

Piedmont Conservation Council, Inc.

FINAL Executive Board Meeting Minutes

October 11, 2012

EB Members Present: Alex Ashton (Chairman, Guilford), Norton Webster (Secretary, Chatham), Rudy Langley (Treasurer, Alamance), Hazel Puckett (Rockingham), Frank Green (Rockingham), Gail Hughes (Orange), Jacob Leech (staff)

Council Members Present: Millie Langley (Guilford), Larry Baker (Rockingham), Janet McFall (Alamance), Sandra Weitzel

EB Members Absent: Eddie Culberson, Bill Alston, Robin Hammond, Hester Vernon

- I. Call to Order & Chairman Comments – Alex Ashton, Chairman
 - a. Alex Ashton called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m. on October 11, 2012 at Moonelon Lodge in Elon, NC and confirmed the presence of a quorum.
- II. Approval of Minutes from September 4, 2012 Executive Board meeting approved (M: R. Langley, 2: Webster; unanimously approved)
- III. Discussion/ Decision Items
 - a. Area Plan: The 2013-2017 Area Plan draft was presented for approval. Jacob explained that the NARCDC has requested an updated Area Plan as part of the Circle of Diamonds application. The plan is an overarching document meant to guide the priorities of the Council and Jacob was able to work off of a copy that Julie Elmore had begun prior to her departure. (M: MacFall, 2: Webster; unanimously approved.)
 - b. The NC Department of Commerce: The Department had sent a late notice for estimated payroll taxes. Jacob and Alex completed the form showing that no taxes were due since there were no employees. Additionally, Jacob was submitting a “Change of Status” form to show that the Council no longer had employees to hopefully avoid future notices or inquiry, however he had spoken with an auditor who indicated that there may be further investigation of whether the contractors working for PCC were legitimate. The Council made a motion to have the accounting firm conducting PCC’s yellow book audit provide guidance on the issue. (M: MacFall, 2: R. Langley; unanimously approved).
 - c. Grant Approval Process: Alex explained that the grant approval structure may need some flexibility to allow for last minute changes in budget and quick responses to grant availability. He proposed a process wherein approval could be sought at a meeting after a grant was submitted (if necessary) and if approval was not given then the proposal could be withdrawn. Preference was for approval to be sought prior to submittal when possible. Janet reinforced that grants only be pursued when no financial commitment was being promised on behalf of PCC. The motion was to allow grants to be submitted prior to approval in cases where time was a limiting factor. (M: MacFall, M. Langley; unanimously approved).

- d. Grant Approval: A proposal was submitted to Syngenta in the amount of \$6,000 to support contractor time/administration and promotion of the Hines Chapel Incubator Farm. Awardees should be announced in January. (M: Webster, 2: MacFall; unanimously approved).
- e. Invoices: (M: R. Langley, 2: Green; unanimously approved)
 - Jacob Leech: \$1,775.00
 - Beehive Insurance: \$744.00
 - Princeton Hydro: \$2,033.35
- f. Rezoning of Guilford County Prison Farm: Alex mentioned that this issue had come up because the prison farm is not financially sustainable. He asked the attendees if anyone saw a potential role in this for PCC to be influential. Rudy mentioned the possibility of PCC submitting a resolution. The potential for PCC's role will be discussed further at the next meeting.

IV. Updates

- a. SWAMP: Eddie had been approached by Dr. Richardson at Duke about what percentage of funds brought in by the SWAMP project PCC would want. Eddie informed him that PCC expected to split it 50/50. Dr. Richardson expressed that he felt his department was doing the majority of the work which warranted a higher percentage and proposed a 75/25 split. A motion was made to discontinue work on the SWAMP project, as 25% of the proceeds would not likely result in a profit for PCC. (M: Hughes, 2: Webster; unanimously approved)
- b. Fab Lab: There will be a bus upfit event in October on Driver Street in Durham. More details will be made available soon. Additionally, Michelle is investigating a storefront space for the Fab Lab project on Driver Street. Due to limited funds remaining, we hope to have some fundraising success soon while we await grant award announcements.
- c. Chapel Hill High School (CWMTF): Gail, Jacob, Todd from Kimley-Horn, and a group of teachers and staff from Chapel Hill and the school met onsite to look at the drainage issues and discuss the potential for a CWMTF project. It seems to be moving forward and to be a good candidate for grant funding. A teleconference is scheduled for the following week to discuss next steps and Will Summer from CWMTF has encouraged PCC to apply for funding.
- d. CW Stanford: Signage is in place at the school. Repairs were made to the pond including larger rip-rap in September.
- e. Alamance Community College: Some repairs were made to the cistern in September. The school was conducting outreach to be used for upcoming grant reports.
- f. Dam Removal Projects: Fish America Foundation has granted a partial award, \$40,500 of the requested \$74,900. This may be enough to proceed with deconstruction at Lassiter Mill. USFWS has approached PCC with a new approach including in-house deconstruction using USFWS personnel who had recently taken down two dams in the area. More discussion will be needed in November to solidify any modifications needed for the agreement with USFWS.

- g. Hines Chapel Farm Incubator: Jacob will be attending a tour of the Lomax Farm in Concord, NC. Grants are being researched and hopefully a couple more applications can be submitted by December. In September a kickoff meeting was held at Hines Chapel with over 20 attending. Shortly thereafter a stakeholder meeting was held at the Elon Fall Environmental Forum.
 - h. Elon Fall Environmental Forum: Janet gave an overview of the forum, which had over 250 attendees. Alex mentioned that the top idea to come out of it was the need for connecting older landowners to new farmers.
 - i. Triangle Community Foundation: Jacob found a list of donor-advised fund advisors and distributed to attendees. He will distribute to the remainder of the Council and all are asked to review the list for potential contacts and report back.
 - j. State Association: The upcoming NC State Assoc. of RC&D Councils meeting at Haw River was cancelled and would be conducted by teleconference.
- V. Board Member Comments, New Business
- a. At the Elon Fall Environmental Forum a large need was recognized for connecting new farmers with older landowners with large tracts of land. Alex raised the idea of PCC serving as an intermediary to make these connections and possibly help manage lease agreements between landowners with large tracts and multiple farmers on smaller parcels of land. We would need a market study to identify the profit margins and see if this could be revenue-generating for PCC. This could generate revenue and assist to preserve farmland in PCC's area. It was asked whether this could be tied into the prison farm issue. Alex is going to do some more thinking and possibly put together an exploratory committee to explore this possible project further at the next meeting.
 - b. An announcement was made that Millie Langley had been recognized as the District Professional of the Year for the Southeastern Region.
- VI. Upcoming events/meetings
- a. Next Executive Board meeting is scheduled for November 8, 2012 at Alamance Community College 6:30-8:30pm.
 - b. Next Full Council meeting is January 13th, 2012 at Alamance Community College 6-9pm.
- VII. Adjournment
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.