

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS
OF GUILFORD COUNTY**

Greensboro, North Carolina
August 4, 2016

The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed work session on August 4, 2016 at 3:00PM in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, 301 W. Market St., Greensboro; North Carolina.

PRESENT: Chairman Jeff Phillips, presiding; Vice Chairman Alan Branson; Commissioners Carolyn Q. Coleman, Kay Cashion, Hank Henning, Alan Perdue, Justin Conrad, J. Carlvena Foster and Ray Trapp (in at 3:35PM).

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: County Manager Marty Lawing; County Attorney Mark Payne, Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier; Clerk to Board, Robin Keller, Deputy Clerk to Board, Ariane Webb; Robert McNiece, Property Management/Facilities/Parks Director; Jeff Fowler, Security Director; members of the community and media.

I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Phillips welcomed those present and called the meeting to order at 3:10PM.

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. RICH FORK PRESERVE PROPERTY UPDATE

2016-302 RICH FORK PRESERVE WORK SESSION HANDOUT MATERIALS

[Legislation Text](#)

[Rich Fork Property Update 080416](#)

County Manager Marty Lawing shared the purpose of the meeting is to review the history and master plan development for the Rich Fork Preserve. He stated staff are prepared to offer factual information regarding the history of the property, and noted consultants are present to present information, as well.

1. Review of History

Robert McNiece, Property Management/Facilities/Parks Director shared staff's attempts to research the history of the Rich Fork Preserve. He reviewed the minutes from the Board of Commissioners in 1976 which gives the first definition of Open Space, and includes watershed and agricultural properties involved in active and passive recreation.

McNiece reviewed the Open Space plan adopted by the Board in 2000, and noted the \$10 million Parks and Recreation bond approved in 2004. He shared the 2004 bond referendum for \$20 million to be utilized for Parks and Recreation, and noted it passed with 55% of the general vote.

McNiece discussed the first capital project ordinance approved in 2006 to transfer bond funds to the Open Space program, and shared the 2009 report created by the Open Space sub-committee, which offered a definition of Open Space and reiterated the value of open space to the community. He noted this definition referenced hiking and passive recreation trails for non-motorized vehicles.

McNiece stated approximately 1,500 acres, at a cost of \$9.5 million, were purchased as Open Space between 2006-2012. He noted the McKee-Huger property was the only property donated to the County. He identified seven (7) parcels of land purchased from four (4) owners which comprised the Rich Fork Preserve and reviewed the approval process involved in purchasing these properties.

McNiece noted the first parcel was placed on the consent agenda for Board approval in March 2012, with a notation indicating no decision had been made regarding existing structures on the property. He shared the Board approved the purchase remaining six (6) parcels of land approximately six (6) months after the initial parcel, bringing total acreage of the property to 115 acres. McNiece confirmed the Douglas property owners requested a conservation easement on the property as a stipulation to the sale, which was approved by the Board, and noted there are no deed restrictions on any of the properties regarding utilization. He shared the planned use of the property is aligned with the conservation easement, as the majority of the property will remain undeveloped.

McNiece reviewed the attributes of the preserve and noted three (3) of the properties, comprising approximately twenty-five (25) acres, had been clear-cut prior to purchase.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned the total amount of clear-cut acreage and if any seedlings had been planted by the Forestry Service.

McNiece confirmed approximately 22.3 acres had been clear-cut and no seedlings had been planted.

Commissioner Cashion noted the picture included in the packet is not representative of the property's current appearance.

McNiece confirmed the picture is approximately three to four years old, and the area is overgrown today.

Commissioner Coleman questioned who clear-cut the property.

McNiece stated the property was clear-cut prior to purchase by the County.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if any additional clear-cutting had occurred since purchase.

McNiece confirmed no additional clear-cutting has occurred.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned the which parcel was clear-cut.

McNiece noted the three (3) parcels were located in the Southeast quadrant, which includes the Sloan properties.

Commissioner Cashion questioned if the Douglass properties had been clear-cut.

McNiece stated the Douglass properties had not been clear-cut.

Chairman Phillips questioned if any property owners received tax credits as a result of the purchase.

McNiece confirmed the Steele and Douglass properties received tax credits.

Chairman Phillips questioned their eligibility for a tax credit.

McNiece noted there was a difference in the selling price versus the appraised value, and this value was allotted as a donation to the County.

Chairman Phillips questioned the differential amount for the Douglass property.

McNiece stated the owners received a \$93,000 tax credit.

Chairman Phillips clarified the differential, or amount less than the appraised value, was the amount eligible for tax credits.

McNiece confirmed this clarification of the tax credit. He reviewed the Hedgecock property and existing structures. McNiece noted the farmstead dates from the 1800's, however the remaining structures vary in age from the 1920's to the 1970's.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned if the County has worked with contractors or engineers to evaluate the homestead, and noted he walked to the property prior to the meeting. He questioned the expense to repair and maintain these structures, as many are in poor condition and have deteriorated.

McNiece stated preliminary reviews have been conducted, but there is a need to decide the meaning of restoration, whether it involves the public viewing structures from a distance versus walking the properties and touring the structures.

Vice Chairman Branson expressed concern that a definite amount has never been provided regarding restoration.

Commissioner Coleman stated the group working on the project has received a \$15,000 grant from the Covington Foundation, with a \$5,000 match. She stated it would cost approximately \$20,000 to complete renovations on the property, and noted the County has not volunteered to assist with funding renovation efforts. Coleman questioned if the Board was committed to assisting in the group in its renovation efforts.

Commissioner Perdue questioned if staff had identified standards associated with proposed uses of the structures, to ensure they are meeting NC codes and requirements.

McNiece noted the numbers can vary greatly dependent upon the level of renovation and proposed uses.

Commissioner Foster questioned if staff were working with the volunteer group to identify their recommendations for levels of renovation.

McNiece confirmed the proposed Master Plan addresses these concerns and noted they await Board direction regarding potential uses for the property.

Commissioner Cashion spoke to the potential educational opportunity that the homestead structures could offer regarding historic farm life. She noted there is community support for an assessment of the property, indicated by the grant award.

Commissioner Trapp arrived to the meeting at 3:35PM.

Commissioner Cashion expressed hope that the Board would consider the fate of the structures, instead of emphasizing project costs.

Vice Chairman Branson spoke to the working farmstead at Northeast Park and questioned the number of classroom visits to the restored tobacco barn and farm house. He commented on the lack of visits to this farmstead and noted its low utilization did not justify the expenses incurred during restoration.

Commissioner Coleman shared her experiences in travelling to other states and observing the limited number of open space properties. She confirmed these prior travels led her to consider the limited open space opportunities within the urban portions of Guilford County, and encouraged the Open Space committee to acquire property in urban areas. Coleman noted the urban open space in Greensboro is the Benbow Preserve and Rich Fork property was purchased for urban access in High Point. Coleman reiterated the intent for use of the Rich Fork property is as a preserve, not a park.

Chairman Phillips requested staff prepare proposals detailing the efforts required to bring the property up to code for public purposes, and provide two to three expanded use options for the Board to consider.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned the brick structure located on the back side of the homestead property.

McNiece confirmed the structure is a hand-dug well that is brick-lined and approximately 50-75 feet deep.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned safety concerns associated with an open well.

McNiece stated staff have placed a temporary cover over the site, and noted they monitor the site, as it is a potential risk.

Commissioner Cashion questioned if there are signs posted on the property indicating potential safety hazards.

McNiece confirmed there are No Trespassing signs posted at each entrance to the property, but noted there is a report that the sign located at the southern entrance was removed.

Commissioner Cashion requested staff place a barrier around the homestead structures to help mitigate trespassing.

McNiece noted the home has been boarded up and staff will continue to monitor.

Commissioner Cashion encouraged discussion with the preservation group to support ongoing restoration of the property.

Chairman Phillips stated the first steps would be to assess the costs of the project and then contact the volunteer group to determine the extent they can support the project.

Commissioner Conrad questioned who prepared the bond brochure.

McNiece stated he reviewed the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Commission and those of the Board of Commissioners, and found no approval from either group.

McNiece reviewed the naming of the property and noted the BOC minutes indicate no mention of the properties planned use as a function behind the name.

Commissioner Trapp questioned the naming of the preserve and noted the designation of the Conner Trail.

McNiece stated the donation of this property was contingent upon naming this area as a trail, but is included in the Rich Fork preserve property.

Commissioner Cashion questioned the proposed entrance for the Conner Trail.

McNiece reviewed discussions with Ms. Conner in which staff attempted to determine the path the former Mr. Conner walked on the property, but noted this area became a point of contention with other property owners and has not been resolved. He stated he will show the proposed entrance when reviewing the draft master plan.

McNiece reviewed prior minutes and noted the initial \$10 million was allocated solely for property acquisition. He stated in recent years, the Board requested staff stop acquiring land and use remaining funds to open the properties. McNiece confirmed nine (9) of the properties have been opened since receiving Board direction in 2015.

Commissioner Foster questioned the relevance of presenting these minutes if they do not mention the Rich Fork property.

McNiece indicated these offered a chronological progression of the discussions regarding open space properties, and identify the Board's intent, at that time, to re-evaluate use of the bond funding to develop and open the properties.

Chairman Phillips spoke to the prior discussions and noted the Board's directive to utilize bond funding to open these properties. He spoke to the benefits of the presented timeline in regards to the progress made with open space properties.

Vice Chairman Branson echoed Chairman Phillips comments regarding the timeline and noted former Chairman William Bencini's directive to staff to open the properties for public enjoyment.

Commissioner Henning's noted the conversation also included efforts to improve the Board's communication with staff, and noted staff's interest in acquiring more properties. He noted the Board directed staff to stop purchasing and work to open existing properties.

Vice Chairman Branson noted the Board also directed staff to implement irrigation at Southwest Park for the benefit of various sports.

McNiece reviewed the definitions of open space and the debate over the definition of "passive recreation". He discussed research conducted by staff to define this term and noted they polled several different jurisdictions regarding the utilization of passive recreation. McNiece confirmed staff then worked with the Parks & Recreation Commission to determine a definition that was presented to, and approved by, the Board in 2014.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if staff had referenced the Open Space minutes and the recommendations offered to the Board regarding what should be included in urban preserves.

McNiece noted the drastic differences in the urban preserves within Guilford County, and noted there is no specific definition of urban preserves in the minutes reviewed.

Commissioner Coleman requested he review these minutes or speak with members of the former Open Space Committee to determine what should be included in these types of preserves.

Commissioner Conrad shared his research regarding Windsor Castle Park in Smithfield, Virginia and stated their website speaks to many of the recreation issues being discussed by the Board. He reviewed their definition of passive recreations and noted the examples listed included: walking on open trails, launching your own kayak, taking pictures, and running or biking on mountain trails. Conrad shared their definition of active recreation as these events which require a fee, such as, running events, weddings, and groups renting picnic areas. He noted the definition is not settled, and noted different organizations within the federal government define active and passive recreation differently.

Commissioner Perdue noted no material difference between the definition of open space identified in the July 2007 minutes of the Open Space Committee versus the definition adopted by the Board in 2014. He stated both included non-motorized vehicles in their defining the utility of open space properties.

McNiece confirmed this was the general understanding of the Parks & Recreation Commission when they finally adopted the terminology.

Conrad noted the Open Space Committee identified this utilization of the property when defining open space during their July 2007 meeting.

2. Rich Fork Master Plan Development Process

McNiece shared the County consulted with CLH design firm to assist in development of the master plan, and introduced Chris Hilt, who would provide an overview of the project.

Ms. Hilt introduced the firm and stated they are located in Cary, NC. She noted they are nationally recognized for their environmental design and shared some of their recent achievements.

Ms. Hilt stated the master planning process records existing conditions, prepares site analysis for the property and establishes goals for the vision of the property, while gaining input from stakeholders regarding potential uses for the property. She noted the site analysis is used to identify locations for specific uses, and shared the Hedgecock Farm should remain as protected as possible.

Ms. Hilt spoke to the importance of the master plan in identifying the physical and cultural attributes of the property that will identify its character and identity, and noted the value of the land. She stated the master plan can be implemented over many years, but the established goals and values identified in the master plan remain the same. Hilt reviewed the zones for compatible use to ensure success and sustainability, and noted when reviewing the Rich Fork site, they sought to maintain trails on existing easements, to avoid cutting or foraging new trails.

Ms. Hilt noted the master plan provides a physical map to plan and develop implementation, and noted all federal and state grants require implementation of the master plan prior to seeking grants for all aspects of the property.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned how a volunteer group could solicit grants on behalf of County property. He expressed concern with funds raised, and fundraisers conducted, by the Rich Fork Historical Committee for preservation of the farmstead.

Mark Payne, County Attorney, stated the County cannot seek a Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) state grant for the property until a master plan is approved. He noted third parties are allowed to raise funds in hopes of actions that the County may take, however there is risk involved if no decision is made and donors must be informed of the potential outcome of the funds received.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned the outcome of the donated funds if the Board decides not to restore the property.

Payne noted the responsibility for the funds would rest with the donors and the third party fundraisers.

Vice Chairman Branson expressed hope the Board could move forward with making a decision that will appease all parties.

Commissioner Coleman questioned who prepared the Master Plan.

Ms. Hilt confirmed their firm prepared the plan with County staff and historical data from the community. She spoke to specific requests regarding placement of the Conner Trail away from the creek.

Commissioner Coleman questioned when information is collected from the community.

Ms. Hilt discussed the public input process, and noted a total of eight (8) input meetings were conducted regarding this property. She stated they understand there were emotional conflicts and a large number of stakeholders involved with the site. Ms. Hilt recommended developing a stakeholder group which follows the process through its multiple phases in areas with multiple challenges.

Commissioner Coleman expressed concerns that the stakeholders have not been granted a public meeting to offer their input, but were only allowed to express their suggestions or concerns on cards. She urged them to provide additional recommendations on garnering public input during the process.

McNiece shared that they would review the public input processes used to garner input on this property and would compare these methods to those used with master plan development of other properties.

Commissioner Coleman expressed concern that the public had little confidence in the mechanisms used to gain their input.

Chairman Phillips referenced the General Master Plan Process on page 74 of the agenda packet and requested clarification on the definitions of a conceptual master plan, draft master plan and final master, and where the County is in the process.

McNiece stated there are numerous versions of the master plan that have received input and have been reviewed in an attempt to address everyone's concern. He stated the plan only addresses long range goals and does not address specific details, but gives a conceptual plan. McNiece confirmed there will be other discussions regarding the plan and those details would be addressed in the next phase of the project.

Chairman Phillips noted Board approval does not finalize the details of the master plan, and stated this has been a primary concern of the Board.

Ms. Hilt stated the master plan is about goals, visions, site analysis and compatibility. She noted trails have not been designed; however, approval of the plan will allow the County to move forward in applying for grants to fund the next phase. She noted the next phase of implementation involves trail design, determining adequate locations for trails, permitting for proposed water bridges and confirmed this normally involves walking the trail with neighbors. Hilt stated the Conner Trail is an important piece of the project and noted the plan gives sufficient detail to develop a budget for established priorities.

Chairman Phillips clarified finalizing the details of the Rich Fork property prior to approving the conceptual master plan would be ineffective.

Ms. Hilt confirmed it is best a conceptual plan be established prior to moving into the next phase and developing detailed plans, to ensure there is sufficient community input.

Vice Chairman Branson noted there is approximately \$516,000 in bond funds remaining, and questioned the limitations on using these funds for access, signage and structures.

Payne noted the limitation of the bond funds stems from the language in the referendum, which includes parks and recreation. He confirmed there was prior discussion regarding using Open Space funds solely for property acquisition, and not for trail design or preservation; however, noted these funds can be used for acquisition, as well as, development of the properties. Payne stated PARTF grant dollars are specific to projects identified within the grant request, and reiterated the need for a Master Plan to ensure the request aligns with grant requirements.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned if the remaining bond funding could be utilized as match funds when applying for grants to assist in property development.

Payne confirmed these funds would qualify.

Commissioner Cashion questioned if the proposed Master Plan is representative of the plan presented to the Parks & Recreation Commission, and if they had approved the plan.

McNiece confirmed the Commission had discussed the plan, but had not approved the plan, as the item was tabled indefinitely.

Commissioner Henning questioned if the Commission voted on the plan.

McNiece stated they did not vote on the plan and noted there is no statutory requirement for Parks & Recreation Commission approval of the plan prior to Board consideration or approval.

Commissioner Cashion stated she had received comments from citizens that their input had not been taken into consideration during the plan development phase. She questioned if the trail design included only walking trails.

Ms. Hilt stated any trails included in the open space definition would be walked and staked.

Commissioner Cashion questioned if the firm would walk and stake mountain-biking trails.

Ms. Hilt noted cycling consultants would be called in to design these trails to ensure they have the least amount of impact to the surrounding environment. She spoke to the beauty of the land and noted the need for a consultant with an environmental background who has experience in developing these types of trails. Hilt confirmed the biking trail should be designed as a contained loop to avoid interference with walking trails.

Commissioner Cashion reviewed the executive summary and opined on the importance of the stewardship recommendation.

Commissioner Trapp stated the Board has been waiting on recommendations from the Parks & Recreation Commission, and expressed concern that the Board is making decisions without volunteer and citizen input.

Vice Chairman Branson stated Parks & Recreation Commission meetings are open to the public, and noted the contention and lack of productivity in the meetings for the past year. He encouraged Commissioner Trapp to attend the next meeting.

Commissioner Coleman expressed her agreement with Commissioner Trapp's comments and noted the cancellation of the last two to three Parks & Recreation Commission meetings. She expressed concerns with the outcome of the work session and requested the Board move forward with a vote, if it was the will of the Board.

Chairman Phillips stated Mr. McNiece is working to present facts, and referenced page 83 regarding the hosted public events for Rich Fork Preserve. He requested McNiece review the instances when Rich Fork has been publicly discussed.

McNiece reviewed the meetings held regarding Rich Fork Preserve and noted the stakeholder's meeting held in October 2014 and the electronic survey distributed in February 2015.

Ms. Hilt confirmed electronic surveying is required for many grants, and noted the need to utilize multiple forms of communication with stakeholders.

Commissioner Coleman clarified surveys should be distributed to all citizens, not specific groups.

McNiece confirmed this was an online survey and access was available to all citizens.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if all citizens were aware of the survey.

McNiece reviewed the various input mechanisms and meetings conducted, including multiple hearings, direct mailings and electronic surveys. He noted that, upon his review of Parks & Recreation Commission meeting minutes, the Rich Fork property has been discussed at over thirty-five (35) meetings.

McNiece noted they received over 300 comments regarding the public meeting, and noted the primary complaint was the large attendance; however, there were no complaints that staff were not inclusive.

3. Review Proposed Master Plan

McNiece reviewed the proposed master plan and referenced the executive summary highlights. He stated the key is balance land use, while retaining the farmstead and reducing the number of trails on the property. He noted the need to compromise the recreational desires and proposals for cycling and walking trails, with retaining the historic character of the property.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if hiking will be allowed on cycling trails.

McNiece stated the County could design multi-use trails to accommodate both activities, or could create separate trails for hiking and biking.

Commissioner Cashion questioned if the cycling trails will accommodate biking or mountain-biking.

McNiece stated staff have researched definitions for bike trails, and noted these biking trails will be designed using standards set by the International Mountain Biking Association, in collaboration with cycling consultants, to ensure the trails provide opportunities for various levels of cyclists.

Commissioner Cashion requested clarification regarding the level of cycling activity.

McNiece noted there is no scale of trails and noted the best way to identify trails is based upon best practices implemented at trails in other County parks.

Commissioner Cashion expressed concerns with the existing trails on the property and questioned if the County would design trails for high-levels of cycling activity.

McNiece stated the County would design trails to accommodate various levels of cycling activity in the bottom third of the property.

Commissioner Conrad stated there are two separate topics associated with the discussion: the farmstead and cycling, and noted additional information is needed from staff.

Motion was made by Commissioner Justin Conrad, seconded by Commissioner Kay Cashion, to direct staff to solicit proposals for the Hedgecock Farmstead; to include an option for preservation and an option for restoration, and addresses long-term maintenance plans and all associated costs.

Commissioner Coleman requested a representative of the Hedgecock Preservation Committee comment regarding the research they have conducted on the Homestead.

Dot Kearns, High Point resident and Hedgecock Preservation Committee member, confirmed the committee contacted the NC Archives and noted the value of the property, along with representatives of NC Preserve. She noted their recommendation was to stabilize and maintain the property, versus restoration. Kearns stated the committee applied through the High Point Historical Society to the Covington Foundation for a grant to hire a structural engineer to outline the structures and offer recommendations regarding each structure. She stated they were given a recommendation to stabilize the under-pinning of the homestead and repair of the roof, and noted maintenance to the remaining facilities could be managed by volunteers. Kearns confirmed the group has been awarded \$15,000 and raised an additional \$7,000 for structural stabilization and maintenance.

Ms. Kearns stated the preservation committee was under the assumption they were working under Board direction, and were unaware of the dissonance between the Open Space Committee and the Board. She expressed concerns regarding the lack of communication between County staff and owners of the neighboring properties.

Chairman Phillips clarified the group has worked with a structural engineer to conduct an evaluation of the facilities on the property and questioned if this information has been forwarded to staff.

Kearns stated she was unsure if this information had been received by staff.

Chairman Phillips requested the group forward the architectural report to the County for review.

Ms. Kearns stated the preservation group understood the County would not be responsible for funding the stabilization of the property, and noted they were under the assumption it was the responsibility of the preservation group.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned if the group received a cost estimate to raise the house, replace the foundation and re-lay the brick work. He noted the County would be responsible for the bid process, and spoke to the potential expense of the work involved.

Ms. Kearns stated she understood the price would be reasonable, based upon recommendations from the engineers.

Commissioner Conrad requested this information provided to staff during the bid proposal process.

Commissioner Coleman expressed concerns with the lack of citizen inclusion in the process and questioned if staff, citizens and the design firm could collaborate on the process and provide a recommendation to the Board.

Chairman Phillips clarified the motion on the floor, and requested all those with additional information offer it to staff upon meeting adjournment.

Commissioner Coleman requested Commissioner Conrad add to the motion a request for staff to work with the preservation group and design firm, and return to the Board with a recommendation.

Commissioner Conrad noted his motion specifies the renovation of the property, and noted there is a need to identify the costs associated with the plan.

Ms. Kearns requested a meeting between the preservation group and staff.

Commissioner Conrad questioned if any members of the preservation group could provide cost estimates comparable to those outline in the motion on the floor.

Ms. Kearns stated the engineer who conducted the evaluation would be willing to share his evaluation and cost estimates.

Commissioner Henning noted the intent of the motion is to preserve the property, and stated the property is invaluable and there is a need to collect the facts.

Commissioner Perdue echoed Commissioner Henning's request for facts, and noted the costs and code requirements associated with converting the single family residence on the property into a park building. He recommended collecting estimates from all groups involved and the Board will make a final decision on the outcome.

Motion was made by Commissioner Justin Conrad, seconded by Commissioner Kay Cashion, to direct staff to solicit proposals for the Hedgecock Farmstead; to include an option for preservation and an option for restoration, and addresses long-term maintenance plans and all associated costs.

VOTE: Motion carried 7 – 2
AYES: Jeff Phillips, Alan Branson, J. Carlvena Foster, Kay Cashion,
Hank Henning, Alan Perdue, Justin Conrad
NOES: Carolyn Q. Coleman and Ray Trapp

4. Next Steps

Motion was made by Commissioner Justin Conrad, seconded by Commissioner Alan Perdue, to approve, as a part of the overall concept design for the Rich Fork Preserve, the allowance of hiking and biking trails on the property; and Direct staff to hire a professional trail design firm to prepare specific proposals for the trails with respect to ensuring: 1) adequate buffers for adjoining properties; and 2) environmentally sound trail designs that will have the least intrusive impacts to the property and the wildlife. Remaining Open Space funds should be used to cover the associated costs.

Commissioner Cashion expressed concerns with approving all portions of the motion without seeing the Master Plan.

Commissioner Henning echoed Commissioner Cashion's concerns regarding the trail design and questioned if the Board will have opportunity to consider different scenarios and options.

Chairman Phillips clarified the County will engage a professional design organization to create appropriate location of hiking and biking trails, with respect to surrounding neighborhoods, adjacent properties and the environment.

Commissioner Henning confirmed there will be opportunities for citizens to provide additional input during the process.

Commissioner Cashion stated the motion implies inclusiveness of mountain-biking in the plan, contingent upon trail placement.

Chairman Phillips stated the plan clearly includes mountain-biking on the property.

Commissioner Cashion expressed her concerns with approving mountain biking on the property.

Chairman Phillips reiterated there would be no implementation of the plan until the design had been considered and approved by the Board.

Commissioner Henning stated the Board regarding the possibility of acquiring additional land that may be more conducive to mountain-biking. He noted the Board should retain flexibility to approve or deny the option of mountain-biking on the property. Chairman Phillips requested the Board consider the purchasing details of an offer received by the Board regarding neighboring properties.

Commissioner Henning offered a friendly amendment to the motion on the floor to include future dialogue on potential land acquisition.

Commissioner Conrad accepted the friendly amendment.

Commissioner Perdue requested each document prepared by staff or the design firm labeled as “DRAFT PENDING REVIEW” until approved by the Board.

Commissioner Foster indicating she will not vote for the motion and questioned if the additional costs to hire a design firm and renovation estimates will be deducted from Open Space funding.

Chairman Phillips confirmed.

Commissioner Foster expressed concerns with using Open Space funds for the estimates and noted there may be insufficient funding to cover the preservation costs. She noted the need for discussion between all groups to establish priorities. stated that this will be additional costs with the funds to come from the existing open space funds. Foster recommended tabling the motion until design estimates were received, as the Board is unaware of associated costs.

Chairman Phillips requesting modifying the language of the motion to identify options for, and cost associated with hiring, a design group that will provide trail designs for hiking and biking.

The Board discussed the language of the motion.

Commissioner Coleman called the question.

Commissioner Henning expressed concern that all Commissioners did not understand the motion on the floor.

Commissioner Conrad clarified the motion and noted it directs staff to hire a firm that would present a design plan with hiking and biking trail options.

Motion was made by Commissioner Justin Conrad, seconded by Commissioner Alan Perdue, to approve, as a part of the overall concept design for the Rich Fork Preserve, the allowance of hiking and biking trails on the property; and Direct staff to hire a professional trail design firm to prepare specific proposals for the trails with respect to ensuring: 1) adequate buffers for adjoining properties; and 2) environmentally sound trail designs that will have the least intrusive impacts to the property and the wildlife; and include future dialogue on potential land acquisition. Remaining Open Space funds should be used to cover the associated costs.

VOTE: Motion carried 5 - 4

AYES: Jeff Phillips, Alan Branson, Hank Henning, Alan Perdue, Justin Conrad

NOES: Carolyn Q. Coleman, J. Carlvena Foster, Kay Cashion, Ray Trapp

Vice Chairman Branson shared the Greensboro Colt Baseball League travelled to Lafayette, Louisiana to attend the Youth Baseball World Series, and noted its benefits to the Greensboro Youth Baseball League. He shared the group awarded sixteen scholarships to Guilford County youth baseball players this year.

III. ADJOURN

There being no further business, the Board adjourned the work session by unanimous consent at 5:33PM.

Jeffrey M. Phillips
Chairman

Robin Keller
Clerk to Board