

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE SHENANDOAH COUNTY CONSERVATION
EASEMENT AUTHORITY

February 27th, 2024

A regular meeting of the Shenandoah County Conservation Easement Authority was held in the Community Development Conference Room, 600 North Main Street, Woodstock, Virginia on February 27th, 2024.

CEA Members present: Chair Dee Hockman, Vice Chair Doug French, Kelly Watkinson, and Planning Commissioner Debbie Keller.

CEA Members absent: Supervisor Josh Stephens and Marla Mooney.

Others Present: Tyler Hinkle County Planner, Lemuel Hancock Director of Community Development, Kim Woodwell Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley, and McKenzie Allen Associate Planner.

Chair Dee Hockman called the CEA meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

1. **Agenda**

Chair Hockman asked if anyone would like to make a motion, Vice Chair French made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Keller seconded the motion. All in favor. This motion carried.

2. **Minutes**

Chair Hockman asked if anyone would like to make a motion, Vice Chair French made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Keller seconded the motion. All in favor. This motion carried.

3. **Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair**

Chair Hockman opened the floor for nominations for Chair and Vice Chair for 2024. All were in agreement that the current Chair and Vice Chair should continue in their positions. This motion carried.

4. **Public Comment**

No comments.

5. **Shenandoah Valley Conservation Collaborative**

Mr. Hinkle refreshed everyone that there is \$4.5 million available for easements in the region and that they are currently working with Kevin Tate on reviewing the potential for Steve Bower's

6. **CEA Funding**

Mr. Hinkle noted that the CEA has \$332,000 to use for conservation purposes across the County and will receive up to an additional \$25,000 for the next fiscal year. He noted that thanks to the diligent work by McKenzie Allen they have been awarded an additional \$48,000 to spend on easements. CEA members thanked Ms. Allen for her work.

7. **Discussion on CEA PDR 22-02-01**

Mr. Hinkle provided an update on the proposed easement and noted that members needed to provide guidance to staff so initial conversations can begin on a formal agreement on the easement. Members spoke about their ideas on the easement and provided direction to staff on finalizing an agreement with the Bakers.

8. **Discussion on CEA DDR 24-02-01**

Ms. Allen provided an overview for a proposed Donation Of Development Rights for 201 parcels off of Dry Run Road in Fort Valley, 130 acres, recently purchased by Cleve Grimes. She noted that staff was seeking guidance on the interest from the CEA on the potential easement. Members expressed interest in working with Mr. Grimes and supported staff in moving forward with this easement.

9. **Discussion on CEA DDR 24-02-02**

Mr. Hinkle provided an overview for a proposed Donation Of Development Rights for a parcel at 488 Harmony Lane for a total of 34.663 acres on Tax Map Number: 043-3-002B. He noted that due to financial circumstances he is asking for the CEA to assist with the upfront due diligence costs. Members asked staff to look into the potential of using the VDACS funds or working with the SVCC on their loan/grant program. He said that they would look into it and provide an update at their next meeting.

10. **Discussion on CEA DDR 24-02-03**

Mr. Hinkle provided an overview for a proposed Donation Of Development Rights for 14 parcels off of Happy Valley Road for a total of 81.49 acres. He noted that the individual may be interested in a conservation easement as they intend to erase all of the property boundaries and an easement could financially be beneficial for them on a tax benefit basis. Members expressed interest in working on placing the property into an easement and said that it was important to protect areas around communities like Orkney Springs.

11. **Shenandoah 2045**

Mr. Hinkle noted that a presentation will be provided to the Planning Commission on March 7th and that all members are welcome to attend.

Next Meeting: March 27th, 2024. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM

Minutes recorded by Tyler Hinkle

Mission statement of the CEA: "To retain the rural character, ensure agricultural sustainability, and protect historic and natural resources in Shenandoah County by promoting, holding/co-holding and purchasing Voluntary Conservation Easements".