



**County Council of  
Beaufort County  
Natural Resources  
Committee Meeting**

**Chairwoman**  
ALICE HOWARD

**Vice Chairman**  
GERALD DAWSON

**Committee Members**  
MICHAEL E COVERT  
YORK GLOVER, SR.  
CHRIS HERVOCHON

**County Administrator**  
ASHLEY M. JACOBS

**Clerk to Council**  
SARAH W. BROCK

**Staff Support**  
ERIC GREENWAY  
EBONY SANDERS  
DAN MORGAN

**Administration Building**  
Beaufort County Government  
Robert Smalls Complex  
100 Ribaut Road

**Contact**  
Post Office Drawer 1228  
Beaufort, South Carolina 29901-1228  
(843) 255-2180  
[www.beaufortcountysc.gov](http://www.beaufortcountysc.gov)

## Natural Resources Committee Minutes

Monday, March 02, 2020 at 3:30 PM

Council Chambers, Administration Building Beaufort County  
100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort

### CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Howard called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM

### FOIA

Chairwoman Howard noted that Public notification of this meeting had been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Motion:** It was moved by Council Member Flewelling, Seconded by Council Member Passiment to approve the agenda. Voting Yea: Council Member Rodman, Council Member Hervochon, Chairwoman Howard, Council Member Glover, Council Member Passiment, Council Member Flewelling, Council Member McElynn, Council Member Covert, Vice Chairman Dawson. The motion passed.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion:** It was moved by Council Member Flewelling, Seconded by Council Member Passiment to approve the minutes from February 3, 2020. Voting Yea: Council Member Rodman, Council Member Hervochon, Chairwoman Howard, Council Member Glover, Council Member Passiment, Council Member Flewelling, Council Member McElynn, Council Member Covert, Vice Chairman Dawson. The motion passed.

### **Update from Eric Greenway**

Eric Greenway: Two issues at the moment. There is speculation occurring among residents regarding golf course redevelopment at Cat Island and Island West. Community Development Department has no official applications for that. Our position is to review the PUD and researching development plans for each community. Any redevelopment will require PUD amendments to the development plan and will be handled like we do rezoning. Mary 19<sup>th</sup> there will be a meeting for Cat Island and I will myself available for Island West residents as well.

### **Budgetary Update from Senator Tom Davis**

Beaufort County has a \$120 Million grant application to the SIB. The application is in order and a strong application. Chairman of the SIB indicated that there was enough money to be given out to accommodate all qualifying request if they want to do that. If they do that they constrain giving out grants

in subsequent years. I'm very optimistic and decisions should be made later this month. General appropriation bill, last year in our budget we had \$9.3

Billion and this year we have \$2 Billion additional dollars, half in recurring and half not recurring. The Governor has mapped out what he would like to do that with recurring money and house budget reflects that. There may be a tax cut from 7% to 6%. A \$3,000 per classroom teacher salary increase. Also, he would like money for Department of Public Safety, Highway Patrol, and other Law Enforcement matters. We have been increasing appropriations for USCB where this year with an additional \$1.5 Million recurring appropriation we have been promised will be up to 100% parity on State wide average. Beaufort County Council has supplemented USCB's budget, after this year we should have USCB coverage at parity for funding. Regarding capital request which is non-recurring and another Billion. Wish I could tell you that money will be spent at a rational assessment of what the state wide needs are but that isn't the case. \$15 Million is needed for airport funds. I feel that is highly unlikely but possibly \$5 Million. TCL requested for Culinary and Nursing. USCB Convocation center is the next step to make for attractiveness for students. \$24 Million State, \$24 County, \$48 Million Requested. Overtime build that into your plan so the state can see you matching.

Council Member Flewelling: Any word on the change of the formation for the local government fund?

Senator Davis: I haven't heard any discussions in regards to that but I have heard discussions of Act 388. 1) Sun setting existing sales tax exemptions that don't make any sense and generating upwards of \$700 Million and then supplementing that with an additional income earning stream. Idea is to extend property tax relief to all categories of property. 2) Reform on a 5-year basic reimbursement stream is fast growing areas.

Council Member Glover: What about the budget for roads?

Senator Davis: Yes, more money for roads in what form that will take, I suspect these will be a supplement to the CTC appropriation, some of that one-time money will be distributed to the counties based on their CTC formulas of 1) land area 2) population 3) road miles. The house budget has some money in there for roads. I don't know the amount but it will be the CTC route. There is talk of repaving I-95 from Georgia to Walterboro and Highway 17 maintenance to the Tallmadge Bridge.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **Approval of a Joint Ownership and Operating Agreement between the County and BCOLT for Widgeon Point Preserve. – Stefanie M Nagid, Passive Parks Manager**

A Joint Ownership and Operating Agreement between the County and BCOLT for Widgeon Point Preserve. With the construction of the new passive park improvements at Widgeon Point Preserve, revisions to the original 2008 Joint Ownership Agreement are necessary. County Staff and BCOLT agree to the 2020 Joint Ownership and Operating Agreement as written and the 2008 Joint Ownership Agreement will be terminated. County will maintain the property and appropriate insurance for constructed structures. County will retain all revenue from property rental, which will be used towards property maintenance. Recommendation is to approve and authorize the County Administrator to execute the Widgeon Point Preserve 2020 Joint Ownership and Operating Agreement as written.

**Discussion:** Stefanie Nagid: This new agreement is basically reversing roles as previously agreed to in 2008. I have spoken with Mr. Rosenald and he is aware of the needs and will probably bring forth some budgeting requests when it becomes open.

Council Member Flewelling: Have you talked with BCOLT about this?

Stephanie Nagid: Yes, and we both agreed to the JOA as written.

Council Member Flewelling: The funds that will originate, will those funds still go to maintenance?

Stefanie Nagid: Yes

Council Member Flewelling: Is it being rented?

Stefanie Nagid: Yes, we have three weddings booked already for this year.

Council Member Glover: Is there a lot of interest?

Stefanie Nagid: Yes, people are very excited to see this opened to the public.

Council Member Glover: Is it gated?

Stefanie Nagid: Yes, it has an automatic gate.

Council Member Flewelling: Make sure its click to open.

**Motion:** It was moved by Council Member Glover, Seconded by Council Member Flewelling to recommend the approval of a Joint Ownership and Operating agreement between Beaufort County and Beaufort County Open Land and Trust for Widgeon Point Preserve and forward to Council. The Vote - Voting Yea: Council Member Rodman, Council Member Hervochon, Chairwoman Howard, Council Member Glover, Council Member Passiment, Council Member Flewelling, Council Member McElynn, Council Member Covert, Vice Chairman Dawson. The motion passed.

**Approval of a Facility Use Agreement (FUA) between the County and the Friends of Fort Fremont (Friends) for the use of the Preserve and the interpretive center - Stefanie M Nagid, Passive Parks Manager**

A Facility Use Agreement (FUA) between the County and the Friends of Fort Fremont (Friends) for the use of the Preserve and the interpretive center. In April 2019, the County and the Friends entered into a Memorandum of Understanding authorizing the Friends to utilize the property according to a Facility Use Agreement and annual Operating Plan. County staff and Friends have agreed to the FUA terms and conditions, which specify in detail the use of the Property as an historic interpretive facility and the responsibilities of the Friends and the County. There are no funding requirements. Liability is waived between the parties. County retains responsibility for the management and maintenance of the property and its structures as a public passive park. Recommendation is to approve and authorize the County Administrator to execute the Friends of Fort Fremont Facility Use Agreement as written.

**Discussion:** Stefanie Nagid: This further specifies the memorandum of understanding from 2019 with more of lease terminology for use of the building specifically and their operating hours. They will also bring forward an annual operating plan describing specific programs they will have on the property. This is the second step of opening the interpretive center and reopening the park once fully constructed.

Council Member Glover: When do you see the interpretive center opening?

Stefanie Nagid: Contractors estimate end of August 2020.

Council Member Covert: No fees to be paid to the county?

Stefanie Nagid: Correct.

Council Member Covert: What about utilities?

Stefanie Nagid: County will be responsible for that and Mr. Rosenald is aware of the additional expenses. The Finance Director has created an account for funding maintenance etc. from timber.

Council Member Glover: Is there a security system?

Stefanie Nagid: Yes, interior and exterior.

**Motion:** It was moved by Council Member Glover, Seconded by Council Member Flewelling for the approval of a Facility Use Agreement (FUA) between the County and the Friends of Fort Freemont (Friends) for the use of the Preserve and the interpretive center. The Votes - Voting Yea: Council Member Rodman, Council Member Hervochon, Chairwoman Howard, Council Member Glover, Council Member Passiment, Council Member Flewelling, Council Member McElynn, Council Member Covert, Vice Chairman Dawson. The motion passed.

**Approval of a Contract Award to The Greenery, Inc. in the amount of \$97,334.00 for Project Management, Landscape Installation & Maintenance Services for Highway 17 Medians and Traffic Circle at Gardens Corner. – Dave Thomas, Purchasing Director and Nancy R. Moss, Community Development Planner**

On February 12, 2020, the Purchasing Department received three responses to the IFB RFP #021220 – Project Management Landscape Installation and Maintenance Services for the Highway 17 Medians and Traffic Circle at Gardens Corner. The Community Development Department Staff reviewed all of the responses and selected the Greenery, Inc. as the number one ranked firm. The Greenery, Inc. provided the lowest price of \$97,334.00. This service includes landscape site preparation/grading, a twelve (12) month hand-watering, warranty and maintenance program to facilitate plant establishment, cost and installation of plants, the cost of pine straw mulch with installation and weed control and hardwood mulch application under 14 existing specimen live oak trees adjacent to the traffic circle. In addition to the twelve-month maintenance program which is estimated to being on May 15, 2020 the service also includes an additional two (2) years of landscape maintenance for a total of (3) years of landscape maintenance which is estimated to end on May 14, 2023. Funding will be \$97,334.00 from account 20120012-51160 Tree Reforestation Fund for North-of-the-Broad beautification projects. Balance was \$425,000.00. The Purchasing Department recommends that the Natural Resources Committee approve the contract award to The Greenery, Inc. in the amount of \$97,334.00 for the aforementioned Landscaping Services from the finding sources listed above.

**Discussion:** Council Member Covert: Is there a warranty?

Dave Thomas- Yes, 1-year warranty on plants and 3 years for maintenance.

Council Member Covert: Have they submitted a plan/schedule and has the contractor agreed to try to not use herbicides?

Chairwoman Howard: Up until 2023 maintenance will be provided.

Nancy Moss: Yes, everything has to be approved by Amanda Flake regarding application of herbicides.

**Motion:** It was moved by Council Member Covert, Seconded by Vice Chairman Dawson to approve the contract award to the Greenery, Inc. in the amount of \$97,334.00 for Project Management, Landscape Installation and Maintenance Services for Highway 17 Medians and Traffic Circle at Gardens Corner. The Vote - Voting Yea: Council Member Rodman, Council Member Hervochon, Chairwoman Howard, Council Member Glover, Council Member Passiment, Council Member Flewelling, Council Member McElynn, Council Member Covert, Vice Chairman Dawson. The motion passed.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**Discussion regarding the appointment of two (2) members to a Steering Committee responsible for recommendations for establishing a Regional Housing Trust Fund. – Eric Greenway**

Beaufort County Council has the option of appointing two (2) members to the Steering Committee that will guide the development of the recommendation for establishing a Regional Housing Trust Fund. The Two (2) names suggested are Mrs. Allison Coppage with Beaufort Memorial Hospital and Mr. Ben Boswell with Beaufort County Human Services Department.

**Motion:** It was moved by Council Member Flewelling, Seconded by Vice Chairman Dawson to appoint Allison Coppage with Beaufort Memorial Hospital and Ben Boswell with Beaufort County Human Resources Department to the Steering Committee responsible for recommendations for establishing a Regional Housing Trust Fund. The Vote - Voting Yea: Council Member Rodman, Council Member Hervochoon, Chairwoman Howard, Council Member Glover, Council Member Passiment, Council Member Flewelling, Council Member McElynn, Council Member Covert, Vice Chairman Dawson. The motion passed.

**Update regarding the status of the Beaufort County Passive Parks Program** - Stefanie M. Nagid, Passive Parks Manager.

Accomplishments:

- 13,552 fee-simple acres acquired (from the last 20 years)
- Passive Parks Ordinance (1018/53) adopted December 2018
- Facility Rental Policy adopted February 2019
- Priority Property Budget Allocations adopted May and November 2019
- Initiated and Continues:
  - Gates and Keys
  - Boundary Signage
  - Property inspections
  - Record keeping
  - Branding and marketing standards
  - Stakeholder engagement
  - Timber management plans

Green Space Closed to the Public: 203 acres

Passive Parks Open to the Public: 795

Upcoming Projects to be open to the public: 1,138 acres

Next Steps:

- Individual property management plans
  - Resource management needs
  - Public use opportunities
  - Revenue generation possibilities
- Boundary Posting
- Timber and vegetation management
- Prescribed burning
- Invasive exotic plant control

For Additional Information

- Beaufort County Passive Park Website
  - <https://www.beaufortcountysc.gov/planning/passive-parks/index.html>
- Beaufort County Passive Parks manager
  - Stefanie M Nagid, [snagid@bcgov.net](mailto:snagid@bcgov.net), 843-2152

**Discussion:** Council Member Glover: How long is Altamaha Road?

Stefanie Nagid: About ¾ of a mile. About a 30-minute hike from the parking lot to the point.

Council Member Glover: The property we just purchased on Lady's Island, any plans?

Stefanie Nagid: Pineview, when we purchased that property if came with a \$50,000.00 donation to start planning and that will start after the next fiscal year.

### **Presentation regarding the Liberty Trail Initiative**

**Discussion:** Mr. Davies: Partnership between American Battlefield Trust out of Washington, DC. They have raised money and saved over 52,000 acres of land. They decided to focus on the American Revolution and contacted South Carolina Battlefield Preservation Trust in Charleston and came up with this partnership called the Liberty Trail. The Group has two purposes. 1) to educate our students and our citizens on the history and reclaim heritage. 2) Pull people off the interstate and bring tourism. The App for Liberty Trail is budgeted at \$750,000 it will take you to the landmarks, show you where to shop and where to eat in the area and it will become an interactive app once you are at the site. I would love to see the Battle of Port Royal in that initial phase.

**Status:** This item was for Informational purposes only.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion:** It was moved by Council Member Flewelling, Seconded by Council Member Passiment to go into executive session to discuss the proposed purchase of property and issues incident thereto (Project 2020A). The Vote - Voting Yea: Council Member Rodman, Council Member Hervochon, Chairwoman Howard, Council Member Glover, Council Member Passiment, Council Member Flewelling, Council Member McElynn, Council Member Covert, Vice Chairman Dawson. The motion passed.

### **MATTERS ARISING OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion:** It was moved by Council Member Flewelling, Seconded by Council Member Glover for Beaufort County to purchase what is known as Project 2020 A for \$544,537.00 in partnership with the Marine Corps Air Station, Department of Defense and South Carolina Conservation Bank and to be presented at the County Council meeting on March 23, 2020. The total price is \$1.82 Million and Rural and Critical Lands is \$544,537.00. The Vote - Voting Yea: Council Member Rodman, Council Member Hervochon, Chairwoman Howard, Council Member Glover, Council Member Passiment, Council Member Flewelling, Council Member McElynn, Council Member Covert, Vice Chairman Dawson. The motion passed.

**Discussion:** Council Member Rodman: I think if we go forward we may need to revisit getting some of those funds from H-Tax/A-Tax to relief some of the cost from Rural and Critical Lands.

Council Member Flewelling: Yes, I agree.

### **BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

#### **Boards and Commissions Vacancies**

Rural and Critical Lands Board: 1 Vacancy (District 7)

Southern Beaufort County Corridor Beautification Board: (District 9- Doug Novak Resigned, District 5 and Town of Bluffton Appointee) Application received by John Maffei.

**Motion:** It was moved by Council Member Flewelling, Seconded by Council Member Glover to recommend John Maffei for the vacancy with Southern Beaufort County Corridor Beautification Board and forward to full Council. The Vote - Voting Yea: Council Member Rodman, Council Member Hervochoon, Chairwoman Howard, Council Member Glover, Council Member Passiment, Council Member Flewelling, Council Member McElynn, Council Member Covert, Vice Chairman Dawson. The motion passed.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

No Citizen Comments

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:00PM

Ratified by Committee: May 4, 2020