

Land, Water, & Conservation Division: Advisory Committee Minutes
5 Geology Road
Columbia, SC 29203
April 3, 2023

Present:

Larry Nates
Patricia Hartung

Tom Garrison
Webb Smathers

Jim McLeod
William Simpson

DNR Exec & Staff:

Brooke Myres
Catherine Hart
Jennifer Morris
Jessie Egan

John Hayes
Jordan Baker
Ken Rentiers
Robbert Morrow

Scott Howard
Susan Porter
Tyler Brown

Call to Order/Welcome: The April 3, 2024, meeting was called to order by **Mr. Simpson**, who welcomed and thanked all for attending.

Approval of the minutes from January 3, 2024. Motion made by Mr. McLeod, 2nd by Ms. Hartung; – no further discussion – all in favor and none opposed. Motion passed.

Following the invocation and approval of minutes, Ken Rentiers provided a Deputy Director's report.

Deputy Director's Report; Ken Rentiers:

Mr. Rentiers gave the committee an update on the Land, Water, and Conservation Division (LWCD). He noted that the LWCD February Monthly Report was included in their packets. In this report, Mr. Rentiers pointed out some of the highlights, which included Climatology has published a drought response plan to help counties throughout the state. GIS is working on coastal projects to examine sealines on the coast further. Heritage Preserve celebrated its 50th anniversary; this included a proclamation from the Governor. Cultural is continuing their survey of Snows Island. Hydrology is preparing for its move and making progress with the River Basin Council meetings in hopes of being done by the end of the fiscal year. Lastly, the new SCDNR building is almost finished. They hope to move in by November of this year.

Executive Session:

Motion was made for the LWC Advisory Committee to enter Executive Session by Ms. Hartung, 2nd by Mr. Nates; – no further discussion – all in favor and none opposed. Motion passed.

Motion was made for the LWC Advisory Committee to return to regular session by Mr. McLeod, 2nd motion by Ms. Hartung; – no further discussion – all in favor and none opposed. Motion passed.

With a quorum present, the LWC Advisory Committee proceeded with commissioner appointments. The appointment list was distributed.

Conservation District Commissioner Appointments:

Ken Rentiers: There are six total. One new appointments: Fred Gannt, III in Calhoun County. Four reappointments: Sabie D. Carthcart, Jr in Fairfield County, English Warren Dixon in Horry County, and Jefferson B. Laney and James Kenneth Mullis, Jr in Richland County. One Commissioner Emeritus: Charles Coleman, III in Fairfield County.

Chair: Any questions about appointments? No comment was made.

Approval of New Appointments. Motion was made by Mr. McLeod, 2nd by Mr. Garrison; – no further discussion – all in favor and none opposed. Motion passed.

Approval of Reappointments. Motion was made by Mr. McLeod, 2nd by Mr. Nates; – no further discussion – all in favor and none opposed. Motion passed.

Approval of Commissioner Emeritus. Motion was made by Mr. McLeod, 2nd by Ms. Hartung; – no further discussion – all in favor and none opposed. Motion passed.

Reports:

Tyler Brown-

He thanked the committee and Mr. Rentiers for their continued support of the Conservation Districts. Mr. Brown introduced his staff to the committee; this included Lowstate District Coordinator; Jennifer Morris, Upstate District Coordinator; Jessie Egan, Watershed District Coordinator; John Hayes, Field Operations & Program Development Manager; Brooke Myres, and Administrative Assistant; Jordan Baker. Mr. Brown praised his team for their dedication and hard work. Mr. Brown informed the board of Mr. Hayes's work; he has rebuilt the Watershed District communication within the districts and looks forward to seeing how the Watershed Districts grow. In January, staff helped host the partnership conference of the South Carolina Association of Conservation Districts (SCACD). Attendance for this conference hit a new record of over 200 attendees. At this conference, new positions for the SCACD Board were announced: President; Ben Setzler, Vice President; Kevin Yon, Treasurer; Mike Stewart, Secretary; Beth White. SCACD has also hired its new Executive Director, Ann-Lamar Tuten. Mr. Brown gave a quick update regarding NRCS, with the help of Jamie Keith, they are seeing a huge improvement in communication issues, and looking forward to working with her more in the future.

Brooke Myres-

Mrs. Myres informed the committee that Annual Reports were in their packets. She is delighted with the content this year, thanks to her team. Both Jennifer and Jessie were able to work closely with districts to provide the best content for the report. Mrs. Myres also noted that the SCDNR

Wildlife Magazine was in the committee's packet. In the magazine, on page 54 is the Conservation Corner, and each month is a short article from Conservation Districts by different staff. Envirothon is later this month, on April 26th, and staff have been dedicating their time to preparing for the event. They have 21 teams signed up so far and are hoping for more. Stewardship Week is also quickly approaching, April 28th – May 4th. Mrs. Myres is pleased with the hard work the staff has been preparing for this week; the theme for this year is “May the Forest be with You Always.” Each day has an event or a video; Monday, the team will travel to Anderson to present the proclamation; Tuesday will be dedicated to the classroom by informing students about forestry; Wednesday will be a field day at Harbison State Forest; and Thursday and Friday will have video content shared on all social media platforms.

Scott Howard-

Dr. Howard is with SCDNR’s Geology Section in the LWC Division. Dr. Howard took the time to inform the committee about what his staff does and other projects they have been working on. He first started by showing the committee different maps of our state. These maps show different colors, indicating their field studies. Another map shown was the Earth MRI map, which shows different mineral elements in our state. Thanks to the USGS, they are sending in new technologies to study the ongoing earthquakes in Elgin, SC. USGS has also been helping with funding to do more mapping with bridge building. Another project Dr. Howard’s team has been conducting is working with data on different geo maps. They are working with Florida, North Carolina, and Georgia on state map lines to flow better together. Sand mapping is also being done to examine the eroding coastline better. Lastly, for outreach, they have been putting together rock kits for schools to educate students about geology.

Annual FOIA Training:

Ms. Porter conducted the annual FOIA training for the committee.

Comments:

The committee expressed their interest in having more in-person meetings in the future.

Meeting dates were presented to the committee.

This meeting was adjourned. ***Motion was made by Mr. Simpson, 2nd by Mr. McLeod; - no further discussion – all in favor and none opposed. Motion passed.***