

Oconee River Greenway Authority

MINUTES

29 May 2007

Members Present: Peter Boylan, Chairman, Richard Bentley Bo Edwards, Dennis Holder, Lee Moon, Marion Nelson, Bubba Williams

Others Present: Ed Moore – GMC
Jeff Gray – GMC
Janet Anderson – ORGF
Vonda Everette – GDOT
Kraig Collins - GDOT
Heather Langston – ORGA Director
Sherrill Jones – Recorder

Not Present: Greg Strenkowski

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

I. Call to Order – At approximately 1:30 PM, Chairman Boylan called the 29 May 2007 meeting of the Oconee River Greenway Authority (ORGA) to order and welcomed all who were present.

II. Approval of Minutes for 24 April 2007 – After making a correction to the 24 April 2007 Minutes (Section IV. D. 2. last sentence....change ORGA to ORGF), Mr. Bentley made a motion, that was seconded by Mr. Nelson, to approve the Minutes. The motion to approve was unanimously accepted.

III. Treasurer's Report – In the absence of the treasurer, Director Langston reported for the period ending 30 April 2007, a checking balance of \$63,399.59.

Chairman Boylan reported that the county commission has reduced ORGA's budget request for FY08 from \$45,000 to \$30,000. The city budget currently supports a request for \$35,000. The combined funds will result in a shortfall of \$10,000 for FY08; consequently, the Board will need to figure out how to make up this shortfall. At the suggestion of Mayor Bentley, Chairman Boylan has written a letter to each council member requesting an increase in the city budget request.

IV. Old Business

A. Groundbreaking Ceremony – Chairman Boylan reported that the Groundbreaking Ceremony and Reception on 26 April 2007 exceeded expectations thanks to the efforts of Mrs. Janet Anderson, Director Langston and members of the board. He thanked one and all for making this event a huge success.

B. Update on McMillan Island – Director Langston noted that the issue of whether or not McMillan Island is bordered by a navigable waterway is still in dispute. Her follow-up research on the issue and contact with the Army Corps of Engineers has resulted in the location of an individual with whom to work. She anticipates a timely resolution of the issue.

C. Property Appraisal and Purchase issue

1. Thirumal (Col. Moore) – Col. Moore reported that he is still trying to identify a GDOT approved appraiser for the Thirumal Property. Ms. Everette questioned the need to have an appraisal prior to the completion of an environmental survey. Mr. Edwards responded that this is a DNR Grant requirement. Chairman Boylan expressed the need for expedition in seeking an appropriate appraiser.

2. Garner – Director Langston reported that the Foundation is willing to purchase the Garner property as soon as all necessary requirements are completed. Ms. Anderson noted that Joe Mangum is currently working on survey (environmental) and title details. The current property owners have signed a sale/purchase agreement and have accepted a check for “earnest money” from the Foundation.

D. Update on DNR trail extension – Director Langston referred members to both old and new quotes from Southern Wilderness regarding the Phase II Greenway Trail. She noted that the old proposal was for only half the trail; whereas, the new quote, with four options, covers the entire trail. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that more information is needed before making a decision. Chairman Boylan asked Director Langston to bring all information regarding available funding for the project, as well as a visual aid with pertinent information, to the next board meeting

Col. Moore suggested creating an RFP for all options. Chairman Boylan asked Col. Moore, Mr. Gray, and Director Langston to develop an RFP with a 30-day response time. He also asked that a request permit for construction (45-day) be made at this time. Mr. Edwards volunteered to assist with these tasks.

E. Phase I: Construction Status – Director Langston shared a Power Point presentation detailing current progress of Phase I construction. Mr. Nelson commented that the current statewide burn ban may result in additional expense for the disposal of debris. The Power Point presentation included information regarding the 1940’s-50’s dump site as well as security.

1. 1940’s – 50’s dump site – Director Langston noted that the EPA requires methane testing followed by either covering the area with topsoil (cost approximately \$20,000) or fencing off the area. She also noted that EPA would prohibit a closed building on the site. The present plan includes only a pavilion, which would be allowed. Chairman Boylan asked her to arrange a date/time for board members to physically observe the site.

Chairman Boylan asked Mr. Holder to report on the progress of the Ball's Ferry project. Mr. Holder explained that it is presently on-hold due to recent information regarding the discovery of a previous mineral release on the property. Chairman Boylan asked Mr. Holder to suggest a time for the ORGA Board to visit Ball's Ferry. Mr. Holder suggested a boat trip on the river for both ORGA Board members and members of the legislature in August or September.

2. Security – Director Langston reported that the security gate near the boat ramp has been relocated after someone drove a truck over the gate. City police

have now created a blockade. Col. Moore made the point that construction site security is the responsibility of the contractor, not ORGA.

3. Schedule – Director Langston shared a 16-week printed construction progress chart reflecting current Phase I progress.

F. Phase II Concept Report – Director Langston announced that the Phase II Concept Report has been received and approved. Chairman Boylan expressed appreciation to Ms. Everett for this having been accomplished. Director Langston noted that an Environmental Assessment for Phase II has not been done and that it will cost more than the Phase I assessment due to new GDOT requirements. Chairman Boylan asked Director Langston to work with Ms. Everett regarding the new requirements and to include this as an agenda item for the June Board meeting. Ms. Everett indicated that she will research the environmental issue. Mr. Nelson suggested that an argument could be made for waiving the new requirement based on the fact that Phase II is simply a continuation of a previously approved project; hence, the same person/agency that did the Phase I study could be used for Phase II.

G. Board Member to replace Guy Thompson – Chairman Boylan asked Mr. Holder to recommend someone to replace Guy Thompson on the ORGA Board. Mr. Holder indicated that he will try to identify someone from the Ball’s Ferry Park Association to serve on the ORGA Board. Chairman Boylan will send a letter of appreciation to Mr. Thompson for giving his time and effort to serve on the ORGA Board.

V. New Business

A. Purchase of materials for Phase I from the city – Director Langston reported that she is working with Barry Jarrett from the city to purchase materials for Phase I at a tax free rate.

B. Sewer - Director Langston reported that there are at least four pairs of sewer caps, owned by city, that need to be lowered. Cost for this work is not currently in the project. Mayor Bentley volunteered to inquire about costs and the possibility of the city assuming responsibility.

C. Found county water line – Director Langston reported that water for Phase I could be made available by using a county water line that has been discovered on the property or by pumping water directly from the river. Mr. Bentley suggested a meeting with both the city and county managers to explore various options (use of county line; use of city line; use of a pump). Col. Moore noted that the contract with Southern Wilderness already includes metal piping for water along the trail.

D. Boat ramp closing – Director Langston reported full cooperation with the county (Joan Minter) on the closing of the boat ramp. Mr. Nelson expressed concern regarding the condition of the road to the ramp on Central State Hospital property, noting that ORGA does not want to alienate the local constituency. He urged reasonable access to the Hancock Street ramp. Board members supported Director

Langston's suggestion of posting a sign to direct visitors to the location of alternate boat ramp(s).

E. Oconee River Greenway Foundation Update – Ms. Anderson reported that most ORGF funds are not designated for specific projects. She also reported that Joe Mangum had to resign from the ORGF Board, as Georgia Bar Association guidelines will not allow him to work on ORGF related survey/contracts, etc. while serving on the board. In addition, she reported that David Grant and William Thompson are chairing a fall fundraiser, featuring autographed sports memorabilia, to be held at 119 Chops. The Foundation is also working to create and distribute of a quarterly newsletter as well as a single website for both the Foundation and the Authority.

- VI. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 26, 2007 at 1:30 PM in the conference room of the Old Capital Building.**
- VII. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherrill Jones, Recorder