

Minutes of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting

July 14, 2016 Regular Meeting

The July 14, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board was convened at 7:07 pm in the Social Room of the Oak Ridge Civic Center with Alan Tatum, Chair, presiding.

Roll Call

Present: Naomi Asher, Steve Dittner, Ray Garrett, Kevin Hoyt, David Kitzmiller, Fay Martin, Dan Robbins, Ken Rueter and Alan Tatum.

Absent: None

Approval of the June 16, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes for the June 16, 2016 regular meeting was made by Dan and seconded by Fay. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Appearance and Citizen Comments

Doug Colclasure commented on the sale of the Oak Ridge Mall property. He noted that the new developer works in Greenville, S.C. and is familiar with the Swamp Rabbit Trail there. Doug recommended advocating for a connection from the Main St. property to the planned rail-to-trail project. Dan noted that the City bike/ped plan identifies potential downtown routes.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

The presentation by Carol Evans, Executive Director of the Legacy Parks Foundation, was postponed due to an unexpected scheduling conflict. Carol will be asked to appear at the August Park Board meeting.

Board Work Plan

Bell Update:

- Alan noted that the Bell Committee has developed a path forward for the project. He expects to be able to provide more details to the Board soon, possibly with a detailed presentation in September.
- Alan - Fundraising activities are ongoing. The committee hopes to have \$400K committed by major donors when the public fundraising campaign kicks off, probably in November.

Community and Corporate Donations Guide:

- Naomi has made significant progress on the corporate donation guide and hopes to have something to present to the Board next month.

Trail Development:

- Ray had a very productive meeting with Carol Evans to learn how Legacy Parks operates and how they can assist with the development of the East Fork Poplar Creek Trail without the City's involvement. Legacy Parks could serve as an agent for signed agreements with property owners. They would just need a commitment for maintenance, which Ray envisions could be provided by the Friends of Haw Ridge or Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning. Dan noted that Greenways Oak Ridge could also assist.
- Ken informed the Board that he would be presenting to the Legacy Parks Board (of which he is a member) in August on the subject of Legacy Parks becoming a more regional entity, branching out into Oak Ridge, along with Anderson and Roane counties. The Legacy Parks Board is growing stronger and increasing their ability to fundraise and complete more work. Potential projects would include the Sinkhole Trail (already complete) along with Gallaher Bend, Clark Center Park, East Fork Poplar Creek Trail and others. Their model is to fundraise, develop the park and then convey to another entity for long-term management.
- Ken also reported that he expected to have a status meeting with DOE in August with regard to the Gallaher Bend trails to address some questions, primarily related to the security assessment.

Clark Center Park:

- No report.

Grant Proposals and Opportunities:

- Steve asked about the recent grants received by the City, such as the sidewalk grant for Oak Ridge Turnpike. Jon explained that the grant submission was a collaborative effort between City departments, with Community Development taking the lead and supported by Public Works, Electric and others as appropriate. Steve expressed concern about the lack of bicycle routes through the center of town and asked about public input on the plan submitted. The plan approved was the part of the City Bike/Ped Plan developed several years ago with significant public input.
- Jon reported that the City was unable to put together a complete application for a Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program (TAEP) grant for tree planting, but would use the information gathered to be prepared to respond to the next application opportunity.

Long Term Strategy/Needs Assessment:

- No report.

Programming Promotion:

- Kevin asked about the dates for next year's Secret City Festival and if they would conflict with, or offer an opportunity for collaboration with, Youth Fishing Day, which he is working to coordinate with TWRA. Jon responded that he did not know what the new non-profit board running the festival had planned. David suggested Kevin contact the non-profit to determine if a collaboration was feasible.
- Kevin noted that the Arboretum hosted a successful firefly walk last month, with about 120 people in attendance. He noted that the Arboretum had two more workshops planned this year, a pesticide workshop and a tree planting workshop. He also noted that there would be a butterfly event at the Arboretum on July 30 from 9 am to 2 pm.

National Park Service Collaboration:

- Jon noted that he and others, including City Councilman Chuck Hope, would be attending a National Park Peer Exchange in August in Denver. Representatives of all three of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park communities will be present to collaborate on Park development planning.

UT Arboretum/City Trails Integration:

- Kevin provided an overview of the UT Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center, the facility he manages. He highlighted the UT Arboretum, which is the public component of the larger facility. His presentation included a potential 5K run route through the Arboretum for future events and potential linkages to future greenway development.

Updates and Observations (Non Action Items):

- Fay noted that the tennis courts at Jackson Square are being cleaned by Parks maintenance staff.
- Dan updated the status of the bluebird houses and noted a hornet's nest on Melton Lake Greenway that he reported to Parks. Within 24 hours the Parks crew addressed the nest, which was subsequently destroyed, presumably by an animal.
- City Councilman Chuck Hope provided updates form Council. He provided background on the sidewalk grant and efforts by Council to look at pedestrian connectivity to the Main St. project. He reported on an April meeting with DOE, which included discussions about the transfer of Clark Center Park. He asked that he and Jon Hetrick, Rec & Parks Director, be kept informed about the discussions with Legacy Parks regarding the park. He also touched on the Park Service Peer Exchange in Denver, noting that Oak Ridge is further along on Park development than the other communities. Alan asked what DOE's position on Clark Center Park is. Chuck responded that they want to dispose of it, but they aren't willing to give anything to facilitate the transfer. He recognized the challenges associated with capital maintenance needs and resources for ongoing management.
- CVB – Steve noted that the CVB is now using the name "Explore Oak Ridge". He was unable to make the June meeting, but shared the news that they have made the move into the Chamber of Commerce building as of July 1st.

Director's Report:

- Summer camp and the Outdoor Pool operation are approaching the end of their seasons. Both have been going well. Despite challenges associated with the pool infrastructure, Aquatics Manager Vonda Wooten has been successful in keeping the pool open. The pools have just received their second Health Department inspections for the season. All pools have received perfect scores of 100 during all inspections.
- Alan asked about filter repair plans. Jon outlined the plan, beginning with replacement of all of the filter valves, then progressing through the issues identified in the engineering evaluation performed this spring, addressing as many issues as the budgeted Capital money will allow.
- Fay asked about expanded food vendor opportunities. Vonda is evaluating possibilities and will probably implement some changes for next season.

Future Agenda Items:

- Legacy Parks Executive Director Carol Evans will be rescheduled to speak with the Board about the ways that Legacy Parks assists other entities with the acquisition and improvement of park land.
- Ray requested an endorsement from the Board of a collaboration with Legacy Parks Foundation for development of the East Fork Poplar Creek trail.

Fay made a motion to adjourn and Ray seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.



Alan Tatum

Mr. David Buhaly
Branch Chief, Reservation Management
Department of Energy, Oak Ridge Office
P.O. Box 2001
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

Dear Mr. Buhaly:

Recently the Oak Ridge Recreation and Parks Advisory Board met with the Legacy Parks Foundation regarding their proposal to the Department of Energy Oak Ridge Reservation, requesting a trail use easement or agreement on the Gallaher Bend/Bull Bluff Park and greenway area. We have concluded that the Legacy Parks Foundation Regional initiatives complement our community's land recreation and conservation vision and further enable the preservation of forest and natural areas in the City of Oak Ridge. Furthermore, we believe that given the proximity of the Clark Center Park within the Oak Ridge city boundaries, the proposed trail additions to the Bull Bluff Greenway area could further enhance the beauty and value of the surrounding property. This proposed project, coupled with the Clark Center Park features and the City of Oak Ridge's trails, greenways, arboretum, and bird sanctuary areas, will further help position East Tennessee and the City of Oak Ridge as an outdoor recreation destination.

Thus, on behalf of the Oak Ridge Recreation and Parks Board, we fully endorse and encourage the Department of Energy to grant the Gallaher Bend land parcel use agreement to the Legacy Park Foundation, enabling a multi-use trail network project.

Sincerely,

Alan Tatum

City of Oak Ridge

Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Chair

C: Carol Evans, Legacy Parks Foundation
John Shewairy, Department of Energy