

**MINUTES
HERITAGE TRUST ADVISORY BOARD
AUGUST 7, 2008
BELFAST PLANTATION HOUSE
NEWBERRY COUNTY**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Campbell Coxe (Chair)
Julia Krebs
Beth Grace
Sonny King
Jake Rasor
Rodger Stroup
Fritz Hamer (for William Calloway)
States Clawson (for Joe Taylor)
Breck Carmichael (for Mike McShane)
Joel Felder (for Gene Kodama)

OTHERS PRESENT

Barry Beasley
Ken Prosser
Kay Daniels
Julie Holling
Herrick Brown
Kathy Boyle
Bert Pittman
Tim Ivey
Buddy Baker
Emily Cope
Marvin Davant
Raleigh West
Slade Gleaton
Harry Shealy

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Frampton
Henry Fair (Vice Chair)
Irvin Pitts (for Chad Prosser)
Steve de Kozlowski (Interim)

Call to Order

Campbell Coxe called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, and requested they introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Coxe asked if there were any changes to the minutes from the May 1, 2008 meeting of the Heritage Trust Advisory Board (HTAB). There were none and a motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Comments from the Director

Barry Beasley updated members on the Palmetto Fort conservation easement and stated the cultural portion had been extinguished due to the terms of the easement. He added the department is still in discussions regarding continued protection of the wetland areas.

Dr. Beasley noted that the Lighthouse Inlet acquisition should be completed after final amendments to the management plan are reviewed and approved by all parties.

Regarding Poinsett Bridge, Dr. Beasley stated that work is moving forward with plans to construct a parking area. He noted that Sean Taylor recently monitored work by an archaeological firm hired to examine the foundation of the bridge and said information from the study will be useful in future plans for bridge stabilization, erosion control, and possible bridge reconstruction.

Overview of Belfast House

Rodger Stroup stated the Belfast house was built in 1785 by John Simpson, who came to the United States from Ireland. He described the features of the house and said four generations of the Simpson family have occupied it, including a lieutenant governor who later became a Supreme Court justice. Dr. Stroup stated the house was sold to Champion Paper Company in the 1940's. He said members of his staff will examine the house and conduct further investigations in the next few weeks.

Update on the SC Conservation Bank

Marvin Davant updated members on recent activities by the Conservation Bank. Since its inception four years ago, he stated that \$80 million has been used to protect 134 properties comprising 152,700 acres. Regarding funding, Mr. Davant stated revenue was down 26 percent this year, and said their enabling legislation mandates that if more than half of state agencies endure a budget cut, funding will for the Conservation Bank will end. He thanked board members and staff for their work in conservation.

Cowasee Basin

Buddy Baker gave a presentation on the Cowasee Basin, a focus area in which participants are interested in protecting river systems and wetland areas along the Congaree, Wateree and Santee Rivers. He said the primary area of interest comprises 215,000 acres and contains a tremendous amount of cultural history and wildlife habitat. Mr. Baker said the area also has significant bird habitat with a high density of songbirds. To date, he said 19 conservations easements have been donated protecting approximately 19,000 acres.

2007 Annual Report and Update on Active Projects

Ken Prosser reviewed the annual report and stated that during the 2007 calendar year, eight different properties comprising 21,474 acres were acquired at a total cost of \$41,293,577. He noted that total Heritage Trust funds expended on property acquisitions for the year was \$9.2 million, and administrative and preserve management costs totaled \$1.4 million.

Budget Overview and Revenue Projections for FY 09

Mr. Prosser reported that the current balance in the Heritage Land Trust Fund was \$12.9 million. He stated that approved operational expenditures for the year were \$2.2 million, and current approved project commitments were \$2.4 million. Mr. Prosser noted that pending project commitments totaled \$4.5 million, and remaining funds after deductions for all expenditures and commitments was \$3.6 million.

Botany Bay: Review and Discussion as Potential Heritage Trust Preserve

Breck Carmichael reviewed the history of the property and stated that Botany Bay opened to the public on July 1, 2008. He said a full-time manager has been hired and they are in the process of hiring a part-time assistant. Mr. Carmichael explained the significance of Botany Bay and proposed dedicating it as a heritage preserve. A motion was made to dedicate Botany Bay as a heritage preserve. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Executive Session

HTAB entered Executive Session to discuss contractual issues.

Return to Regular Session

HTAB returned from Executive Session and a motion was made to approve an acquisition project in Barnwell County. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

A motion was made for staff to explore a potential acquisition project in Berkeley County. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

A motion was made to approve an acquisition project in Newberry and Laurens County. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

A motion was made for staff to investigate and report to the board at the next meeting which portions of the Woodbury, Marsh, Hamilton Ridge, and Newberry/Laurens County properties are suitable for dedication as a heritage preserve. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

A motion was made to approve the Heritage Land Trust Fund budget, including additional funds for legal expenditures. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Other Business

The next HTAB meeting will be held November 5-6, 2008, near Botany Bay in Charleston County.

Adjournment

No further business was brought before HTAB and the meeting was adjourned.

/k