

**Heritage Trust Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
Congaree Bluffs Heritage Preserve
Saint Matthews, SC 29135
Thursday, February 8, 2024 – 11:00 a.m.**

Members Present

Kevin Hunter
Rob Keck
Dr. Sonny King (via telephone)
Campbell Coxe, Chairman
Julien Springs
Brad Sauls
Clarke Thompson
Chisholm Beckham
Ken Rentiers
Terry Hurley (normally Attends)
Justin Hancock
Emily Cope
Amy Bartow-Melia
Jake Rasor

Members Absent

Dr. Julia Krebs
Dr. Jonathan Leader

Others Present

Dawn Beaver
Allison Morris
Jordan Baker
Meg Gaillard
Larry Lane
Lelia Rice
Reece Spradley
Kiersten Weber
Hunter Young
Csilla Czako
Barry Kessler
Bill Marshall
Brian Long
Cameron Foster
Cindy Thompson
Fran Varacalli
Jess Kinsella
Joe Lemeris
Joey Frazier
Julie Binz
Ken Prosser
Megan James
Ricky Kiker
Sean Taylor

Call to Order

Chairman Coxe called the meeting to order.

Welcome and Introduction

Chairman Coxe gave a quick welcome to the Board and everyone attending, introduced Allison Morris as the new Heritage Trust Program Administrative Assistant, and asked Dawn Beaver to do roll call.

Roll Call of Attendance

Dawn Beaver gave a roll call and asked participants to reply “here” when called. Participants who were not present were noted.

Public Comment Period

Chairman Coxe asked if anyone wanted to speak during this time. No comment was made.

Approval of Minutes from November 9, 2023

Chairman Coxe noted that the minutes from the previous meeting had been sent to the Board Members. *Mr. Rob Keck made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board approve the minutes from the November 9, 2023, meeting as submitted. Clarke Thompson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.*

Items for Board Information

A) Archaeology Community Engagement: 10 Years Back and 10 Years Forward: Meg Gaillard, Heritage Trust Archaeologist, Heritage Trust-Archaeology, Land, Water and Conservation, SCDNR

Meg Gaillard, Heritage Trust Archaeologist, presented on the past 10 years of community engagement in archaeology by the Heritage Trust Program's Cultural Outreach Team. She also provided a comprehensive look forward into the next 10 years of community engagement in archaeology and the programs and initiatives the Cultural Outreach Team is planning to continue with this wonderful work.

- The Cultural Outreach Team has implemented programs such as Archaeology for Kids, Archaeology Summer Series, Archaeology Summer Camps, and the Archaeology Coloring Book in the past 10 years. They are involved in Boy and Girl Scout programs and are currently designing an Archaeology Merit Badge for the Girl Scouts.
- Ms. Gaillard is a Project Archaeologist for the State of South Carolina and has trained the entire Cultural Outreach Team in Project Archaeology. The Project Archaeology Educator Workshops provide educators with free workshops every summer that educate them in archaeology and provide them with professional development credit. Moving these workshops online has allowed them to provide greater access to teachers and will continue to expand them in the future.
- The Cultural Outreach Team also engages in festivals and events across South Carolina to reach a diverse audience and engage various communities in archaeology.
- They ensure there are exhibits and wayfinding signage at the Heritage Preserves and provide guided tours of several of them as well.
- They also coordinate volunteers to assist in excavations and the Parker Annex laboratory. Volunteers are a key part of community engagement – Meg herself began work with SCDNR by volunteering with the Heritage Trust Program at the age of 18.
- Documentary filming has taken place in the field on excavations, supported by the Harry Hampton Memorial Wildlife Fund. These documentaries won 3 awards. Notably, *The Ring People*, the 30-minute documentary focusing on shell rings in South Carolina and the Southeast, has 22,000 impressions of engagement and nearly 1,000 views.

- Recently, the Cultural Outreach Team has released the first of a set of children’s books focusing on the history of SCDNR’s Heritage Preserves. The first book, “Fort Frederick: A SCDNR Heritage Preserve and the World It Changed”, was written by Heritage Trust Archaeologist Reece Spradley and will be published in March 2024. Printing was funded by the Harry Hampton Memorial Wildlife Fund. The book will be translated into Spanish, Gullah, and Braille and audiobook versions will be available. Reece Spradley is providing a story time to debut this book during the Palmetto Sportsmen’s Classic 2024 in March. The Cultural Outreach Team has also met with SCETV to partner with them in creating more robust lesson plans for educators from these children’s books and animating films for children from the books, allowing them to reach globally.
- Branding is an important aspect of community engagement, and the Cultural Outreach Team designs and provides various branded items, including tote bags, stickers, pens and pencils, and shirts. The Archaeology Coloring Book and soon-to-be released Children’s Book on Fort Frederick Heritage Preserve are also excellent resources for branding the Heritage Trust Program.
- Further innovation is being done with photogrammetry by Heritage Trust Archaeologist Gabe Donofrio, and Heritage Trust Archaeology Intern Charles Scarborough. Photogrammetry provides 3D models of various artifacts and resources found on our Heritage Preserves that people may not be able to see in person. This allows the Heritage Trust Program to be a public source for archaeology in South Carolina and the Southeast and digitally reach across the globe. The 3D scans can be utilized in further research, such as Heritage Trust Archaeologist Lelia Rice’s Master of History thesis and Reece Spradley’s work on the children’s books about the Heritage Preserves.
- Presentations of research such as Gabe’s photogrammetry, Reece’s community engagement work with the children’s books, and Lelia’s history thesis on Edgefield pottery have been given at conferences such as the 2024 Southeastern Archaeological Conference. Additionally, articles written by Dr. Karen Smith and Meg Gaillard have gone through the rigorous and important process of peer review prior to being published and disseminating information on our Cultural Heritage Preserves to the public.
- Storymaps have been an integral part of engaging the community in archaeology as well. The storymaps document the history of the Heritage Trust Program, supply material for lesson plans, and help create wayfinding signage for the Heritage Preserves. Nine have been completed already, and 11 more are being prepared for the next 2-3 years.
- Finally, the Archaeology Newsletter reaches 20,000 people every month, and 200-300 people are added monthly. The Newsletter provides updates about the Heritage Trust Program’s Cultural section, its activities, team members, and upcoming events.

Meg Gaillard completed her presentation.

Chairman Coxe complimented Meg and her team on their impressive public outreach and their global reach. He said it was amazing to see what's taken place over the past 10 years and he was very impressed.

Ken Rentiers added commendation to the entire Cultural/Archaeology team on an outstanding job, said he loves the focus on the next generation, and thanked them for their work.

Potential Conflict of Interest Statement

Chairman Coxe read the "Potential Conflict of Interest Statement" before going into Executive Session. No Statement was made.

Motion to Enter Executive Session

Mr. Julien Springs made a motion that the Board go into Executive Session pursuant to S.C. Code Section 30-4-70(A)(2) to discuss a conservation easement related to Action Item A, a license agreement related to Action Item B, a restoration related to Action Item C, and property acquisitions related to Action Items D through, and including, H. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion to Close Executive Session

Mr. Julien Springs made a motion that the Board return to open session, and let the record reflect that no action was taken in Executive Session. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Items for Board Action

A) Conservation Easement Acceptance and Dedication: Green Hill Mound, Richland County:

Mr. Kevin Hunter made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board approve the acceptance and execution of a conservation easement on the Green Hill Mound site, contingent upon any additional approvals by the Department of Administration. Additionally, Mr. Kevin Hunter moved that the property also be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the Corpus of the Heritage Trust Program. Mr. Clarke Thompson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

B) Proposed Palmetto Trail License at Wateree River Heritage Preserve:

Mr. Clarke Thompson made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board approve the 10-year license agreement to allow the Palmetto Conservation Foundation to design, construct and maintain a walking/hiking trail at Wateree River Heritage Preserve and Wildlife Management Area. Mr. Kevin Hunter seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

C) Callahan Creek Restoration: Approval to fund the Callahan Creek Restoration Project:

Mr. Chisolm Beckham made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, for the purpose of stabilizing and improving Callahan Creek, located in Greenville County on Poinsett Bridge Heritage Preserve, approve the expenditure of \$220,945 from the

Heritage Trust Fund. Mr. Julien Springs seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

D) Property Acquisition Project: Final approval to purchase approximately 127 acres in Beaufort County:

Mr. Brad Sauls made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and subject to standard due diligence, recommend that the SCDNR Board grant final approval of the acquisition of approximately 127 acres in Beaufort County to be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust, and the expenditure of \$505,000 in Heritage Trust funds. Mrs. Amy Bartow-Melia seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

E) Property Acquisition Project: Final approval to accept a donation of approximately 175 acres in Charleston County:

Mr. Julien Springs made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board recommend that the SCDNR Board grant final approval to accept the donation of approximately 175 acres in Charleston County to be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve. This property will be placed into the corpus of the Heritage Trust as a part of the Botany Bay Heritage Preserve, conditional upon the successful completion of all due diligence. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

F) Property Acquisition Project: Final approval to acquire approximately 32 acres in Greenville County:

Mr. Rob Keck made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board recommend that the SCDNR Board grant final approval to expend \$85,000 in Heritage Trust Land Funds to purchase approximately 32 acres in Greenville County to be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve. This property will be placed into the corpus of the Heritage Trust as a part of the Bunched Arrowhead Heritage Preserve, conditional upon the successful completion of all due diligence. Mr. Clarke Thompson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

G) Property Acquisition Project: Final approval to acquire approximately 73.47 acres in Lancaster County:

Mr. Clarke Thompson made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and subject to standard due diligence, recommend that the SCDNR Board grant final approval of the acquisition of approximately 73.47 acres adjoining Forty Acre Rock Heritage Preserve/WMA in Lancaster County that would be dedicated as a heritage preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust. Mr. Julien Springs seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

H) Property Acquisition Project: Final approval to acquire approximately 17.7 acres in Oconee County:

Mrs. Amy Bartow-Melia made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board upon the recommendation of the SCDNR staff and subject to standard due diligence, recommend that the SCDNR Board grant final approval of the acquisition of approximately 17.7

acres adjoining Stumphouse Mountains Heritage Preserve/WMA in Oconee County that would be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust, and the expenditure of \$150,000 in Heritage Trust funds. Mr. Kevin Hunter seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Other Items

Ken Rentiers noted that a letter from the State Ethics Commission determined that the Heritage Trust Board Members must provide a Statement of Economic Interest, in contrast to its 2015 determination that Heritage Trust Board Members did not need to do this. Mr. Rentiers noted that Heritage Trust Board Members needed to complete this by March 30, 2024, and offered our assistance in this matter.

Mr. Rentiers thanked Emily and Hunter Young for preparing the house at Congaree Creek Heritage Preserve for this meeting and complimented them on their incredible work.

Mr. Rentiers updated the Heritage Trust Board on the 50th Anniversary of the Heritage Trust Program. He informed the Board that the Governor would read a Gubernatorial Proclamation at the South Carolina State House during the month of February.

Mr. Rentiers recognized and complimented Joey Frazier and Cindy Thompson's work on the article in the South Carolina Wildlife Magazine about the 50th Anniversary of the Heritage Trust Program, and all the great work they do for the SC Wildlife Magazine. Mr. Rentiers noted Cindy and Joey may reach out to Board Members and original staff for quotes. Joey Frazier said they may reach out in the next few weeks for the July/August 2024 issue.

Mr. Rentiers noted the possibility of having an event at one of the Heritage Preserves for the 50th Anniversary, and that Meg Gaillard mentioned our relationship with SCETV, and it would be nice to have them involved in the anniversary.

Mr. Rentiers provided a handout for the Board Members put together by Ken Prosser and Fran Varacalli. This handout included a compilation of acquisitions and additions for each Heritage Preserve site, information on purchase prices, appraised values, and donated values. He noted that these handouts tell the story of the long-term strategy of acquisition and the addition of adjacent sites to the Heritage Trust Program, and how much the Program has expanded its reach. He applauded all of HTAB and all involved on the positive impact these efforts have had on the State of South Carolina.

Chairman Coxe noted that the back page provides information on the donated value versus the purchase price and commented that leveraging the good partnerships to the fullest and using those contacts provided the Heritage Trust Program with great deals on these properties. He congratulated all those involved.

Time and Place of the Next Board Meeting

The next meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board will be held Thursday, May 9, 2024. The location of the next meeting is to be determined at a later date.

Adjournment

Having no further business to discuss, Mr. Clarke Thompson made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board be adjourned. Mr. Julien Springs seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Allison Morris
Senior Administrative Assistant
Heritage Trust Program
Land, Water, and Conservation Division
SC Department of Natural Resources*