

Minutes
Land Acquisition Committee
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S. E.
Suite 1252 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30330

May 25, 2010

Attending:

Committee Members

Tom Wheeler, Chairman
Earl Barrs
Dennis Billew
Bill Carruth
Dwight Davis
Joe Hatfield
Walter Hudson
Jenny Lynn Bradley, Board Chairman, ex-officio

Board Members

Bill Archer
Gene Bishop
Mabel Jenkins
Ray Lambert
Loyce Turner
Jim Walters
Steven Woodruff

Visitors

Katie Kirkpatrick, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce
Alice Howard, Marine Corps Air Station, Beaufort, SC
Lt. Colonel Derek Richardson, Marine Corps
Ronny Just, Georgia Power Company
Joe Ferrero, Georgia Air National Guard
David Wamer, National Wild Turkey Federation, Georgia
Andy Ivey, National Wild Turkey Federation, Georgia
Andrew Schock, The Conservation Fund
Michele Cable, The Nature Conservancy
Phil Zinsmeister, Sierra Club
Scott Tanner, Joe Tanner & Associates

Staff Members

Chris Clark
Allen Barnes
Paul Burkhalter
Todd Holbrook
Emily Hitchcock
Kyle Pearson
Spud Woodward
Dave Crass
Becky Kelley
Marlin Gottschalk
Dan Forster
Mark Smith
Linda MacGregor
Jac Capp
Jim Ussery
Doralyn Kirkland
John Bowers
Steve Friedman
Bryan Alexander
Homer Bryson
Lon Revall
Sarah Dearman
Rashanda Carter
Mary Ann Evans

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Doug Fulle, Oglethorpe Power Corporation

Bettie Sleeth, Home Builders Association of Georgia

John Eberhart, Georgia Earth Alliance

David Word, Joe Tanner & Associates

R. Henry, Associated Press

Mike Giles, Georgia Poultry Federation

The May 25, 2010 meeting of the Land Acquisition Committee was called to order by Board Chairman Jenny Lynn Bradley. Chairman Bradley called on Tom Wheeler, Chairman of the Land Acquisition Committee.

Mr. Wheeler stated that three items would be presented for action and called on Steve Friedman, Chief of Real Estate.

Mr. Friedman stated that the first item for consideration was acquisition (purchase) of 6,911± acres of real property, Altamaha River, Townsend Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Rayonier Forest Resources, L.P. Tract Phase II, via The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Long County. He further stated that Phase I of this tract was acquired by the Department in August 2009 and included 7,180± acres. He added that this is an important tract of land in the lower Altamaha River corridor, which is itself one of the most important conservation targets identified in Georgia's State Wildlife Action Plan.

Mr. Friedman stated that this tract will be permanently protected and managed to restore its hydrological and ecological values and create significant public recreational opportunities. He further stated that this property will also buffer the Townsend Bombing Range, one of the military's most important bombing ranges on the east coast. He added that TNC will sell a restrictive easement over this property to the U. S. Marine Corps (USMC) that will preclude development. He further added that the Department will then require the remaining fee interest at a reduced price.

Mr. Wheeler called on Lt. Colonel Derek Richardson, Executive Officer, USMC Air Station Beaufort, for comments.

Lt. Colonel Richardson stated that the Townsend Bombing Range is owned by the Marine Corps and is an inert training bombing range. He further stated that the Townsend Bombing Range is comprised of 5,183 acres in Long and McIntosh Counties. He added that it is a joint-use range, meaning that all services are able to use the range at any time.

Lt. Colonel Richardson stated that although it is owned by the Marines, it is operated by the Air National Guard and recognized Colonel Joe Ferrero, who was in attendance representing the Air National Guard.

Lt. Colonel Richardson gave a briefing of the significance of the Townsend Bombing Range, stating that it is unique in many ways.

Discussion ensued and Mr. Friedman stated that he would like to request the Committee's approval of this acquisition.

A motion was made by Mr. Billew, seconded by Mr. Carruth and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval for the acquisition (purchase) of 6,911± acres of real property, Altamaha River Townsend Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Rayonier Forest Resources, L.P. Tract Phase II, via The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Long County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Mr. Davis stated that, for the record, he is very reluctant to invest money at this time in land acquisition, but that Mr. Friedman had met with him to explain that the financing of this project is being done with money that is already available, and that since this is such an important part of the long range plan and serves the military, therefore, he will endorse the project.

Mr. Wheeler stated that he felt many of the Board Members share Mr. Davis' concerns and that his support on this acquisition is very much appreciated.

Mr. Friedman stated that the next item for consideration was acquisition (purchase) of 0.48± acre of real property, Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Randy Grant Tract, Dawson County. He further stated that approximately 600 acres of the Dawson Forest WMA was accessed by permission across two neighbor's properties. He added that one of the neighbors sold his property and the new owner revoked permissive access. He further added that this parcel has been sold again and the new owner has agreed to sell a 30-ft. wide strip of his land to the State for access. He stated that by buying this strip, the State will have deeded, permanent access owned in fee simple and will not need to cross adjoining landowners.

Mr. Friedman stated that funding to purchase this strip had been received in the form of a grant by the National Wild Turkey Federation as a part of their "More Places to Hunt" initiative. He further stated that the grant includes all costs associated with the purchase, which is land purchase price, plus due diligence costs. He added that he would like to recognize David Wamer and Andy Ivey who were in attendance from the National Wild Turkey Federation, Georgia Chapter, and thanked them for their partnership with this acquisition.

Discussion ensued and Mr. Friedman stated that he would like to request the Committee's approval of this acquisition.

A motion was made by Mr. Billew, seconded by Mr. Carruth and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to seek State Properties Commission approval for the acquisition (purchase) of 0.48± acre of real property, Dawson Forest Wildlife

Management Area (WMA), Randy Grant Tract, Dawson County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Mr. Friedman stated that the final item for consideration was the recommendation of termination of a Construction Agreement and Amendment of an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the Department and Gordon County regarding Resaca Battlefield Historic Site, Gordon County. He further stated that the Department entered into an IGA with Gordon County on December 23, 2009, regarding the construction of a visitor's center and the subsequent operation of the Resaca Battlefield Historic Site. He added that Gordon County was to construct the visitor's center using both state and county funds and upon completion of the construction, Gordon County would operate and maintain the site and make it available to the general public for educational use.

Mr. Friedman stated that the projected cost of the project exceeded the total budget and, therefore, the Department and the County recommend terminating the Construction Agreement. He further stated that the Department will use the existing state funds to construct outdoor amenities associated with a historic battlefield, such as trails, historic signs and markers, bathroom facilities and a road, in time, for the site to be a part of the sesquicentennial celebration. He added that the County will begin raising funds for the balance of the money required to construct the visitor's center, and if any of the state funds remain, the Department would apply them toward the building.

Mr. Friedman stated that the Department and the County also desire to amend the IGA by substituting references to the outdoor amenities for the current references to the visitor's center, and that Gordon County will still be responsible for maintenance and operation of the outdoor site. He further stated that if the County does not meet the standards of the Department in operating this facility, the Department has the option to terminate the agreement with a 45-day notice.

Discussion ensued and Mr. Friedman stated that he would request the Committee's approval of the termination of the Construction Agreement and Amendment of the IGA.

A motion was made by Mr. Billew, seconded by Mr. Hudson and carried unanimously that the Committee recommends that the Board adopt the Resolution to authorize the Commissioner to terminate the Construction Agreement and Amend the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the Department and Gordon County regarding Resaca Battlefield Historic Site, Gordon County. (Resolution attached hereto and made a part hereof)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.