

Oconee River Greenway Authority

MINUTES

29 April 2008

Members Present: Peter Boylan, Chairman; Richard Bentley, Troy Clymer, Bo Edwards, Marion Nelson, Lee Moon, Bubba Williams

Others Present: Jeff Gray – GMC
Vonda Everett - GDOT
Shannon New – ORGF
Jim Hardin – Walden, Ashworth & Associates (*Via conference phone for section IV.B.2.*)
Heather Langston – ORGA Director
Sherrill Jones – Recorder

Not Present: Dennis Holder

Location: President's Conference room in the Old State Capital building.

I. Call to Order – At approximately 1:30 PM, Chairman Boylan called the 29 April 2008 meeting of the Oconee River Greenway Authority (ORGA) to order, and welcomed all who were present.

II. Approval of Minutes for 25 March 2008 – After a review of the 25 March 2008 Minutes, Mr. Nelson made a motion, that was seconded by Mr. Williams, to approve. The motion to approve was unanimously accepted.

III. Treasurer's Report – Mr. Clymer reported a current net income balance of \$694,568.48 with a total liabilities & equity balance of \$1,089,187.24. He also reported receipt of a "dormant status" notice from CB&T regarding a Money Market Account with a total of \$424.16. After a brief discussion, there was general agreement to take no action regarding this account. Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. It was seconded by Mr. Bentley and unanimously approved.

IV. Old Business

A. Phase I Status

1. Construction Update - Dr. Langston reported that a final inspection for Phase I was done on April 15, with a follow-up on the 28th, and that applicable pay requests had been paid accordingly. Chairman Boylan asked Dr. Langston to request the fire department to remove clay from the sidewalk before the Grand Opening on Saturday.

2. Grand Opening of Phase I - Mr. Edwards presented the schedule of events and layout for the Grand Opening on May 3, 2008, from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. He reported that prior to conducting a "Cherokee Lottery", Dr. Bob Wilson will present the history of this type of lottery and how it was used for securing funds when building the Milledgeville Masonic Hall, completed in 1834.

Chairman Boylan thanked the committee for their work on this event, and Dr. Langston acknowledged the Foundation's efforts, headed by Shannon New whose work has been both "endless and tireless."

Mr. Nelson reported that additional parking is being made available by the Washington EMC and that boy scouts will direct parking within the parking areas while Milledgeville Police will direct traffic on the street. He also acknowledged Lawson Lawrence's donation of crushed pipe and materials for the ceremonial stage.

Chairman Boylan indicated that the city will put in a gate, and that publicity is coming along well. Again, credit was given to Ms. New, as well as Dr. Langston.

B. Phase II Status

1. Property Update - Mayor Bentley reported that he has been unsuccessful in obtaining property needed for the amphitheatre in that Marriott has expressed interest in building a hotel/conference center on the site.

2. Alternate Location of Amphitheatre – *(Jim Hardin joined the meeting via conference phone for the purpose of discussing an alternate location for the amphitheatre.)* Mr. Hardin reported that he has not been able to identify an alternate site for the amphitheatre in that property north of the river bridge is in the flood plain and contains wetlands as well as the city water treatment property. Property south of the bridge also presents floodplain issues.

Dr. Langston suggested consideration of property south of Fishing Creek. Mr. Edwards supported this suggestion noting considerable open space and the fact that it is not in the flood plain. Additional Tomlin property would have to be secured to make this location possible.

At this point, Chairman Boylan suggested a reconfiguration of Phase II & III. He suggested that Phase II include the wetlands trail south of the bridge, a parking area from the Greene Street extension, pedestrian access off Hancock Street, and trails north of the bridge. Chairman Boylan also reported that just prior to today's meeting he spoke to John Barrow re: federal funding (\$2million) for Phase III. Congressman Barrow noted there will be NO earmarks in the next fiscal year's budget; consequently the only money ORGA can rely on is money in hand.

Mr. Edwards supported the chairman's recommendation noting that he no longer feels the need for a road entrance from Montgomery Street, and that he now feels a singular entrance is more advantageous.

Mr. Nelson made a motion to remove the construction of an amphitheatre from Phase II, and to focus on the expansion of trails north of the bridge. The motion was seconded by Mr. Edwards and unanimously approved. Mr. Hardin agreed to rework the Design Contract for Phase II. To do so, he will need an overall topographical map of the area. This also constitutes the need to modify the existing concept report.

(End of conference call with Mr. Hardin.)

C. Georgia Power Property Donation – Dr. Langston reported that the donation of property by Georgia Power is near fruition. In light of the change in plans for Phase II, Ms. Everett issued a word of caution in that this acquisition might be in violation of GDOT guidelines. Chairman Boylan stressed the importance of following GDOT requirements and asked Dr. Langston and Ms. Everett to resolve the issue. He also asked for a written agreement with GDOT to avoid jeopardizing federal funds.

(Note: Subsequent to the meeting, Ms. Everett emailed the following, which included a memo from GDOT State Right of Way Administrator Donald E. Brown.)

Considering that the donation of the Georgia Power property was solicited by ORGA, you must wait until:

- 1) the concept is approved*
- 2) the environmental document is approved by FHWA*
- 3) right of way plans are complete*

The following documents are required in the negotiation file for this parcel for GDOT to certify the right of way. Ronnie Brantley can assist you with following federal guidelines when you get to this point in the process.

Required Documents for a Donation:

Waiver Letter

Appraisal by DOT-approved appraiser

Appraisal must be submitted to DOT for review by GDOT Review Appraiser

Option

Availability of Incidental Payments Letter

Offer Letter

D. Woodruff Grant Travel – Dr. Langston has submitted the initial letter requesting grant funds from the Woodruff Foundation’s next grant cycle to Mr. P. Russell Hardin. Chairman Boylan suggested that several ORGA board members and foundation members join him in meeting with Mr. Hardin sometime in June. Mr. Edwards, Mr. Bentley and Dr. Langston volunteered to participate, and Dr. Langston will coordinate the trip/visit to include members of the foundation as well.

E. DNR Grants Status – Dr. Langston reported that the 2006 Grant funds were approved (\$100,000); however, the 2004 grant (also \$100,000) is still in question in light of the bidding procedure. Next week, Chairman Boylan will once again discuss the situation with Noel Holcomb.

F. Financial Spreadsheet Update – Dr. Langston presented the monthly financial spreadsheet update, reporting that funds for Phase II are presently short by approximately \$97,547.32. Chairman Boylan complimented Dr. Langston for creating and maintaining an up-to-date financial spreadsheet for the board to review each month.

V. New Business

A. Election of Officers

Mr. Edwards made a motion to retain the present slate of officers for another term (Chairman, Peter Boylan; Vice-Chairman, Richard Bentley, Treasurer, Troy Clymer). Mr. Nelson seconded the motion which was unanimously approved. Mr. Edwards and Mr. Nelson each expressed appreciation for Chairman Boylan's leadership, experience, and expertise in guiding the Greenway Authority.

B. Maintenance Committee - Mr. Nelson noted that the success of the Opening will set the stage for the Greenway’s future. He asked if the city can assume responsibility for trash pick-up. Mr. Bentley indicated that the city will do all it can. It was also suggested that the board seek support/involvement for maintenance from Recreation Director Bill McNair. Mr. Williams agreed that the county and the city should share responsibility for

Greenway maintenance. Mr. Nelson, Mr. Williams and Mr. Bentley will meet to discuss specifics.

(Note: Subsequent to the meeting, Ms. Everett emailed the following:)

Regarding any maintenance within DOT right of way underneath the river bridge: Heather has received an agreement from DOT to be processed stating that ORGA will be responsible to maintain the facilities that were constructed under Project CSMSL-0006-00 (690) on DOT right of way. This would include the upkeep of the parking area and lighting that falls within the right of way, as well as any mowing and trimming around the parking lot.

If the bridge structure becomes covered in graffiti, please contact Bryan Haines. ORGA should not attempt to remove graffiti due to the possibility of damage to the bridge and the possibility of someone becoming hurt on DOT right of way performing a task without a permit.

For all other maintenance activities not covered in the first paragraph (such as additional mowing, herbicide, trimming, grading, placement of riprap, etc.), Mr. Haines requests that he be contacted first and that no activities be performed without DOT supervision.

Contact: Bryan Haines (478) 445-5130

Dr. Langston reported signing a contract with Quinn Pest Control regarding fire ant eradication. She also reported communicating with SDS regarding the placement of a dumpster on the site. This would require a poured concrete pad. Mr. Nelson cautioned placing a dumpster on the property due to potential abuse by the public. Chairman Boylan asked that the city/county collect trash on a weekly basis, rather than contracting with SDS for a dumpster. Trash containers will be placed at the fishing platforms and around the trails. It was proposed that GMC cadets collect trash during the week and the city/county will do so after the weekend.

Dr. Langston reported that she has had requests for porta-potties and has secured the lease of two, to be cleaned twice a week for \$75/month. The board agreed to try this on a month-to-month basis.

C. Park hours - Mr. Edwards led a discussion about park hours by questioning the authority's responsibility to the public in terms of keeping boat ramps open 24/7, and whether or not the park should be opened after dark. Chairman Boylan noted that the authority's official position is that walking trails are closed thirty minutes after sunset and opened thirty minutes before sunrise. It was suggested that a disclaimer be issued regarding after dark use of the trails.

Chairman Boylan noted that signage for Phase II needs to be determined and asked that this be included as an agenda item for the June Board meeting.

D. ORGF Update - Ms. Shannon New shared the new Greenway logo and she announced four resignations as well as the following new officers for the ORGF Board: William Thompson, President; Frank Chambers, First Vice-President; Shannon New, Second Vice-President; and Sally Holmes, Secretary. She also reported that the Milledgeville Mainstreet office has a window display for the Greenway, and that banners and bumper stickers have been ordered.

VI. The next ORGA Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, June 3, 2008 at 1:30 PM** in the conference room of the Old Capital Building.

*(Note: Prior to June 3rd, the meeting date was changed to **Tuesday, June 24, 2008.**)*

VII. **Adjournment** – The meeting adjourned at 3:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherrill Jones, Recorder