

Oconee River Greenway Authority

MINUTES

24 April 2007

Members Present: Richard Bentley – Vice-Chairman
Bo Edwards, Lee Moon, Marion Nelson

Others Present: Ed Moore – GMC (Acting ORGA Director)
Janet Anderson - ORGF
Sherrill Jones – Recorder

Not Present: Peter Boylan, Dennis Holder, Greg Strenkowski, Bubba Williams

Location: Conference room in Cone-Sibley Library at GMC.

- I. **Call to Order** – At approximately 1:35 PM, Vice-Chairman Bentley called the 24 April 2007 meeting of the Oconee River Greenway Authority (ORGA) to order and welcomed all who were present.
- II. **Approval of Minutes for 27 March 2007** – Mr. Nelson made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Edwards, to approve the 27 March 2007 ORGA Minutes. The motion to approve was unanimously accepted.
- III. **Treasurer's Report** – In the absence of the treasurer, Mr. Moore reported, for the period ending 31 March 2007, a checking balance of \$61,217.13 and a Money Market Balance of \$421.59. Mr. Edwards made a motion to accept the financial statement as presented. It was seconded by Mr. Nelson and unanimously approved.
- IV. **Old Business**
 - A. **Update Access Road** – Mr. Moore reported that the county has graveled the access road for Phase I and that the road will be paved when construction is complete.
 - B. **Update on McMillan Island** – Mr. Moore advised the board that the Corps of Engineers has declared the area around McMillan Island to be a navigable waterway. If the area is developed it will need to be connected by a bridge/boardwalk. Mr. Moore proposed a single bridge whose height will need to be determined by the high water level mark. Discussion about the feasibility of developing McMillan Island ensued. It was agreed that this is a low priority compared to other trails; however, there was concern that some already secured funds may be specifically designated for this development. Mr. Moore will review funding details with former Director Nichols and report findings at the May Board Meeting.
 - C. **Wetland Flagging with GPS** – Mr. Moore reported that Vonda Everett (GDOT) indicated approval of the GPS system for flagging the wetland. Mr. Strenkowski has surveyed the area with a GPS system and will do a follow up survey to submit to Jim Hardin.

D. Property Appraisal & Purchase

1. **Thirumal** – Mr. Moore recounted that the appraisal of the Thirumal property, completed by Mike Cobb, was submitted to the state and subsequently rejected as Mr. Cobb is not an MAII qualified appraiser. There are no MAII qualified appraisers in Baldwin County. In lieu of the MAII qualification, paperwork regarding the appraiser's qualifications must be submitted for review; however, Mr. Cobb asked that another appraiser be found as he did not want to complete the voluminous paperwork requirement.

2. **Garner** – Mr. Edwards reported that Jo Mangum has drafted an Option to Purchase agreement for the Garner Property. Once the property owners sign, a check for \$1,000 will be written, and Mr. Mangum will work to resolve survey and title issues. Mr. Edwards also noted that there is no deadline for using the Grassman Funds, earmarked for the purchase of the Garner property. He further recommended that as soon as Mr. Mangum indicates all issues are resolved, ORGF should make the purchase.

E. Update on DNR Loop Trail (Phase II) – Mr. Moore directed those present to review the 10 April 2007 cost proposal from Dan Hammack, noting a cost total of \$194,350. Funds available total only \$154,000 (\$100,000 from DNR + \$54,000 matching funds). Mr. Moore noted that the biggest expense item on the cost proposal is the concrete sidewalk for a section along the river front. Costs could be reduced by making the entire trail a natural trail surface, rather than concrete. Mr. Edwards suggested that money designated for McMillan Island be used to pave this section of the Phase II trail, if the funds are transferable. Mr. Moore also noted that the quantity of rip rap might also be reduced to cut costs; however, this might result in an erosion issue later. He also reported that Phase I work is being permitted under nationwide permit # 42. Another permit will be needed for the Phase II loop. Permitting will take at least 45 days. Mr. Edwards asked Mr. Moore for a recommendation. Mr. Moore suggested a natural trail at this point in time. Those present agreed that Mr. Moore should ask Mr. Hammack to make a proposal for a natural trail (no concrete) for the loop. Mr. Nelson inquired as to whether or not the contract includes any kind of maintenance agreement for erosion control. Mr. Moore noted that the Phase I agreement has already been signed, and that he will investigate whether or not there is a maintenance agreement as well as whether "established" grassing is written in the contract.

F. Phase I Construction Status – Mr. Moore noted that some equipment has been moved to the site; however, work has not been initiated.

G. Culvert in Phase I – As per the Board's request at the March meeting, Mr. Moore met with Hardin & Hammock to discuss the possibility of replacing the culvert identified in the Phase I contract. Both gentlemen recommended the use of a culvert, as it is much more substantial for emergency vehicles.

H. DNR Grant for Phase I – Mr. Moore reported that all additional materials for the DNR Grant have been submitted for review.

I. Update Phase II Concept Report – Mr. Moore reported that the Phase II concept report, submitted to the GDOT is available for public reading as advertised in *The Union-*

Recorder. He also advised that a Phase II ecology survey must be conducted. Unfortunately GDOT now requires that Ecology Firms must be GDOT qualified. The company that completed the Phase I ecology survey is not on the current GDOT list; therefore, another firm is needed. Mr. Moore suggested that Breedlove, which is on the list, be approached to do the survey. Those present agreed with this suggestion.

J. Board Member to Replace Mr. Thompson – Mr. Nelson volunteered to contact Dennis Holder before the next board meeting to ask the Wilkinson County Commission for a recommendation to replace Guy Thompson on the ORGA Board.

K. Groundbreaking Ceremony & Reception – The Groundbreaking Ceremony is scheduled for 5:00 PM on April 26, 2007. Discussion focused on an exact location for the ceremony. It was agreed to utilize the picnic area near the boat ramp. A reception in the atrium of the new academic building will immediately follow the ground breaking. Mrs. Anderson reported that almost 50 are planning to attend. Reporters from *The Macon Telegraph*, *The Union-Recorder*, and *The Baldwin Bulletin* will be present. Macon TV stations have also been contacted; however, there have been no confirmations to date.

Mr. Moore shared a drawing for the layout of the reception, which included two DVD monitors and an area for the Greenway Map display, as well as a podium, food and drink tables.

V. New Business

A. Executive Director – Vice-Chairman Bentley thanked members of the Selection Committee (Williams, Nelson, Edwards) for their work on identifying a new Director. Mr. Nelson made a motion to appoint Dr. Heather Langston as Director for ORGA. The motion was seconded by Edwards and unanimously approved. Dr. Langston will assume the role of Director on 1 May 2007. Chairman Boylan will review/negotiate a contract with Dr. Langston.

B. Request for \$85,000 for DNR Loop for McMillan Island – Mr. Nelson reminded the Board of an earlier meeting with Senator Grant and Representative Parham during which a request for \$85,000 was made. He asked if there had been any update. No information is available at this time.

VI. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 29, 2007 at 1:30 PM in the conference room of the Cone-Sibley Library at GMC.

VII. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherrill Jones, Recorder

