

Minutes of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting

January 14, 2016 Regular Meeting

The January 14, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board was convened at 7:03 pm in the Social Room of the Oak Ridge Civic Center with Alan Tatum, Chair, presiding.

Roll Call

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

Absent: Naomi Asher, Dan Robbins.

Approval of the December 10, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes for the December 10, 2015 regular meeting was made by David and seconded by Ray. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Appearance and Citizen Comments

Mary Lou Daugherty, representing the League of Women Voters, was introduced.

Introduction of New Board Member: Alan introduced newly elected Board member Kevin Hoyt. Kevin is the Director of the University of Tennessee Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center, commonly referred to as the UT Arboretum, located at 901 S. Illinois Ave in Oak Ridge.

Department Presentation

John Harris, Recreation & Parks Athletics Supervisor, provided an overview of Athletic programming within the Department. See attached PowerPoint presentation for details.

Board Work Plan

Alan noted that the Board needed to schedule a work session to draft the work plan for 2016. He then provided a review of the 2015 work plan. The Board scheduled the work session for Saturday, January 30, 2016 at 9 am. Kevin Hoyt will host the work session at the recently completed University of Tennessee Arboretum Auditorium.

Committee Reports

Bell Update:

- Alan reminded everyone that the Bell Committee will have a booth at the National Park Service public input meeting on the Manhattan Project National Historical Park, to be held February 1, 2016 from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm at the Oak Ridge High School. The committee will have a new one-page brochure to distribute, which will also be available at the NPS temporary headquarters inside AMSE.
- Alan stated that the Bell Committee is actively working on the fundraising strategy.

- He also reported that the Japanese Consul General is expected to visit Oak Ridge March 2nd or 9th. Discussions are expected to include how the inclusion of the Bell in the National Park helps to present a positive view of current US/Japan relations.

Bike/Ped Committee:

- North Ridge Trail – Ray passed on a request from Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning (TCWP) to look at a possible small parking area along Key Springs Rd. in the area where the trail crosses the road. Ray asked who is responsible for maintenance of that section of road and Jon reported that he was almost certain that Anderson County maintains the road, though it is in the City limits. Jon then suggested that Ray look into whether the right-of-way was wide enough for providing the parking without encroaching on the greenbelt. Steve suggested the best location might be about 20 yards up the road from the trail crossing – fairly flat.
- East Fork Poplar Creek – Ray shared concerns expressed by Mel Sturm, one of the property owners, regarding the requested easement. He has talked to the City Attorney about the issues and is awaiting a response. David suggested that Ray contact Legacy Parks about assistance with obtaining easements on private property. Ray also reported that he left a trail description and request for approval with the Schools Superintendent. Tate has also withdrawn permission to use their property, so Ray is looking at a bypass around the property on Jefferson Ave.
- North Ridge Trail report – mostly good, with one downed tree to be reported to Parks maintenance.

Community Funding Opportunities Committee:

- The corrections have been made to the brochure and it has been sent for an initial printing run. The new demonstration rain garden at Jackson Square has been added to the list of potential distribution sites.
- Alan requested that the availability of the brochure be publicized through press releases, social media, etc.

Long Term Strategy/Needs Assessment:

- No Report.

Trail Stewardship:

- The route of the proposed trail bypassing Melton Lake Greenway and the Life Development Center on the East end of the Park has been flagged for construction. FoHR is planning a coordinated effort with AMBC for a trail construction day in February, with the exact date yet to be determined. Ken reported that Larry Creech is coordinating the date and working with the LDC staff to get their buy-in on the section of trail adjacent to the LDC ropes course. Ken also reported that a hunting blind was discovered by the crew laying out the trail, about 800 ft. in from the west end of the trail. Jon will have it removed.

Grants:

- No report.

Programming:

- Alan has received the Department presentation from Jon and is now working to create a condensed version, without losing content and message. He will try to have a draft for the Board to review at the work session.

Unfinished Business:

- The Board reviewed the draft of the annual report to City Council prepared by Alan. Ken requested that construction of the Sinkhole Trail be added to the list of accomplishments. David requested that some wording be added to indicate that the Board has concluded that the department is underfunded. Alan agreed to integrate that into the text and Ken suggested that it be created under its own heading to draw attention to it. David also requested that the spelling of his name be corrected. Ken made a motion to approve the report with the recommended edits and Fay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

- Ken – holding discussions with DOE about adding singletrack multi-use trails at Gallaher Bend as an extension of the greenway license agreement. Trails could include a cyclocross course in the “dove fields” along the greenway. DOE has indicated a willingness to work with Legacy Parks on crafting the agreement and allowing Larry Creech and Doug Colclasure to scout and map potential routes. Ken will coordinate with Larry and Carol Evans (Legacy Parks Executive Director) to move the project forward.
- David asked if there were any greenways incorporated into the Main Street Oak Ridge project. Jon responded that he did not believe so, but that the site had been designed to be pedestrian friendly.
- Steve suggested looking into a license agreement for greenways on DOE patrol roads west of Country Club Estates, south of the Turnpike and east of 95 after the 95/58 split. Jon asked about the proximity of “hot spots” to the proposed trails. Ken responded that the hot spots were secured and he felt DOE would probably be receptive to a license agreement there. He will help coordinate with DOE.

Updates and Observations (Non Action Items):

- CVB – no report.
- Jon reported that the City purchased a dozen 4x4 posts for Dan’s bluebird house project.
- Steve reported huge fire ant mounds have become common in the BORCE.

Director’s Report:

- Jon reported that the department has hired a new Aquatics Manager, Vonda Wooten, who will begin work January 19th. Vonda is coming to Oak Ridge from Manchester, TN, where she served in a similar position for thirteen years. He reported that other staffing changes at the Civic Center were having positive results, with better teamwork and customer service as a result.
- Jon also reported that the department has an engineering firm under contract to perform an audit of the outdoor pool mechanical systems. The report will be used to develop short and long-term repair programs.

- He also provided an update on planning for the Secret City Festival.

Future Agenda Items:

- Officer elections
- Parks Division supervisor Billy Pickett and Crew Chief Wade Cordell will provide a report to the Board on the Parks Division of the department.

Fay made a motion to adjourn and Ken seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:56pm.

Alan Tatum