

Oconee River Greenway Authority

MINUTES

26 June 2007

Members Present: Peter Boylan, Chairman: Richard Bentley,
Bo Edwards, Lee Moon, Marion Nelson

Others Present: Jeff Gray – GMC
Vonda Everette – GDOT
Kraig Collins – GDOT
Michael Taylor - GDOT
Heather Langston – ORGA Director (present via speaker phone)
Sherrill Jones – Recorder

Not Present: Dennis Holder, Greg Strenkowski, Bubba Williams

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

I. Call to Order – At approximately 1:30 PM, Chairman Boylan called the 26 June 2007 meeting of the Oconee River Greenway Authority (ORGA) to order and welcomed all who were present.

II. Approval of Minutes for 29 May 2007 – The 29 May 2007 minutes were tabled in light of the fact that board members had not received them for review prior to the meeting. A motion to approve will be made at the July Board Meeting.

III. Treasurer's Report – No report.

IV. Old Business

A. Phase I: Construction Status – Director Langston reported that Southern Wilderness has completed the installation of culverts where the trail intersects the sewer easement, grading of the parking lot, and the cleaning of debris from the old dump site have been completed. In addition, work on the trail section leading to the trail entrance has commenced. Dr. Langston also announced that she will be attending the next meeting of the County Commission to make a formal plea for financial assistance to cover the cost for soil to cover the dump site.

Mr. Nelson expressed appreciation for Jack Graham's assistance in organizing city crews to load debris and he also commended Cecile Ogden for transporting the debris at no cost to ORGA.

Director Langston also reported that there has been no recent vandalism at the construction site and that she will ask Southern Wilderness to relocate materials so that the boat ramp may be open to the public on the 4th of July. She will assume responsibility for appropriate publicity regarding the availability of the boat ramp.

B. Update on McMillan Island – Director Langston reported that after having made contact with the Corps of Engineers regarding the navigable waterway issue related to McMillan Island, she was unsuccessful in getting them to change their position. She indicated the Corps maintains this area is a Section 10 waterway and that the issue is non-negotiable; therefore, the paperwork necessary for building a bridge as well as the design

for a bridge will need to be completed. Mr. Nelson expressed a desire to make another plea to the Corps. Director Langston will provide the contact information for Mr. Nelson to request an on-site visit from the Corps. Those present supported Mr. Nelson's request to make another plea.

C. Vote on DNR Trail Extension – Current funding for the DNR Trail Extension totals \$154,000 (\$100,000 DNR grant + \$54,000 SPLOST). Board members reviewed the following four options presented at the May Board Meeting:

- Option I – 10' Wide Paved Concrete Trail at \$219,990
- Option II – 8' Wide Paved Concrete at \$195,540
- Option III – GAB Compacted Gravel Trail at \$108,450
- Option IV - Natural Graded Trail at \$92,050

Chairman Boylan pointed out that the DNR grant requires a 50% match; therefore, he recommended that the board accept an option which would utilize the full grant amount of \$100,000. This would require additional funding of approximately \$42,000. He further stated that ORGA has sufficient funds for both this and the McMillan Island project; however, exactly how much is available is currently not clear. He asked Director Langston to prepare a full financial report for the board to review and discuss at the July Board Meeting.

Director Langston noted that building the trail on McMillan Island would be an ideal Boy Scout project; consequently, the cost for this would be minimal.

Mr. Nelson made a motion to approve Option II (8' Wide Paved Concrete Trail) at a cost of \$195,540. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bentley and unanimously approved.

D. Property Appraisal and Purchase Issues

1. Thirumal – Director Langston reported that an appropriate appraiser has been identified; therefore, an appraisal for the Thirumal property will be forthcoming.

2. Garner – Director Langston noted that ORGA is waiting on approval from GDOT to purchase the Garner property. Ms. Everette indicated that she is researching whether or not GDOT will permit the Foundation (ORGF) to make the land purchase before the completion of an environmental survey. She anticipates a response before the next Board Meeting.

E. Phase II Ecology Report – Ms. Everette reported that she had researched the pre-qualification requirements for the consulting group that completed ...the previous group has been denied approval to do the report due to incomplete application...Heather has spoken to group and they are suppose to be reapplying...Heather will check with TRC to determine status of their application to be approved.

F. Board Member to Replace Guy Thompson – To date, Director Langston has not received a recommendation from Dennis Holder. Mr. Nelson volunteered to contact Mr. Holder so that a recommendation may be made at the July Board Meeting.

G. Sewer – Mr. Bentley reported that city water/sewer department has determined the cost (\$17,000+) of lowering the sewer caps; however, the FY08 City Budget does not include this line item. The city will explore the possibility of camouflaging sewer caps and will provide the necessary maintenance work to repair broken sewers, thus eliminating offensive odors. Following a brief discussion regarding maintenance costs versus cost of lowering the caps of the leaking sewers, Mr. Bentley agreed to work with the city water/sewer department to determine which approach would be more cost effective.

Chairman Boylan subsequently organized a walk-through of the construction site for Wednesday, June 27, from 9:00-11:00 AM. Those planning to participate will meet in the Zell Miller Hall parking lot at 9 AM.

H. Water Line – Director Langston reported that Southern Wilderness has started work on the waterline; however, further progress is pending permission to not have a fire hydrant at the ramp. Mr. Bentley stated that he believed, from city's perspective, that there is no need to install a hydrant as there is already an existing hydrant on the road. Mr. Nelson suggested deleting the fire hydrant at the boat ramp from the current plan, unless, of course, there is some compelling reason.

Details of how the water line will be put in along the trail will be discussed at the July Board Meeting.

I. Finances – Director Langston has now received financial materials from Mr. Strenskoski and will prepare a detailed financial report, outlining available funds (federal, SPLOST, Foundation, etc.) and indicating, if applicable, projects for which funds have been earmarked, at the July Board Meeting.

Mr. Strenkowski has informed Director Langston that he can no longer serve on the ORGA Board, however, he is recommending that Troy Clymer, Milledgeville District Forester, be approved to replace him. Chairman Boylan asked Director Langston to determine whether or not Mr. Clymer would be willing to assume the responsibility of serving as treasurer for the Board.

J. GA Power – Chairman Boylan noted that Southern Wilderness and Georgia Power will need to coordinate the installation of lights along the trail. There will be follow-up discussion at the July Board meeting to make sure this aspect of the project is on track.

V. New Business

A. 2006 DNR Grant Application – Director Langston reported that approval for this grant application is pending the city of Milledgeville's granting right-of-way for construction of a trail over the sewer easement. Mr. Bentley reported that he has drafted letter granting approval; however, the letter is currently under review by the city attorney. Once the city attorney determines there are no legal concerns, the letter will be submitted.

B. July 4th Boat Ramp Closing - *See Section IV.A. above.* It is the desire of ORGA to have the boat ramp OPEN on the 4th, and Director Langston will see that an appropriate public service announcement is broadcast.

C. Oconee River Greenway Foundation Update – The ORGF Sports Memorabilia Auction (Fall Fundraiser) has been scheduled for Monday, October 1, 2007 at 119 Chops.

D. Dirt for Old Dump Site - *See Section IV.A. above.* Director Langston is on the Agenda for the next meeting of the County Commission to plea this case. Chairman Boylan suggested that she fully inform Bubba Williams of the situation prior to said meeting, and subsequently inform ORGA Board members if their presence at the Commission meeting is needed.

VI. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 31, 2007 at 1:30 PM in the conference room of the Old Capital Building.

VII. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 2:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherrill Jones, Recorder