

APPROVED

Minutes of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting

April 10, 2014 Regular Meeting

The April 10, 2014 Regular Meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board was convened at 7:09pm in the Social Room of the Recreation Center with Ray Garrett, Vice Chair presiding.

Roll Call

Members present at roll call: Naomi Asher, Steve Dittner, Ray Garrett, Fay Martin, Dan Robbins and Cathy Toth. Late arriving: Alan Tatum. Members absent: Frank Chmielewicz and Bridgette Ellis.

Approval of the March 13, 2014 Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes for March 13, 2014 meeting was made by Cathy Toth and seconded by Dan Robbins. The minutes were approved by a 6-0 vote.

Appearance and Citizen Comments

No one appeared before the Board.

Committee Reports

Bike/Ped Committee- Ray Garrett

Ray Garrett discussed three proposed projects for the Bike/Ped Committee for 2014. The three projects included a single track walking/biking trail along the north side of East Fork Poplar Creek from the Civic Center to Big Turtle Park, Parking spaces near Mississippi Avenue or along the ROW on North Illinois Avenue to serve the western end of the North Ridge and Rails To Trails from Elza Gate Park to Y-12. Ray reviewed the scope of each project, potential costs and issues that must be considered. (see attached) The Board approved Ray's proposed project list as part of the larger Recreation and Parks Advisory Board 2014 Work Plan.

Community Funding Opportunities Committee

Chairman Tatum discussed the draft document that was prepared by the Committee as part of the 2013 Work Plan and was included in the Board agenda material e-mailed with the meeting announcement. Finalizing and distributing the Community Funding Opportunities Brochure will be included in the 2014 Board Work Plan. After Allan asked for volunteers to chair the committee, Naomi Asher agreed to take on the role as committee chair.

Long-term Strategy/Needs Assessment Committee – Alan Tatum

Chairman Tatum discussed the role of the Committee and stressed the challenge facing the Recreation and Parks Department staff as it deals with rising maintenance costs, changing community needs and staying abreast of current trends in Recreation. The Board needs to be an advocate for the Department. Alan outlined a plan

that would assign Board members to each activity area within the Department to gather information on operational and capital needs. Allan also proposed inviting Department staff members to future meeting to discuss their area of expertise and challenges they face.

Waterfront Redevelopment Master Planning Committee

Chairman Tatum reviewed the Committee's work plan for 2013 and discussed tasks that are yet to be completed. Allan asked for a volunteer to chair the committee. The 2013 work plan tasks will be continued in the 2014 Work Plan.

Unfinished Business

2014 Park Board Plan

After reviewing the elements of the 2013 Board Work Plan and discussing potential Committee tasks, Chairman Tatum presented a proposed 2014 Board Work Plan for approval. (see attached) Dan Robbins made a motion to approve the proposed Park Board Work Plan for 2014. Ray Garrett seconded the motion . The Work Plan was approved by a vote of 7-0.

Committee Assignments

Naomi Asher agreed to chair the Community Funding Committee and Ray Garrett will chair the Bike/Ped Committee. The Chairmanship for the Waterfront Development Committee is still open.

East Fork Poplar Creek Trail- Ray Garrett

This was covered under the Bike/Ped Committee Report.

New Business

Agenda Format Changes

Chairman Tatum will draft a list of proposed format changes for the May Board meeting.

Director's Report

School Swap Off Agreement

This topic will be added to the May agenda.

Project Update

This topic will be added to the May agenda.

June Meeting

Josh Collins requested Board consideration on rescheduling the June 12 meeting. The Secret City Festival will be starting the next day and the building will be setup for the event. Josh offered to reschedule to June 5th or June 19th. The Board will discuss the date change at the May meeting.

Adventure Tourism Designation

Josh Collins briefly discussed the initiative to establish an Adventure Tourism District within Oak Ridge. This will allow the City to support local tourism and tourism related businesses and companies to create jobs in Oak Ridge. This designation will provide incentives to these companies that move to Oak Ridge. City Council will consider the designation at its April 14 meeting.

Dan Robbins discussed the Melton Lake Cleanup held on March 29 and the volunteer effort to clean up the shoreline. Several organizations including Rotary Club, Greenways Oak Ridge and Keep Anderson County Beautiful participated. Trash was bagged and left at designated areas along the lake front.

Dan discussed the recent tree cutting along Melton Lake IV, recycling in the parks/greenways and cleanup efforts along the greenway trail.

Cathy Toth made a motion to adjourn and Ray Garrett provided the second. The meeting was adjourned at 9:17.

Proposed Bike and Ped Projects for 2014

1. East Fork Poplar Creek Trail

a. Scope: Single track walking/biking trail along East Fork Poplar Creek from Civic Center walking trail to Big Turtle Park

b. Cost: Near zero

c. Issues (see appendix)

2. Parking Spaces for west North Ridge Trail

a: Scope: gravel parking space for 2 cars at top of Mississippi and on North III.

b. Cost: (i.) some dirt and gravel. (Rogers may donate gravel, some opportunities can provide free dirt)

(ii.) New signage Very modest total cost.

c. Issues: (i.) Move steel gate further downhill at Mississippi (ii.)

3. Rails to Trails Elza Gate to Y12

a. Scope; Bike trail along railway

b. Cost: ??

c. Issues: (i) negotiate available options with railroad (ii) Face financial issue

APPENDIX

Proposed East Fork Poplar Creek Walking Trail

For many years the East Fork Poplar Creek has been a liability for Oak Ridge. It has been contaminated with mercury, marked with warning signs, banned from fishing, and decried in public and private meetings and in print and television media.

Enough of this! Herein is a proposal for creation of a hiking trail along the creek extending from the Civic Center to Big Turtle Park. A trail that would have identified plants (trees, shrubs, flowers, etc) creek views, and resting benches. If properly done, the trail would have the potential of turning a City liability into an asset. An exemplary model is that of the trail along Boulder Creek in Boulder Colorado.

Issues to be faced:

1. Negotiating agreements with several private owners.

Discussions with the owner of a major piece of property along the proposed corridor (Mel Sturm) produced the following items to be addressed:

a) Owner must be protected from "7 years of public use creating public ownership"

b) Private land owner must be protected from liability for accidents on the trail

c) Trail must not terminate on private property

2. negotiating with city to address concerns under item 1

3. Organizing volunteers to build the trail

4. Identifying and marking plants, etc.

5. Installing benches and signs.

***Recreation and Parks Advisory Board
2014 Work Plan***

High Priority Strategic Directions and Plans

- 1) Continue to support city staff in development of dog park infrastructure
 - a) serve as liaison to the Oak Ridge Dog Park User Group
 - b) provide recommendations on improvements to the existing dog park
 - c) identify future dog park sites

- 2) Complete Community Donations Guide
 - a) finalize Guide and create a brochure
 - b) make Guide readily available to the community

- 3) Continue development of a master plan for future redevelopment and enhancement of the City waterfront
 - a) evolve existing master planning concepts to reflect current thinking, priorities, and public input
 - b) define a proposed plan of future, executable projects, including scope, cost estimates, coordination/integration, and schedule

- 4) Pursue Proposed Bike and Ped Projects
 - a) East Fork Poplar Creek Trail
 - b) Parking spaces for west North Ridge Trail
 - c) Rails to Trails Elza Gate to Y12

- 5) Develop Long Range Plan
 - a) articulate a 5, 10, and 20 year vision for the Recreation and Parks program by creating a living document that can be updated at least annually
 - b) communicate the Plan to the City Manager and City Council as required for the budget formulation process
 - c) solicit public input to the Plan through one or more community meetings

- d) include a strategy for long term capital maintenance of existing infrastructure
- e) determine unmet needs and opportunities for redirection of resources to meet those needs
- f) develop opportunities to promote the Oak Ridge Recreation and Parks Program