

Piedmont Conservation Council, Inc.
FINAL Executive Board Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2014 – Alamance Community College

EB Members Present: Gail Hughes (Chair, Orange), Norton Webster (Vice-Chair, Chatham), Janet MacFall (Secretary, Alamance), Bo Rodenbough (Treasurer, Guilford), Alex Ashton (Guilford), Eddie Culberson (Durham), Rudy Langley (Alamance), Hazel Puckett (Rockingham), Claudia Berryhill (Person)

Council Members Present: Frank Green (Rockingham)

Staff Present: Jacob Leech

EB Members Absent: Hester Vernon (Caswell), Bill Alston (Randolph)

- I. **Call to Order & Chairman Comments:** Gail Hughes called the meeting to order at 6:40 and announced the presence of a quorum. Gail noted that this is her first meeting as Chair and thanked all members for their support and nomination. She also extended gratitude for his three – year service as Chair.
- II. **Minutes:** Meeting minutes for March 4, 2014 were reviewed and approved (M: MacFall, 2: Puckett; unanimously approved).
- III. **Discussion/ Decision Items**
 - a. **Report from Annual Meeting of NC Association of RC&D Councils:** Frank Green, Hazel Puckett, Millie Langley, Rudy Langley, Larry Baker, and Jacob Leech were all in attendance at the annual meeting. Rudy reported that the venue was excellent and that next year we should consider suggesting that PCC provide the dinner, possibly at the HCIF site. He will develop a budget for the dinner for inclusion into the FY 2015 budget next month. Jacob announced that a speaker attended from the NC Rural Center. The Rural Center will be holding roundtables in which they will be soliciting input about rural issues they should address in their re-strategization. He solicited input from the board. Janet recommended noting that food system aggregation be mentioned. Jacob and Hazel also spoke about the Rural Center’s STEP program, and participating towns in the PCC area.
 - b. **Fab Lab Carolina project closeout:** Fab Lab subcommittee members Gail Hughes and Eddie Culberson reflected on some lessons learned from their experience with the Fab Lab project. It was brought to the board’s attention that council member and subcommittee member Tushar Mahale submitted his letter of resignation to the council now that the project has concluded. A motion was made to accept the letter of resignation from Tushar Mahale (M: Ashton, 2: MacFall; unanimously approved). Gail mentioned that we should respond to him in a letter thanking him for his service. Jacob will draft the letter. The assets from the Fab lab project have been recovered. Jacob stated that there is no value on

the books for any equipment. The bus is valued at \$1,800 as of end of FY13, and estimated to be approximately \$1,600 currently minus any cost of repairs needed. That amount should be estimated so that if the bus is sold as a loss it can be reflected in our accounting procedures. A motion was made to allow Jacob to proceed in selling and/or donating equipment under the guidance of the subcommittee for pricing. (M: Ashton, 2: R. Langley; unanimously approved).

- c. **Future Project Expectations:** As a lesson from the Fab Lab project, Gail recommended that for future projects, particularly those utilizing independent contractors, project expectations, deliverables, and deadlines should be more thoroughly documented.
- d. **Conflict-of-Interest Policy:** Jacob Leech presented a draft conflict of interest policy statement for consideration, noting that it was identical to the previous policy from 2010. After discussion, the board agreed that it should be re-drafted with individual council members signing independent disclosure forms rather than everyone signing the same statement. Jacob noted that such a format was more sensible to him, as did Claudia and Hazel. He will draft a new policy for consideration in June and individual statements to be signed in July at the council meeting.
- e. **Guilford County Lease:** Alex presented the draft lease between PCC and Guilford County for the Hines Chapel Preserve Incubator site. It still needs to be reviewed and approved by the Guilford County Legal Department. The suggestion was made that the Section III (8) be revised to reflect that PCC has the option to renovate the farm house rather than obligating PCC to do so.
- f. **Cape Fear River Partnership Meeting:** Jacob will be attending the annual meeting of the Cape Fear River Partnership next week. He is requesting reimbursement for hotel expenses, estimated to be \$149 + tax. A motion was made to approve this request (M: Langley, 2: MacFall; unanimously approved).
- g. **Strategic Plan Subcommittee:** Jacob proposes drafting a brief strategic plan to reflect the project prioritization exercise performed at the April Council meeting. He would like a subcommittee to be formed to provide guidance and feedback and does not estimate this to take up more than 2 hours time between now and the June meeting. Alex Ashton, Norton Webster, and Janet MacFall volunteered. Janet recommended Joanna Lelekacs to be named to the committee also, pending her availability.
- h. **Grant Opportunities:** Jacob presented the following grant opportunities:
 - i. **319 NPS:** This grant would be for the NC School of Science and Math, pending the availability of matching funds. A motion was made to allow

Jacob to proceed if matching funds were identified, the exact amount of the grant to be approved post-submission.

- ii. **USDA-NIFA BFRDP:** CEFS and NCAT are partnering on a submission to the BFRDP and would extend subagreements to individual incubators including Hines Chapel. The details are not all known but the grant would need to be drafted and finalized by early June. A motion was made to allow Jacob to enter into the agreement with CEFS under guidance of the HCIF steering committee, provided that cash match is not a requirement.

IV. Updates

- a. **Accounting/Ops:** Jacob distributed a summary of all financial transactions since the February board meeting. Alex requested that next time he add a column to show the expenses in relation to the budgeted amount. Jacob also noted that the draft 990 and financial review were complete and final versions would be available for the next meeting.
- b. **Biocenosis/Natural Resource Planning:** Biocenosis gave presentations on 3/10 to Pittsboro Commissioners, 4/17 to CCP, and have another scheduled for 5/22 with the Robeson Creek Watershed. The presentations are available on a wiki page – if anyone wants access please let Jacob know.
- c. **Washington Park Project – Asheboro:** The final parcels are still in process of being purchased. Some land has been cleared. Jacob has identified some potential funders. He will be meeting with Mr. McNair on site within the week.
- d. **Dry Hydrant Projects:** Jacob has made progress in developing dry hydrant projects in both Wake and Person County. Wake SWCD has helped set up meetings and generate leads. Person Co. put Jacob in touch with the right folks there to launch a potential project. He will continue to look for opportunities to create a regional project.
- e. **Durham Green Roof:** The proposed budget from Xero Flor in Durham came back at a fraction of the expected budget for the project.
- f. **Troy 2 Dam Removal:** A subagreement and letter of commitment is being considered by the Town of Troy currently. Jacob has also prepared an inquiry to NC Dam Safety for the town to submit.
- g. **Person Co. Farmland Protection Plan:** The AFDP Trust Fund grant is still pending.
- h. **Town of Hillsborough/Eno River Restoration Project:** A grant with CWMTF is currently pending.
- i. **Hines Chapel Incubator Farm:** Jacob learned that the county is considering demolition of the house. He is also looking into viability of a free cover crop seed source.

