

Heritage Trust Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

**SCDNR Florence Office
295 S. Evander Drive
Florence, SC 29506**

Thursday, May 9, 2024 – 11:00am

Members Present

Kevin Hunter (via Teams)
Rob Keck
Dr. Oswald H. King, III
Campbell Coxe, Chairman
Dr. Julia Krebs
Julien E. Springs
Dr. Jonathan Leader (via Teams)
Brad Sauls (via Teams for Dr. Eric Emerson)
Clark Thompson (for Harry Lightsey)
Tom Patton (for Scott Philips)
Ken Rentiers
Daniel Gambrell (for Duane Parrish)
Dave Cicimurri (via Teams for Amy Bartlow-Melia)
Jake Razor (via phone)

Others Present

Dawn Beaver
Allison Morris
Amber Larck
Catherine Hart
Fran Varacalli
Hunter Young
Joe Lemeris
Julie Binz
Ken Prosser
Lauton Sutley
Lorianne Riggin
Roger Hux
Sean Taylor
Terry Hurley

Members Absent

Emily Cope (for Robert Boyles)

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 and asked Allison Morris to do roll call.

Roll Call of Attendance

Allison Morris 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 February 8, 2024

Chairman Coxe noted that the minutes from the previous meeting had been sent to the Board Members. *Dr. Oswald King made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board approve the*

minutes from the February 8, 2024, meeting as submitted. Clarke Thompson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Items for Board Information

A) Budget Amendment for FY 2025: Sean Taylor, Senior Archaeologist, Land, Water & Conservation, SCDNR

Sean Taylor thanked Chairman Coxe and the Heritage Trust Advisory Board Members for having him. He requested that \$151,000 be moved from Cultural's operating budget to the personnel budget to pay for the salary increase plan and a temporary classified position for GIS work.

Chairman Coxe requested clarification that this action was just a transfer. Sean Taylor confirmed this. Chairman Coxe asked if the Heritage Trust Advisory Board needed to approve this, and Mr. Ken Rentiers said they did not.

Chairman Coxe thanked Mr. Taylor. This concluded the Items for Board Information.

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

Dr. Oswald King 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, property acquisitions related to Action Items B and C, a proposed lease agreement related to Action Item D, acceptance of property donations related to Action Items E through G, and property acquisitions related to Action Items H through J. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion to Close Executive Session

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

Items for Board Action

A) Conservation Easement on Tyger Oaks in Spartanburg County:

Dr. Oswald King made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, in keeping with Title 27-Property and Conveyances Chapter 8- Conservation Easement Act Section 27-8-30, recommend Heritage Trust staff review SCPRT/Spartanburg Area Conservancy's Conservation Easement proposal and set up a public meeting for comment on the proposed easement within sixty (60) days of today. Mr. Clarke Thompson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

B) Property Acquisition Project: Final approval to acquire approximately 1,263 acres in Jasper County:

Dr. Julia Krebs moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and subject to standard due diligence, recommend the SCDNR Board grant final approval of the acquisition of approximately 1,263 acres adjoining Coosawhatchie Heritage Preserve/WMA in Jasper County, in which an appropriate portion will be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust, and the expenditure of \$805,000 in Heritage Trust funds. Mr. Julien Springs seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

C) Property Acquisition Project: Final approval to acquire approximately 396 acres in Jasper County:

Mr. Rob Keck moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff and subject to standard due diligence, recommend the SCDNR Board grant final approval of the acquisition of approximately 396 acres west of Coosawhatchie Heritage Preserve/WMA in Jasper County, in which an appropriate portion will be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust, and the expenditure of \$1,435,000 in Heritage Trust funds. Mr. Julien Springs seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

D) Proposed Lease Agreement at Glassy Mountain Heritage Preserve:

Mr. Clarke Thompson moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation of SCDNR staff, and the Director, recommend the SCDNR Board grant approval to enter into a lease agreement with Pickens County, specifically the Pickens County Emergency Management Services, for a one-year term with an option to renew for up to 4, one-year terms, for use of the radio communication tower located at Glassy Mountain Heritage Preserve, Pickens County. The use of the radio communication tower will provide critical public safety communications for first responders to support search and rescue efforts in the area. Dr. Julia Krebs seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

E) Property Acquisition Project: Preliminary and Final approval to accept a donation of approximately 260 acres in Horry County:

Mr. Julien Springs moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation from SCDNR staff, and the Director, recommend the SCDNR Board grant preliminary and final approval of the expenditure of up to \$20,000 in Heritage Trust funds to conduct due diligence activities, which are conditional upon the successful completion of all due diligence and to accept the donation of approximately 260 acres in Horry County. This property will be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the Heritage Trust as a new Heritage Trust Preserve. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

F) Property Acquisition Project: Preliminary and Final approval to accept a donation of approximately 16 acres in Charleston County:

Dr. Julia Krebs moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation from SCDNR staff, and the Director, recommend the SCDNR Board grant preliminary and final approval of the expenditure of up to \$20,000 in Heritage Trust funds to conduct due diligence activities, which are conditional upon the successful

completion of all due diligence and to accept the donation of approximately 16 acres in Charleston County as an addition to the Botany Bay Heritage Preserve(HP)/Wildlife Management Area(WMA). This property will be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the Heritage Trust. Dr. Oswald King seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

G) Property Acquisition Project: Final approval to accept a donation of approximately 97 acres in Lancaster County:

Mr. Tom Patton moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board recommend that the SCDNR Board grant final approval, in addition to the previously approved \$20,000 in Heritage Trust funds for due diligence activities, conditional upon the successful completion of all Department of Administration approvals and to accept the donation of approximately 97 acres in Lancaster County as a part of the Forty Acre Rock Heritage Preserve (HP)/Wildlife Management Area (WMA). This property will be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the Heritage Trust. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

H) Property Acquisition Project: Preliminary approval to acquire approximately 353 acres in Horry County:

Mr. Julien Springs moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board, upon the recommendation from SCDNR staff, and the Director, recommend the SCDNR Board grant preliminary approval to investigate the potential acquisition of approximately 353 acres in Horry County that would be dedicated as part of the Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve (HP)/Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and placed into the corpus of the SC Heritage Trust, and the expenditure of up to \$20,000 in Heritage Trust funds to conduct due diligence activities. Mr. Rob Keck seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

I) Property Acquisition Project: Final approval to acquire approximately 29 acres in Greenville County:

Mr. Rob Keck moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board recommend that the SCDNR Board grant final approval to expend \$197,000 in Heritage Trust funds, in addition to the previously approved \$20,000 in Heritage Trust funds for due diligence, to purchase approximately 29 acres in Greenville County. This property will be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the Heritage Trust as a part of the Bunched Arrowhead Heritage Preserve, conditional upon the successful completion of all Department of Administration approvals. Mr. Tom Patton seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

J) Property Acquisition Project: Final approval to acquire approximately 16 acres in Greenville County:

Dr. Oswald King moved that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board recommend that the SCDNR Board grant final approval to purchase approximately 16 acres in Greenville County. This property will be dedicated as a Heritage Preserve and placed into the corpus of the Heritage Trust as a part of the Chestnut Ridge Heritage Preserve,

conditional upon the successful completion of all Department of Administration and the Joint Bond Review Committee approvals. Mr. Tom Patton seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

After the motion was carried unanimously, Dr. Julia Krebs asked for clarification regarding how the decision is made on whether to designate an area as a Heritage Preserve or a Wildlife Management Area, and what the differences were. Ken Prosser, Assistant Deputy Director of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, and Catherine Hart, Assistant Legal Counsel, discussed the various aspects of this. For instance, roads can be used as boundaries in document descriptions. Chairman Coxe asked if the area must be surveyed, like a deed. Catherine Hart stated that we could use a survey that was already completed. If we don't have an appropriate survey, we could potentially do one. Ken Prosser said we could also amend a previously completed survey.

Dr. Julia Krebs asked what could be done in a Wildlife Management Area that could not be done in a Heritage Preserve. Ken Prosser said that the Heritage Trust Act has more restrictions that would limit Wildlife Management Areas on certain lands, such as properties with sand ridges, etc.

Dr. Oswald King mentioned a typo in Motion J, and Dr. Julia Krebs also noted this. Allison Morris made a note to correct it, and corrected it in the above motion.

Other Items

A) Updates and Comments: Ken Rentiers, *Deputy Director, Land, Water and Conservation Division, SCDNR*

Ken Rentiers thanked Chairman Coxe and asked the Board if the next meeting could be moved to July 25, 2024 so that the Heritage Trust budget could be approved before the SCDNR Board's August budget meeting. Chairman Coxe, Mr. Julien Springs, and Mr. Clarke Thompson confirmed their availability for this date. The other Board members noted they would review their calendars.

Mr. Rentiers commended Sean Taylor and his archaeology team for an outstanding archaeological dig at South Bluff Heritage Preserve in partnership with Mississippi State University. He noted many students were involved. Mr. Taylor confirmed that a site dating to the Late Archaic period was found and noted that other sites were likely also present.

Mr. Rentiers updated the Board regarding the expiration of the lease agreement at Parker Archaeology Annex. The lease has two and a half years left, and we are actively working with the Department of Administration to look at other options. These options include leasing other property or building something for the future, since the curation of artifacts from their projects requires a huge amount of space and the Cultural program has outgrown the current space at Parker Annex.

Mr. Rentiers also noted that the new SCDNR Headquarters building was making major

progress and would be ready to be occupied in November or December of 2024.

Paper copies of two documents were passed around to update the Board on legislative developments.

- **Act to amend the South Carolina Code of Laws by adding Section 50-15-100.**
 - Ken Rentiers explained that this Act prohibits the release of DNR records of rare plant and animal species. This provides a level of protection to these rare plant and animal species.
- **Act to amend the South Carolina Code of Laws by amending Section 48-59-40 and adding Section 48-59-150.**
 - Mr. Rentiers explained that adding Section 48-59-150 to this Act establishes the Working Farmland Protection Fund, which will provide grants and assistance to working farms to make sure they don't disappear.

Dr. Jonathan Leader announced his retirement from his position as the State Archeologist of South Carolina at the South Carolina Institute of Archeology and Anthropology. He noted that there would likely be a national search for his replacement, and he may not attend the next meeting unless needed. He expressed what a pleasure and honor it has been to be involved from the beginning with the Heritage Trust Advisory Board and its growth and activities. He said it has been blessed by its staff and appointments and wished it all the success for the future. All attendees applauded and congratulated Dr. Leader on his kind words and retirement.

Mr. Rob Keck also complimented the work staff have done on acquisitions and all the background work that goes into the Heritage Trust. Mr. Keck, Ken Rentiers, Ken Prosser, and Dr. Oswald King discussed marketing and dissemination strategies and initiatives for ensuring the public was abreast of the incredible work HTAB does, including that of property acquisitions. Press conferences, social media, photos of events such as the Governor's Proclamation about the 50th Anniversary of the Heritage Trust Program, and the South Carolina Wildlife Magazine were all mentioned.

Chairman Coxe asked that Ken Rentiers let the Board know about the July/August meeting. Mr. Rentiers asked the Board if quorum would likely be met for that meeting, and general agreement was had among the Board.

Time and Place of the Next Board Meeting

The next meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board was proposed for July 25, 2024 and was covered in discussions in the "Other Items" section of these meeting notes. The location of the next meeting will be determined at a later date.

Adjournment

Having no further business to discuss, Mr. Rob Keck made a motion that the Heritage Trust Advisory Board be adjourned. Dr. Oswald King 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*