

Oconee River Greenway Authority

MINUTES

31 August 2010

Members Present: Peter Boylan, Chairman; Richard Bentley, Bo Edwards, Dennis Holder, Eric Mosley, Marion Nelson, Bubba Williams

Others Present: Heather Langston – ORGA Executive Director
Vonda Everett – GDOT
Kraig Collins - GDOT
Aubrey Nelson - Guest
Sherrill Jones - Recorder

Not Present: Joe Yeager

Location: President's Conference Room in the Old Capital Building.

I. Call to Order – At approximately 1:38 PM, Chairman Boylan called the 31 August 2010 meeting of the Oconee River Greenway Authority (ORGA) to order.

II. Approval of 27 April 2010 Minutes - After a review of the 27 April 2010 Minutes, Chairman Boylan directed attention to the following items:

- Page 2, Item VI.A.3.c. Greene Street – Chairman Boylan inquired whether or not GDOT had given written approval for add alternates applicable to Greene Street. Dr. Langston reported that she has received verbal, not written approval. This led to additional discussion of the issue, with Ms. Everett and Mr. Collins indicating that GDOT would not have a problem with the placement of gravel from the present end of Greene Street to the Greenway Entrance off Greene Street; however, this cannot be done as an add alternate to the existing concept for Phase II. Dr. Langston was asked to discuss with the city manager and the city engineer the idea of ORGA providing up to \$100,000 to put in a temporary entrance to the Greenway from Greene Street. Mr. Nelson noted that this particular area is plagued by soil run-off and he feels preparation for an entrance will require an exorbitant amount of engineering work, exceeding available funding. At this point, the issue was tabled.
- Page 2, Item IV.A.4. – Line of Credit – Dr. Langston will contact Century Bank & Trust before the September meeting.
- Page 2, Item IV.D. last paragraph. – Chairman Boylan asked Dr. Langston to work on seeking funds from both the Grassman and Woodruff Foundations.
- Page 3 – Item IV.E.1. – Boulders Under Bridge – Mr. Nelson reported that boulders have been placed in the areas identified.
- Page 3 – Item IV.E.2. – Middle Overlook – Dr. Langston reported that weather conditions have prevented the removal of the middle overlook; however, she anticipates it will be done reasonably soon.
- Page 3 – Item V.B. FY2011 Budget – Dr. Langston met with City Manager Barry Jarrett and learned that the ORGA budget will be cut by 11%. Mayor Bentley commented that he understood there was a 10% cut. Chairman Boylan asked Dr. Langston and Mr. Bentley to determine whether the cut is 10% or 11%.

Mr. Bentley made a motion, that was seconded by Mr. Nelson, to approve the April Minutes. The motion to approve was unanimously accepted.

Members were also provided the unofficial meeting notes from 29 June 2010. Chairman Boylan noted that he did not write a letter stressing the importance of attending board meetings (see page 1, Item I., first bullet); however, attendance at today's meeting indicates the message was apparently sent and received by some other means.

Chairman Boylan directed attention to the third bullet under Item I and asked the board to respond. Mr. Williams made a motion to rewrite Dr. Langston's contract to include an additional week of vacation in lieu of no pay raise. Mr. Nelson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

- III. Treasurer's Report** – Mr. Mosley reported a total of \$34,533.13 in the Century Bank & Trust account, a current net income balance of negative \$6,184.51 and a total liabilities & equity balance of \$1,549,398.07. He noted that the net income balance will be back in the positive after today's deposit of checks from both the city and county. He also noted that the cost of the McMillan Island boardwalk is a new line item on the balance sheet, and that the annual audit for ORGA may be moved from October to September. Mr. Nelson made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Bentley, to approve the treasurer's report.

IV. Old Business:

A. ROW – Dr. Langston summarized the current ROW battle by stating that for tax reasons Georgia Power will donate the property in its entirety to the Foundation. The Foundation will then donate the 3.778 acres needed for ROW; however, terms for an agreement have not been reached in that Georgia Power originally requested that ORGA indemnify them. The Attorney General's office subsequently refused this request. Georgia Power has now imposed conditions and restrictions, which include installing sirens even though they refused to install sirens as it is against their policy. **Dr. Langston will continue negotiating with Georgia Power on the terms of the warranty deed as this is blocking Phase II progress.** She anticipated hearing from Grey Tyson of GP later today.

B. Green Street – Mr. Bentley reported that the Greene Street Extension is moving slower than anticipated. Ms. Everett reported that due to funding issues the project will not be let until July 2011. There are no ROW issues with this project.

C. McMillan Island Connection Trail Status – Dr. Langston presented a slideshow of the completed McMillan Island Connection and the platform overlooking the river, noting that some fencing beneath the platform is needed.

Chairman Boylan asked about weeds, grass, kudzu, and privet along the trail. Mr. Moseley stated that he would like to see the kudzu and privet removed. Mr. Nelson reported that the county has discontinued its inmate detail; consequently, that resource for trail maintenance is no longer available. He has talked to personnel at the county jail and they will work with him on an as-needed basis to provide inmate work details. Chairman Boylan volunteered cadets to take on trail maintenance on a regular basis. Mr. Williams suggested investigating the use of state parolee details. **Chairman Boylan asked Mr. Nelson and Mr. Williams to investigate further and work together to coordinate these various groups.**

D. Wilkinson County Property – Dr. Langston reported that she met with the Lockerly Board of Trustees in July to ask for the river track of property in Wilkinson County. The Lockerly Board will meet again in October to consider donating the property to Lockerly.

E. Meeting with Georgia Power Regarding Generation of Electricity – Dr. Langston scheduled a meeting with Greg Brown, Georgia Power's Manager of Operations; however, when she arrived she was greeted by Herbie Johnson who informed her that Georgia Power will not put in a siren near the bridge as they do not want to assume liability. He further indicated that if ORGA wants to raise a fuss about the fluctuation of water flow then Georgia Power would most likely reconsider donating the property needed for the ROW. It was agreed that signage warning the public of river hazards would have to suffice.

F. Map of Oconee River – Dennis Holder brought copies of an updated map of the Oconee River, outlining 15 points of interest along the river from Baldwin to Wilkinson County. Mr. Edwards suggested adding the 100-acre Berry Farm near Southside School to the map. Chairman Boylan expressed appreciation to Mr. Holder for his work on this project.

V. New Business

A. Bidding for Construction of Phase II – Dr. Langston reported that once bid documents are approved by GDOT, ORGA could allow GSFIC to take over and let bids. She pointed out that by doing so, ORGA would be required to go with the lowest, reliable bidder. There would be no cost to ORGA for using GSFIC. After considerable discussion, Chairman Boylan recommended going with GSFIC, and those present gave approval. GDOT will give approval to let bids once the Georgia Power property is donated for the ROW.

B. Trees for the LRC – Mr. Mosley reported the he met with Mr. Gray and Dr. Langston regarding the acquisition of trees to plant along the periphery of GMC's Leadership Reaction Course (LRC). He determined that 50 trees would be needed to hide the course from the Greenway and recommends planting 2-inch caliber trees such as river birch, red maple, and black gum, that will sustain flooding. Trees this size will cost \$55 to \$75 per tree. The going rate to contract the planting of trees is between \$50 and 75. He recommends purchasing from a certified tree farm and having them plant the trees. The total cost would be approximately \$5,000. Dr. Langston asked permission to move ahead with this project. Mr. Nelson and Mr. Edwards questioned doing this and asked for the opportunity to view the area with Mr. Moseley before the board gave approval; therefore, the recommendation was tabled.

C. TE-projects – Ms. Everett reported that applications for TE-projects may be submitted between October 15 and December 15. This grant application, to be approved by the state transportation board, can be used for pedestrian or bike trails and requires an 18/20 match. Normally, the planning for these projects is simpler than for that of other federal grants and the regional commission can do the concept paper as well as the required environmental surveys. Grant application workshops will be held in early October. She advised checking the GDOT website for additional information. Dr.

Langston inquired if the amphitheater, a bridge across fishing creek and a trail to the end of the greenway project could be funded with this grant. Ms. Everett noted that TE-projects are generally under \$100,000; therefore, she advised against including all these projects in one application. Separate applications for each entity could be submitted.

D. New Georgia Recreational Trails Grant - Dr. Langston reported that the next DNR grant opportunity will also be in October. She asked for permission to submit a grant application to DNR for the bridge across Fishing Creek and to submit a TE grant application for trails beyond the bridge. Mr. Moseley inquired about the possibility of connecting trails to the Selma Erwin nature area. Mr. Edwards suggested forming a committee of Edwards, Nelson, and Moseley to assist Dr. Langston in determining priorities for these various grants. Those present supported this suggestion.

E. Schedule next meeting – The next ORGA meeting is scheduled for 28 September 2010 at 1:30 PM in the President's Conference Room at the Old State Capital.

VI. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 3:13 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherrill Jones, Recorder