

**Oconee Rivers Greenway Commission
Meeting Summary DRAFT**

Date: July 21, 2015

Call to Order: Ron Thomas at 4:00 PM,

Meeting adjourned: Ron Thomas at 6:00 PM

Commission members present: Mack Duncan, Chris Fleisher, Susie Haggard, Steve Harris, Shana Jones, Nat Kuykendall, Lara Mathes, Alex Patterson, Karen Porter, Bob Sleppy, Nancy Stangle, Ron Thomas, Madeline Van Dyck

Commission members absent: Cartter Fontaine

Ex-officio members and staff present: Vicki Buschbom (ACC Planning), Mel Cochran (ACC Leisure Services), Tyler Dewey (Bike Athens), Andrew Saunders (ACC Environmental Coordinator), Terry Stephens (Oconee Rivers Water Trails/UOWN), Blaine Williams (ACC Manager's Office)

Guests Attending: Kelly Girtz (ACC Commissioner), Melisa Link (ACC Commissioner), Kyle McKay (UOWN), Jerry NeSmith (ACC Commissioner), Alfie Vick (UGA CED)

Quorum: 13 members present – quorum achieved

Meeting Summary submitted: Karen Porter

Actions taken:

Motion 1. Election of Mack Duncan as Treasurer.

Patterson moved, Van Dyke seconded, passed unanimously.

Motion 2. The Oconee Rivers Greenway Commission respectfully requests that the Mayor and Commission table the Environmental Areas Committee's Buffer Report. This is to allow ORGC to have the time needed to consider the extensive environmental, economic and policy information presented to the Buffer Committee and to hear from experts so that ORGC can make an informed recommendation to the mayor and commission concerning buffers that will improve water quality and other environmental benefits.

Kuykendall moved, Patterson seconded, passed unanimously.

Motion 3. The Oconee Rivers Greenway recommends against adoption of the proposals of the ACC Buffer Committee.

Duncan moved, Fleisher seconded, passed unanimously.

Motion 4. The Oconee Rivers Greenway Commission (ORGC) continues to support the approval of the proposed Sub-Projects #2, #3, and #4 of the SPLOST 2011 Project #09, Oconee Rivers Greenway Network Connectors, as illustrated on Attachment #2 of the agenda report for August 4, 2015. The ORGC also supports the advancement of these sub-projects to the preliminary plans stage in accordance with the review and approval process for SPLOST program projects.

Additionally, **the ORGC recommends that SPLOST 11 Project #09 also include the identification of feasible, suitable, and cost-effective greenway trail connectors to Barnett Shoals Road and Research Drive**, as appropriate to the revisions of the Greenway Network Plan approved July 7, 2009 (see “Greenway Network Plan, North Oconee River Northern Section, Easley’s Mill Section: Level 2 Zone and Buildout Map Revision”, attached). Such neighborhood connectors are critical for supporting public use of the greenway. ORGC will work with Leisure Services, other ACC staff, and the public to initially target potential connectors for more detailed review. The ORGC anticipates that assessing the preliminary plans for Sub-Project #2, #3, and #4 along with a Concept Plan-level evaluation of potential Barnett Shoals Road and Research Drive connectors will improve cost, priority, and sequencing decisions for completing SPLOST 11 Project #09.

The ORGC also recommends that a high priority be placed on applying remaining surplus SPLOST 11 funds to the completion of Project #09, including future selected neighborhood connectors. Project #09 has involved unanticipated regulatory requirements and delays that greatly increased the costs of constructing the East Campus Bridge, reducing funds available to complete the entire Easley Mill Section as originally envisioned. Restoring funding for completion of the pathway network connecting neighborhoods in East Athens with the UGA campuses and downtown Athens will have far reaching benefits to the citizens of Athens-Clarke County for alternative transportation, recreation and education, and public health.

Kuykendall moved, Patterson seconded, passed unanimously.