

APPROVED

Minutes of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting

March 13, 2014 Regular Meeting

The March 13, 2014 Regular Meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board was convened at 7:05pm in the Social Room of the Recreation Center with Josh Collins, Director of Recreation and Parks presiding.

Roll Call

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

Election of Officers

Dan Robbins nominated Alan Tatum to serve as Chair of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board. The motion was seconded by Fay Martin. No other nominations were made. Alan Tatum was elected to chair the Board by an 8-0 vote. Fay Martin nominated Ray Garrett for the Vice Chair position and Dan Robbins provided the second. Ray was elected to the position of Vice Chair by an 8-0 vote.

Approval of the February 13, 2014 Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes for February 13, 2014 meeting was made by Cathy Toth and seconded by Bridgette Ellis. The minutes were approved by an 8-0 vote.

Appearance and Citizen Comments

No one appeared before the Board.

Committee Reports

Dog Park Committee- Bridgette Ellis

Bridgette reported a 99.7% approval rating from comments she has received regarding the Dog Park. Visitors are satisfied with the facility and think it's a great off leash area. One visitor expressed concern regarding a pet owner that had a small dog and a large dog in the small dog area. After some discussion with other pet owners, the two dogs were moved into the all dog area. Self-regulation is the best solution for managing this type of issues. Bridgette discussed the need for year round restrooms and the concern over the recent news regarding canine distemper at the Animal Shelter. Water should be turned on by the 1st of April.

Dan Robbins had received a request for a "two level" wash station, the need for more shade and the need for a Dog Park on the east end.

When asked about additional improvements at the Dog Park, Josh Collins mentioned the planting of trees near Monterey Drive, adding security lighting, a few more benches and fire hydrants. Bridgette would like to solidify

the Dog Park user group and phase out the Dog Park Committee. The user group can continue working the Recreation and Parks Department on Dog Park related issues.

Bike/Ped Committee

The Board discussed the charge for the Bike/Ped Committee and the role of the Committee in 2014. Ray Garrett expressed support for the Committee and offered to serve as its Chair. As the Rails to Trails project moves forward, the Bike /Ped Committee will play a major role in the planning effort.

Bridgette Ellis asked about a case before the Supreme Court that deals with the possible return of acquired railroad rights of way to the original owners and how would this case impact the City's request to acquire the CSX railroad ROW from Elza Park to Y-12? The Court will issue an opinion in late June.

Community Funding Opportunities Committee

The Board discussed the charge for the Community Funding Opportunities Committee and the status of the deliverables from 2013. Josh will provide the Board with the latest work product from the Committee.

Long-term Strategy/Needs Assessment Committee – Alan Tatum

Alan Tatum briefly discussed the role of the Committee and the importance of keeping City Council and the City Manager informed on Recreation and Parks Department challenges/issues during the upcoming City Budget process. The Board needs to develop a strategy for dealing with these challenges in the coming years. Alan proposed a plan that would assign Board members to each activity area within the Department to gather information on operational and capital needs. Alan will fine tune the process for the April meeting.

Waterfront Redevelopment Master Planning Committee

After a brief Board discussion on the role of the Committee, members expressed support to continue working on implementation of the Waterfront Plan.

Unfinished Business

2014 Park Board Plan

The Board briefly discussed the status of the elements included in the 2013 Work Plan and moving forward with drafting the 2014 plan. Several of the 2013 goals such as Waterfront Development, the Rails to Trails action plan, performing a needs assessment and community funding are ongoing and could be continued into 2014.

Committee Assignments

Formalizing committee assignments will be included in the April Agenda.

New Business

Tree Board

Josh Collins led the discussion regarding the Oak Ridge Tree Board and its relationship to the Recreation and Parks Department. Josh outlined the role and duties of the Tree Board as it relates to the City's designation as a Tree City USA. Prior to the appointment of the first Recreation and Parks Advisory Board, City staff discussed the possibility of moving the Tree Board duties from the Environmental Quality Advisory Board to the soon to be created Park Board. Since the Tree Board works with the Department on Tree City and greenbelt issues, such a move would give the new Board a greater role in managing trees in public areas. Staff determined the Tree Board duties should remain with EQAB until such times as the new Park Board was well established and able to evaluate taking on additional responsibilities associated with becoming the City's Tree Board.

EQAB members , Ellen Smith and Pat Imperato, discussed the expanded duties of the Tree Board to include working with the Public Works Department and the Electric Department on utility trimming and rights of way tree maintenance in addition to activities involving Recreation and Parks.

Board members expressed support for the Tree Board duties to remain with EQAB and promised to pass along tree issues and concern as they arise.

Director's Report

Josh Collins briefly discussed the March 1, 2014 Board work session. Copies of the presentation will be sent to each Board member

Dan Robbins discussed the Melton Lake Cleanup on March 29 and the need for additional volunteers. Dan will prepare a flyer to promote the event and the City will make copies. Several organizations including Rotary Club and Keep Anderson County Beautiful will be participating. Trash will be bagged over the weekend and the City will pick up the bags on Monday. Dan passed along citizen concern over the planned repair of the Bell house in Bissell Park. Some citizens fear the planned repairs may include a redesign of the bell house. An engineering firm is evaluating the condition of the structure and will make recommendations on how to proceed with the repairs.

Ray Garrett discussed his idea of constructing a single track trail along East Fork Poplar. He has discussed his ideas with 3 of the major landowners along the creek. Ray will discuss his plans in greater detail at the April 10 meeting.

Frank Chmielewicz discussed a trail marking system that will be installed along the Melton Lake and Emory Valley Greenways this fall. The markers will display the mile marker and the name of the greenway. Police dispatch will be able to send emergency services based on a GPS coordinate for each marker.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.
