

Oconee River Greenway Authority

MINUTES

27 January 2009

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

Others Present: Jeff Gray – GMC
Heather Langston – ORGA Executive Director
Russell Thompson – City Planner
Jim Hardin – Walden, Ashworth & Associates
Sherrill Jones – Recorder

Not Present: Troy Clymer, Dennis Holder, Lee Moon

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

- I. **Call to Order** – At approximately 1:40 PM, Chairman Boylan called the 27 January 2009 meeting of the Oconee River Greenway Authority (ORGA) to order.
- II. **Approval of 28 October 2008 Minutes** - After a review of the 28 October 2008 Minutes, Mr. Williams made a motion, that was seconded by Mr. Bentley, to approve. The motion to approve was unanimously accepted.
- III. **Treasurer's Report** – Dr. Langston reported a current net income balance of \$303,928.28 and a total liabilities & equity balance of \$1,402,888.32. A motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mr. Edwards. It was unanimously accepted.
- IV. **Old Business:**
 - A. **Phase II Status**
 1. **Environmental Documents Status Update** – Chairman Boylan reported that he and Dr. Langston met prior to today's meeting concerning the required TRC Document, which will be complete and ready for submission by the end of the business day tomorrow. Dr. Langston will submit it to Vonda Everett (Tennille office of GDOT) as well as the Atlanta GDOT office. Chairman Boylan will personally request the expedition of this portion of the Greenway project when he meets with GDOT Commissioner Dr. Gena Evans on Friday.
 2. **Review of Preliminary Phase II Plans** – Jim Hardin provided two sets of preliminary Phase II Plans in GDOT format. These plans reflect previously requested changes. Mr. Hardin responded to individual questions and concerns, resulting in the identification of an additional trail section to concrete.

Chairman Boylan reminded board members that any changes to the plans reflect additional costs, and that individual board members are not authorized to make changes, only the board as a whole can do so.

Mr. Nelson made a motion to create a section of concrete trail around the south end of the open field to connect the northern extremity of the wetland trail

to an existing concrete trail along the Oconee River. Following a second by Mr. Williams, the motion was unanimously approved.

B. Greene Street Extension Status – Russell Thompson, Milledgeville City Planner, reported that the city's concept report for the Greene Street project was submitted to GDOT on 29 Dec. 2008. He anticipates approval will take 4-6 weeks.

Chairman Boylan asked Mr. Thompson to provide a point paper to present to GDOT Commissioner Dr. Gena Evans regarding the Greene Street Extension Concept Report and how it ties in with the Greenway. When asked about funding for the Greene Street project, Mr. Thompson noted a shortfall of about \$300,000. Chairman Boylan then proposed that ORGA consult with GDOT about using a portion of the \$700,000 GDOT money, not needed for Phase II, to support the Greene Street project.

C. Financial Spreadsheet Update – Dr. Langston presented the following financial spreadsheet for Phase II, noting that the Phase II, CST reflects Jim Hardin's cost estimate plus 10% (\$1,380,000). She also noted that the total budgeted figure for Phase II, PE includes payment of an additional \$5,000 to Patrick & Associates for topographic surveys.

January 2009					Total Budgeted	Total Expended	Remaining
Source	Available Funds	Greene St.	Phase II, PE	Phase II, CST			
SPLOST (FY09)	415,358.52	94,747.63	47,637.33	276,000.00	413,385.96	0.00	415,358.52
GDOT (7629)	2,000,000.00		11,355.86	1,104,000.00	1,274,549.34	11,355.86	1,234,193.48
Woodruff 2004	68,580.70	5,252.37			5,252.37	5,252.37	63,328.33
Total Budgeted		100,000.00	213,186.67	1,380,000.00			
Total Expended		5,252.37	11,355.86				
Remaining		94,747.63	201,830.81	1,380,000.00			

- 1 – Amounts highlighted in blue are budgeted amounts.
- 2 – Remaining Woodruff funds (red) will be spent on educational signage.

Dr. Langston will begin the process of preparing the FY2010 budget for the board to review.

D. DNR Grant Status –
1. Boardwalk and Overlooks at Mouth of Fishing Creek – Dr. Langston reported that access from McMillan Island down to the sandy beach area is perilous and eroding rapidly. A boardwalk with steps from McMillan Island to an overlook, as well as a boardwalk to the beach area at the mouth of fishing creek,

with a wooden bridge connection to an existing concrete walkway are needed. Mr. Nelson noted that McMillan Island is getting much more use than originally anticipated and that it provides access to the only beach/swimming area along the greenway. Dr. Langston indicated that the \$100,000 DNR grant could be used to build the boardwalk and overlook at the mouth of Fishing Creek; however, it requires an 80/20 match, which means ORGA would need to provide \$25,000. Mr. Nelson expressed concern about a bridge being able to withstand flooding. Mr. Edwards made a motion to proceed, contingent upon the Foundation (ORGF) providing the necessary \$25,000 match. Mr. Nelson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. The board subsequently asked Mr. Hardin to prepare the design work for this project.

E. Master Gardeners' Garden – Mr. Edwards reported that the Oconee Master Gardeners will plant donated iris and trees on February 16th. Mr. Nelson and Mr. Edwards will oversee the design plan for placement of these plantings.

F. Mowing of Grass by County – Mr. Williams reported that the county is purchasing mowers for use by the Recreation Department and that these mowers may be used for mowing along the greenway. The trailer and mowers will be located at the Recreation Department and will be available for use by both the city and county maintenance crews. Chairman Boylan expressed appreciation to Mr. Williams for his county leadership and spirit of cooperation.

V. New Business

A. Flood Report – Dr. Langston provided and read the following written report regarding the 11 December 2008 flooding of the Greenway and Riverwalk:

What we learned: The Oconee River crests the banks at the park when the river is at 18 feet. According to the National Weather Service's Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service, which monitors the water levels of the Oconee River several times a day, flood stage is 27 feet and action stage is 20 feet. I consulted with Marion Nelson several times that day and we decided that we did not need to remove the trashcans, etc. According to Jim Hardin's estimate, parts of the greenway were under nearly 20 feet of water. The floodwaters were strong enough to dislodge the sanitary sewer manhole risers. Mr. Hardin came down the following Thursday morning to assess the park and found no areas where repairs or maintenance was needed. He was a little concerned about a possible shift of the middle overlook, however, Matt Taylor from Southern Wilderness inspected the overlook and the bridge to McMillan Island (about which I had concerns) and found them both to be structurally sound and with no movement. Some of the concrete underneath the bridge is exposed but Mr. Davis said that it goes down 5 more feet. Dan Hammock should be sending an official letter. It is essential that everyone realizes that no vehicular traffic should be allowed into the greenway except for emergencies and those vehicles should be light weight. The concrete drives, parking areas and walkways will suffer damage if vehicles are driven over them with the sub-grade being saturated. GMC replaced the lost bollards and locked them during the holiday break. Mr. Nelson and I have keys. The city replaced the manhole risers and intends to make better repairs once the ground is completely dry. I have consulted with Greg Tyson at Georgia Power. He is arranging a meeting for me with Jimmy Helms, the

manager of the hydro units at both dams. I intend to impress upon him the point at which the river floods at the park and get assurances, in writing, of them contacting me in a timely manner so that we may secure the park. Our “action stage” is 15 feet. At that time, we will canvas the park for citizens and remove any unsecured amenities.

Dr. Langston asked for approval to create a sign to post when a chain is placed across the road entry to the greenway. Mr. Nelson asked that the sign be kept simple and clear, with three lines to read:

***No Entry
Park Closed
Flood Conditions***

B. Sign Committee Recommendations – Mr. Nelson reported that Steve Chambers from the city council has agreed to serve on the committee, as well as Mr. Edwards; however, a meeting date has not been determined. He noted that the two most frequently asked questions by those visiting the greenway are: *What is the length of the trail(s)? Where do the trails go?* In addition, he noted the trails need small signs for emergency identification. He also asked that the existing "rules" sign be reoriented 90 degrees.

Chairman Boylan made a motion to accept the map brochure, presented by Dr. Langston, with the orientation reversed. Mr. Nelson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

C. Criminal Damage to Fence – Chairman Boylan reported that someone recently drove a truck into the fence at the greenway and destroyed it. He believes this was an accidental act. Board members concurred, agreeing that the installation of cameras would be premature; however, Dr. Langston was authorized to investigate the cost for camera surveillance.

D. ORGF Update – Dr. Langston reported that the ORGF dinner/wine pairing fundraiser at 119 Chops yielded \$1,248. ORGF anticipates additional proceeds (10% of bar tab) once the bar tab for the night is calculated, and has a current funding balance of \$81,442.95.

VI. The next ORGA meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 1:30 PM in the conference room of the Old Capital Building.**

VII. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 3:10 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherrill Jones, Recorder