



2020 Hampton Street • Room 3063A
P.O. Box 192 • Columbia, SC 29202
(803) 576-2083

Minutes October 24, 2011

Attendance:

Members present: Carol Kososki, John Grego, Becky Bailey, Jim Lawracy, Gary Atkinson via phone, Frank Houston, Margaret DuBard, Sam Holland, Glenice Pearson, Mildred Myers, and Virginia Sanders

Others Present:

James B. Atkins (Buddy), Environmental Planning Division
Chanda Cooper, Environmental Planning Division
Nancy Stone-Collum, Environmental Planning Division
Charlie Fisher, Environmental Planning Division
Ken Driggers, Legal
Quinton Epps, Richland County Storm Water, Manger of Flood Plains
Val Hutchinson, County Council
Milton Pope, County Administrator
Tony McDonald, Assistant County Administrator
Stephany Snowden, Richland County PIO
Pam Greenlaw
Mark Huguley, Richland Soil and Water Conservation District

Chair Carol Kososki called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

Minutes: A motion was made by Jim Lawracy and seconded by Margaret DuBard to approve the minutes of September 26, 2011 as written. Motion carried.

Agenda: A motion was made by Jim Lawracy and seconded by Becky Bailey to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Carol Kososki reported that RCCC was well represented at the county's recent Neighborhood Planning Conference. Chanda Cooper staffed Kid City and the new display board was very attractive and helpful.

Environmental Division Manager's Report:

SCE&G 230kV Transmission Line – Buddy Atkins reported the Public Service Commission hearing has been rescheduled for October 27 at 10:30am. Pre-filed written testimony and surrebuttal to SCE&G's rebuttal comments were submitted. SCE&G has offered a settlement which County Council will discuss at a special called meeting on October 25th. The Town of Blythewood also challenged SCE&G's application and both local governments are using Danny Crowe as outside counsel.

Jackson Creek Mitigation Bank – County Council voted on September 6th to approve proceeding with land owner negotiations. Buddy and Quinton Epps met with Milton Pope to review a flow chart for the negotiating process. A four-part series in *The State* on the Decker area will conclude on Wednesday with an article about the Jackson Creek project. At a meeting about the Northeast Sports Complex, the need for mitigation credits was mentioned. The preliminary design indicates 4.75 acres of wetlands will be impacted. Under current market value the cost of these credits could run from \$470,000 to \$700,000. If Richland County established a mitigation bank at Jackson Creek, the County could then purchase the credits from its own bank which would offset the cost of creating it.

Planning Director Vacancy - Buddy announced that Anna Fonseca resigned as Planning Director and Sparty Hammond is the interim Planning Director. The position has been posted and Administration hopes to have it filled by spring.

Committee Reports:

Conservation Committee

Northeast Landfill

John Grego began his presentation by reviewing graphs Buddy prepared on the amount of waste disposed of by Republic and Waste Management since 2005. John distributed handouts of data synthesized from Freedom of Information requests from the Department of Health and Environmental Control (attached to file minutes). He reviewed maps that he and staff prepared, explaining that of the 183-acre site, about 40 acres cannot be used due to the presence of wetlands. One unlined phase has been filled and capped; four more are in operation with clay and synthetic liners. Four additional phases are proposed. Maximum amount of waste allowed per year is 529,600 tons with no more than 37 acres open at any one time. In 2010, 175,504 tons were buried; at that rate the landfill has capacity for another 32 years. The landfill does not accept hazardous waste but does take industrial process waste, contaminated soil, friable asbestos, and commercial waste. No household waste has been disposed of in 2009 or 2010.

Groundwater pollution was first detected in 1996; landfill gas, under pressure, introduced industrial solvents into the groundwater. Although remediation has taken place, heavy metals and volatile organic compounds continue to contaminate the groundwater. Approximately fifteen compliance, background, and delineation wells are monitored. Many wells show contamination including #19 on the southern border; no monitoring has been done offsite. Pollution has not flowed northwest toward Old McGraw; however, contaminated groundwater is spreading in a southeast direction toward the Wateree River. Gas monitoring was initiated after explosive levels of methane were detected. High levels of methane were found along the perimeter and are being flared.

Mildred Myers expressed her concern about health effects, citing terminated pregnancies, cancer, kidney problems and learning disabilities. Questions were raised about methane recovery but it is doubtful that enough would be produced at the site to make it economical since residential waste is such a small component. The nearest air quality monitoring station is located at Congaree National Park. Council member Val Hutchinson asked if there were safe standards for the groundwater pollutants, to which John answered no. Buddy discussed the need for modeling in the independent analysis to predict where the contaminated groundwater would flow.

Glenice Pearson moved and Virginia Sanders seconded the motion:

Prior to making any decision regarding the contract for the Northeast Landfill, RCCC recommends County Council conduct an independent analysis of present contamination and model future potential contamination of both groundwater and air resources onsite and offsite to protect the public health, safety and welfare of Richland County citizens. The motion was approved unanimously.

Time Extension – At 5:30 pm, Jim Lawracy moved and Becky Bailey seconded the motion to extend the meeting 10 more minutes.

The meeting continued with John Grego moving:

RCCC restates its recommendation that County Council acquire fee simple ownership of Cook's Mountain to protect this unique natural resource and to ensure continued public access to and public benefits from this property. Margaret DuBard seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

Caughman Pond Update—Carol Kososki reported that County Council approved a contract to purchase the Caughman Pond property with the stipulation that if the County is not satisfied with the results of a feasibility study, the County may terminate the agreement to purchase.

Other Business

Carol announced the meeting was past the time extension and the remainder of the agenda will be postponed until the next meeting.

Glenice Pearson reported that she brought greetings from the Commission at the October 21st fundraiser for the Reeder House, a grant-funded project with Zion Baptist Church. She strongly urged Commission members to attend events in their districts and talk about the role of RCCC and its many programs. Glenice also mentioned there seems to be confusion among Richland County staff about the different missions of RCCC and Richland Soil & Water Conservation District.

Nancy Stone-Collum reminded the Commission of the Pine Grove School Grand Opening on Thursday, November 3, 2011. RCCC has funded the restoration since 2004 through a series of grants.

Becky Bailey encouraged Commissioners to take copies of the new brochure created by Chanda Cooper when attending neighborhood functions.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.

Next meeting: Monday, November 28, 2011 at 4:00pm at the Richland County Administration Building

Submitted by
Charlie Fisher
Administrative Assistant