

Oconee River Greenway Authority
MINUTES
28 August 2007

Members Present: Peter Boylan, Chairman;
Bo Edwards, Lee Moon, Marion Nelson, Bubba Williams

Others Present: Jeff Gray – GMC
Vonda Everett – GDOT
Kraig Collins – GDOT
Hannah Marney – The Union-Recorder
Keilani Parker – Assistant Attorney General (via conference phone)
Heather Langston – ORGA Director
Sherrill Jones – Recorder

Not Present: Richard Bentley, Troy Clymer, Dennis Holder

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

- I. Call to Order** – At approximately 1:34 PM, Chairman Boylan called the 28 August 2007 meeting of the Oconee River Greenway Authority (ORGA) to order and welcomed all who were present.
- II. Introduction of Keilani Parker** – Assistant Attorney General Keilani Parker was welcomed and introduced via speaker phone.
- III. Approval of Minutes for 31 July 2007** – After a review of the 31 July 2007 Minutes, Mr. Edwards made a motion, that was seconded by Mr. Nelson, to approve. The motion was unanimously accepted.
- IV. Treasurer's Report** – Chairman Boylan asked members to examine the printed treasurer's report reflecting a total checking/savings balance of \$152,961.57. He noted that this increase from last month reflects a GDOT reimbursement of \$97,000+ as well as almost \$3,000 from SPLOST. Total assets for the period ending 31 August 2007 totaled \$442,657.98. A motion to accept the report was made by Mr. Nelson, seconded by Mr. Williams and subsequently approved.
- V. Old Business**
 - A. Phase I: Construction Status** –
 - 1. Slideshow** - Dr. Langston presented digital slides displaying the DNR paved trail, a view from the fishing platform area closest to the boat ramp, and the area where dirt donated by Lloyd Avant (54 loads) was spread.
 - 2. Construction Cost Adjustments** – Dr. Langston referred board members to Change Orders from Walden, Ashworth & Associates. Change Order #3 decreased the contract sum for Phase I by \$43,920 by deleting work associated with the

installation of waterlines along the trail. Change Order #4 decreased costs by another \$8,755, and also increased contract time by 42 days.

3. Pavement – Based on the Change Orders identified above, parking areas will be paved accordingly.

4. Trenching for water and power lines – Dr. Langston reported that the area to be trenched for water and power lines is ready for work to commence.

5. County transport of dirt donated by Lloyd Avant – Dr. Langston expressed appreciation for not only the donation of dirt by Mr. Avant, but also the county's cooperation in transporting the dirt to the construction site.

6. Sewer – Dr. Langston reported that she met with Jim Hardin to discuss relocating the trail to avoid the raised sewer heads. He advised against this due to a heavy cost increase. He also noted that sewer caps should be a minimum of 6 inches above ground. Dr. Langston reported that the cost of lowering the manholes (eight pairs) is approximately \$17,000. Chairman Boylan asked Dr. Langston to once again ask the city to assume responsibility for the cost of lowering the sewer caps and/or partnering with ORGA to underwrite costs. Those present supported this concept and agreed that ORGA will need to fully finance this project if the city cannot assist.

B. Property Appraisal and Purchase Issues

1. Thimural – Dr. Langston reported that Jean Easom & Associates appraised the Thimural property (59 acres) for a total of \$146,000, which is considerably less than the asking price of \$270,000. The appraisal did not take into consideration the Tomlin property sale. Ms. Eason indicated that if the Tomlin property sale was based on fair market value then she would reconsider the appraisal. Also in dispute is how much of the property lies within the flood plain. Dr. Langston will follow-up on these issues.

2. Garner – Dr. Langston shared with board members a letter from Vonda Everett, GDOT, District Planning & Programming Engineer, in which Ms. Everett points out that acquisition of property for the purpose of constructing the Greenway cannot be made prior to right of way authorization by the GDOT. Once again, Dr. Langston and board members questioned why the Oconee River Greenway Foundation cannot purchase the property and “hold it” until right of way plans are approved. Ms. Everett again reported that federal funds could be put at risk and the greenway project could be significantly delayed until the issue can be resolved. Assistant Attorney General Parker was asked to comment on this issue. She indicated that she would need to research a response. Chairman Boylan asked Dr. Langston to coordinate a meeting with Ms. Parker and Phil Copeland, GDOT Right of Way Administrator to resolve the issue. Chairman Boylan also noted that the only acceptable alternative for conservation easement by the Oconee River Land Trust is a road through the Garner property; therefore, acquisition of the Garner property is critical to the development of Phase II.

3. Georgia Power – Dr. Langston reported that Greg Tyson of Georgia Power indicated that Georgia Power would like to transfer the property as soon as possible, and Mr. Tyson provided the paperwork necessary for such a transfer. Ms. Everett again noted that acceptance of property for the greenway must not precede 1) approved right of way plans, 2) verification of an approved environmental document which is current (meaning that approval is within six months of notification of approved right of way plans), and 3) delivery of a notice to proceed with right of way acquisition.

C. Phase II Status Report

1. Environmental Studies - Dr. Langston reported status of the following environmental studies relative to Phase II:

- a. **History** – completed
- b. **Archaeology** – more detail needed...exact trail information needed
- c. **Ecology** – in progress
- d. **Air** – needed, but not included
- e. **Noise** – not necessary as per Susan Knudson

Chairman Boylan asked Dr. Langston to have a representative from Breedlove and Associates attend the next ORGA board meeting to discuss Phase II status.

D. Update 2005 DNR grant application – Dr. Langston reported that ORGA should know status of this grant application by the end of week.

E. Privet – Mr. Nelson reported that privet and invasive vegetation are being removed and that the contractor appears to be ahead of schedule. He noted that the land contour prevents removal of some of the vegetation. With board approval the contractor can have this done by hand and then grind it on site. There would be no additional cost if done within the contracted time period.

VI. New Business

A. DNR 2007 Grant Application – Dr. Langston reported that new grant applications for up to \$100,000 will be accepted in October. She will email a list of projects for which grant funds may be used, so that board members may make suggestions.

B. Bridge to McMillan Island – Dr. Langston confirmed with those present that a bridge to McMillan Island may be built by a Boy Scout Troop.

C. Combined Website – Chairman Boylan reported that Jody Yearwood of GMC is creating a combined website for the Foundation and the Authority.

D. Fishing Platforms – Mr. Nelson reported that in meeting with Jim Hardin to discuss construction details regarding the fishing platforms, elevation issues were raised. He and Mr. Edwards will meet today with Stanley Gray, of DNR today to discuss these issues.

E. Foundation Fundraiser – Dr. Langston reminded board members of the Foundation’s Fall Fundraiser, featuring autographed sports memorabilia on 1 October 2007 at 119 Chops.

VII. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 25, 2007 at 1:30 PM in the conference room of the Old Capital Building.

VIII. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherrill Jones, Recorder