



MINUTES CONSERVATION BANK BOARD

March 2, 2021

Oconee County Administrative Offices, Council Chambers
415 S. Pine Street, Walhalla, SC 29691

MEMBERS

Mr. Andrew Smith, Chair, District II
Ms. Emily Hitchcock, Vice Chairman, At Large
Mr. Ryan Keese, Secretary, District, III
Ms. Laura Havran, Treasurer, District I

Nicholas Gambrell, District IV
VACANT, District V
Mr. Charles VanOver, At Large
Ms. Katie D. Smith, Staff Liaison

The Oconee County Conservation Bank Board [OCCB] met at 9:00 a.m. in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all members present [except Mr. Gambrell] and Katie D. Smith, Clerk to Council acting as staff liaison.

Press: Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [www.oconeesc.com/council]. In addition, it was made available [*upon request*] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

No members of the media were present.

Call to Order

Mr. Smith called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Havran made a motion, seconded by Mr. Keese, approved 5 – 0, to approve the minutes from February 9, 2021 meeting as presented.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Havran read the Treasurer's Reports for Community First Bank and the Local Government Investment Pool [State Pool] and noted they are accurate as presented. She further noted the balances on the reports are as follows:

Community First Bank for January 2021 is \$4,420.00;

Local Government Investment Pool [State Pool] for January 2021 is \$344,292.41.

Mr. Keese made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hitchcock, approved 5 – 0, to accept as presented the Treasurer's Report for both Community First Bank and the Local Government Investment Pool [State Pool] for January 2021.

Fundraising & Public Relations Reports

Mr. Smith noted at the previous meeting he spoke about contacting Senator Alexander's office but has not received a response. He noted he made contact with Ms. Amanda Brock, County Administrator, and would be making contact with the Grants Writer for Oconee County regarding writing grant proposals for OCCB.

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Ms. Havran noted she has completed the PowerPoint presentation and dispersed to Mr. Keese and Mr. Smith. She noted she had feedback from one member who stated the presentation was a bit too long. She noted it would be easier to edit the presentation with taking out slides that is not needed rather than trying to add slides. She further noted she submitted an article to the Scuttlebutt regarding the OCCB.

Mr. Keese asked Ms. Havran to send him the article she submitted. He noted he would like to speak with a journalist at the newspaper.

Discussion Items

Lengthy discussion followed regarding the topics indicated below, with various opinions expressed, to include but not limited to:

Discussion and/or action regarding revised OCCB forms

Mr. Smith noted the revised OCCB forms include Application for Funding, Criteria Worksheet, Evaluation Scoresheet, 2-404 Findings, Grant Procedures Policy 0003, and Grant Agreement. He noted the goal is to approve these forms.

The following motions reference the revised Oconee County Conservation Bank Board [OCCB] forms with the changes being discussed.

OCCB Application for Funding

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Havran, to approve the OCCB Application for Funding, v4 as presented.

Changes to the form include to remove the “o” from the footer at the bottom of the page, add a line above signature of applicant and date on page 4, and add a line above signature of landowner and date on page 5.

Regarding the previous motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Havran, it was approved 5 – 0, to approve the OCCB Application for Funding, v4 with the additions as noted above.

OCCB Criteria Worksheet

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Havran, to approve the OCCB Criteria Worksheet, v3 as presented.

Changes to the form include to bold the numbers under Section II on page 1 and remove the “h” from the footer at the bottom of the page.

Regarding the previous motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Havran, it was approved 5 – 0, to approve the OCCB Criteria Worksheet, v3 with the additions as noted above.

OCCB Evaluation Scoresheet

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hitchcock, to approve the OCCB Evaluation Scoresheet, v3 as presented.

Change to the form includes to remove “f” from the footer at the bottom of the page.

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Regarding the previous motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Hitchcock, it was approved 5 – 0, to approve the OCCB Evaluation Scoresheet with the addition noted above.

OCCB Sec. 2-404(b)(4) Findings

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Havran, to approve the OCCB Sec. 2.-404 (b)(4) Findings, v2 as presented.

Change to the form include to remove “Template” from the footer at the bottom of the page.

Regarding the previous motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Havran, it was approved 5 – 0, to approve the OCCB Sec. 2.-404 (b)(4) Findings, v2 with the addition noted above.

OCCB Grant Procedures, Policy 0003

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Havran, to approve the OCCB Grant Procedures, Policy 0003 as presented.

Changes to the form include change page numbering from 6 to 7, remove “draft 1.06” at the top of the page, add effective date of March 2, 2021, remove “Template” after Section 404 Findings under Attachments, and remove the space on Section 5, subsection b on page 1.

Regarding the previous motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Havran, it was approved 5 – 0, to approve the OCCB Grant Procedures, Policy 0003 with the additions noted above.

OCCB Grant Agreement

Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Havran, to approve the OCCB Grant Agreement as presented.

Lengthy discussion continued to include:

- Revised ordinance requires a grant agreement
- Naturaland Trust is the only applicant that takes fee simple titles to properties
- Upstate Forever and Oconee Soil & Water Conservation District puts conservation easements on property; holds and enforces easements
- Added a signature page at the end of the grant agreement
- Not a provision for subordination included; needs to be addressed in the grant agreement and in the policy
- Postpone approving grant agreement until the April meeting

Regarding the previous motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Havran, the motion **failed** 0 – 5, to approve the OCCB Grant Agreement as presented.

Discussion and/or action regarding Policy 0003 and Grant Agreement

Ms. Hitchcock made a motion, seconded by Mr. Smith, to request the Information Technology staff add Policy 0003 and all attachments, except the Grant Agreement, on the website as soon as possible so that applicants will have it available for the April 1st grant cycle, and in support that the website be revised as set forth in the document entitled “Proposed Revisions to OCCB Website”.

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Discussion continued to include:

- Ms. Hitchcock addressed the Board utilizing a handout entitled “Proposed Revisions to OCCB Website” [copy filed with backup materials]
- Queried the Clerk to Council if an item can be added to the agenda; Clerk sent Section 30-4-80 “Notice of meetings in public bodies”
- Primary procedural aspects are that two items have to be met; approved by two-thirds of the Board and has to be either emergency or exigent circumstances to allow to take action that is not on the agenda
- Exigent means requiring immediate attention or remedy
- Clerk to Council read from Freedom of Information Act [FIOA], Section 30-4-80, “Notice of meetings in public bodies”
- Did not need to amend the agenda because the discussion falls within the topic that was properly noticed in the agenda

Regarding the previous motion made by Ms. Hitchcock, seconded by Mr. Smith, it was approved 5 – 0, to request the Information Technology staff to add Policy 0003 and all attachments, except the Grant Agreement, on the website as soon as possible so that applicants will have it available for the April 1st grant cycle, and in support that the website be revised as set forth in the document entitled “Proposed Revisions to OCCB Website”.

Ms. Havran noted that once the Clerk to Council gets the documents finalized for the website, she requested that the Clerk email the documents to the Board members and email the eligible partners the finalized documents as well.

Ms. Havran made a motion, seconded Mr. Smith, approved 5 – 0, to direct the Clerk to Council to edit all the documents and, once finalized, send the final revisions to the Board members as well as to all applicants.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at the Oconee County Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC 29691.

Adjourn:

Mr. Keese made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Katie D. Smith
Clerk to Council & Staff Liaison

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