

Piedmont Conservation Council Executive Board

Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2011

Members Present: Alex Alston, Vice-Chairman; Rudy Langley, Treasurer; Frank Green, Talmage Layton, Eddie Culberson, Julie Elmore, PCC Coordinator, Stephanie Grant, Project Manager and Carol Melton, Administrative Assistant.

Members Absent: Bill Alston and Hazel Puckett.

I. Call to order

Vice Chairman Alex Ashton called to order an emergency meeting of the Executive Board at 7:15 p.m. on March 21, 2011 at the American Tobacco Campus in Durham, North Carolina. Due to the potential loss of federal funding for RC&D's an Emergency meeting was called to provide feedback to coordinator for a closeout plan if necessary. Julie reported that a continuing resolution for federal funding is in place until April 8, 2011.

II. Discussion Items & Old Business

Julie said that the RC&D program could possibly close April 8th if federal funding is lost. The board will need to develop a plan on how to close out projects, what to do on existing contracts and projects. PCC is good through August to conduct business and another year if pending grants come through. All the storm water projects will be built this summer.

Alex asked if RC&D is coming up with a plan for PCC. Julie replied that the RC&D headquarters is asking coordinators for any questions on developing a close out plan that they may not have thought of such as leased space. Members were asked to send Julie comments by Friday March 25th. PCC itself is not tied to federal grant funding. Alex asked about the liability of board members if we don't have staff to oversee. Julie said the board has liability insurance. But each contract should be reviewed by PCC and staff to make sure. Carol can compile all outstanding contracts if necessary. The bulk of PCC projects have places to go. New grants may have to be declined due to unforeseen circumstances. PCC may need to do some outsourcing such as the Caswell County Farmland Preservation Plan. Alex asked the Treasurer if PCC is at any financial risk. Rudy said that PCC can't operate without the coordinator seeking the grant and funding. Eddie asked what happens with county dues if they don't get the coordinator for a year. Response – unknown.

Members discussed if PCC could possibly operate in the next year without a grants coordinator. Julie suggested winding down projects and asking Stephanie to take the lead role until she goes back to school (in August). Eddie asked if PCC is setting up to dissolve. Julie said that if the FabLab project brings in funding from private companies, PCC could shrink down to go along minimal, then re-amp when ready, once FabLab is running with its own 501c3 status. There are really good opportunities with agriculture community and business ideas developed. PCC would keep meeting regularly, keep ideas and business running following the three year business plan already in place using on-hand funding for audit cost and administration. FabLab is generating a lot of interest from corporative technical sourcing as the mission of the FabLab matches their mission statements.

Alex asked about the possibility of some of current grant projects being given to another entity. Julie said the Piedmont Quilt Trail could transfer to Randolph County Soil & Water; Piedmont Local Foods to Brenda Sutton Rockingham County's Cooperative Extension Service. Alex suggested asking the board members to take on projects within their relative counties to oversee on behalf of PCC. Rudy added that technically each county has three representatives on the council. Stephanie added that this is a good backup plan.

Julie introduced Drew Nelson from Tech Shop Durham to the board. Drew has been working as a volunteer with FabLabs and has provided great problem solving answers and helping people use the lab. He is a former nuclear physicist for the US Navy with many technical and leadership skills. He is willing to work for the FabLab project and would provide much needed expertise to promote and keep FabLabs operating. Julie added that she would

49 like to show Drew the Agricultural community and problems facing agricultural rejuvenation.
 50 The American Tobacco company wants a permanent FabLab in this location and is willing to
 51 donate some funding. There is already a global FabLab network in place and we have good
 52 leadership with Tushar and Stephanie. The board discussed hiring Drew and agreed for
 53 Stephanie to develop the contract and job description to bring back at the next meeting. The
 54 board also asked staff to develop a corporate sponsorship contract that spells out a plan that
 55 Drew can use to move this project forward.

56 **III. Decision Items**

57 a) Quilt Trail Brochure & Website RFP

58 The board reviewed the proposals received and their prices for the logo development,
 59 website creation and upkeep, and the Quilt Trail Brochure. Members asked Stephanie to
 60 email links online for them to review examples from the proposals. The board agreed to
 61 decide at the next meeting on April 5th.

62 **IV. Project Updates**

63 a) May 18th, NCARC&D Council State Meeting Conference, PCC's responsibility of door
 64 prize and silent auction item. Eddie is continuing to work on seeking sponsorship. Julie
 65 noted that part of the sponsorship had been agreed to by PCC's insurance carrier.
 66 Stephanie suggested the possibility that EYDO and Eco Engineering could be
 67 approached.

68
 69 b) 2012 NCASWCD Expo- PCC Role, Sponsorship. Julie reported that Bill will be
 70 negotiating a contract where PCC will receive half of profit from the event. Carol noted
 71 that the information from Bill Dunlap about possible contacts for auction donations, exhibit
 72 spaces, co-sponsors for meals is lacking any contact details such as phone numbers,
 73 email addresses or addresses.

74 **V. Pending Projects**

- 75 a) CW Stanford Stormwater-Stephanie reported that the preliminary design phase is done
 76 and the workgroup is meeting Thursday with the maintenance group about an agreement.
 77 b) Alamance CC Stormwater- on schedule to end during summer when students are off
 78 campus. The board agreed to have the full council meeting on April 21st begin at 5:00 pm
 79 for a tour of the project site by Stephanie.
 80 c) Event Planner-Brenda Sutton managing this project.
 81 d) FabLab-Mobile –Julie reported that the American Tobacco Company is doing promotions
 82 and local companies are donating equipment to use as well as a vacant restaurant space
 83 in American tobacco to setup. The lab can accommodate about 3 people at a time to
 84 make items. If you want to make something, need appointment – contact Stephanie.
 85 e) Quilt Trail-March 6 *Asheboro News & Record* article
 86 f) Caswell FPP – PCC is still in the running and may know definite decision by June.
 87 g) Lassiter Mill dam-we were awarded grants.
 88 h) Circle of Diamonds next status level requirements are being worked on.
 89 i) Guilford Farmland Protection Plan – March 22nd open house at 2:30-7pm at Guilford Ag
 90 Building. Julie presented to Guilford County Commissioners on March 17 at 6pm.
 91 j) Community Garden proposals- PCC received notification of grant award.

92 **VI. New Projects**

- 93 a) On hold until a decision about the future of RC&D's are concluded.

94 **VII. Adjournment**

95 Alex adjourned the meeting at 9:15p.m. Next meeting April 5th, 2011.

96 Minutes respectfully submitted by: Carol Melton, PCC Administrative Assistant.