

Minutes of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting

November 10, 2016 Regular Meeting

The November 10, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board was convened at 7:02 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, David Kitzmiller, Fay Martin, Dan Robbins, Ken Rueter and Alan Tatum.

Absent: Kevin Hoyt

Approval of the September 8, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes for the September 8, 2016 regular meeting was made by Fay and seconded by Ray. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Appearance and Citizen Comments

Citizens present: Mary Lou Daughtery, Doug Colclasure.

Doug discussed a unanimous Park Board recommendation made approximately four years ago against the construction of a powerline along the North Boundary trail to provide additional power to the Horizon Center. Doug stated that the City Manager, Mark Watson, had confirmed at a recent IDB meeting that the powerline would not be built and an alternate source of supplying power would be used. Doug also noted that he had recently walked that section of North Boundary Greenway with Mayor Gooch.

Doug then reported on trail work recently completed at Haw Ridge Park by Tom Dunigan and himself, using a mini excavator to rebuild water bars and correct erosion issues. He also talked about the recent 18th running of the Hill of Truth 12-hour mountain bike race at Haw Ridge, which was a very successful event. Steve noted that 10% of proceeds from the race are donate to the Friends of Haw Ridge.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

None

Board Work Plan

Bell Update:

- Alan requested that all Board members attend the Bell project fundraising kickoff event at Pollard Auditorium on Thursday, November 17th from 5:30 – 7:30 pm. The event will include a presentation of the new design concept by architect Ziad Demian.

Community and Corporate Donations Guide:

- Naomi has completed the brochure, which is now awaiting printing. Alan asked the Board for suggestions on the best way to distribute the brochure. Several suggestions were made, including direct distribution by Board members to businesses, trail kiosk notices, a Park Board table at the Secret City Festival, distribution at ETEC, distribution through the Chamber of Commerce and through Explore Oak Ridge. Jon will have copies printed for distribution to Board members.

Trail Development:

- Ray reported on the construction of a small parking area along Key Springs Road to serve the North Ridge trail, constructed by the Anderson County Road Department at Ray's request.
- He also reported on his meeting with Carol Evans of the Legacy Parks Foundation to create a plan for the development of the proposed East Fork Poplar Creek trail. Ray has also written a white paper for Jon to present to the City Manager for review. There will be a short-term request for permission for the trail to cross City property, with the long-term plan to be a request that the City accept responsibility/liability once the trail has been created. Ray also stated that there is now some urgency to complete the easement with Wayne Clark for the section of trail crossing his property because he may be donating that land soon and would like to have the easement in place prior to that.
- Ken reported on a recent discussion he had with Mayor Gooch with regard to the Legacy Parks initiatives in Oak Ridge and Anderson County. The Mayor appears to be supportive of the efforts. Areas of discussion included the Sinkhole trail and other possible multi-use trails on the ED-6 parcel, Gallaher Bend and West BORCE development Legacy Parks potential role in Clark Center Park.
- Ken also reported on a presentation by he and Carol Evans gave to ETEC on the relationship between trail development and residential, commercial and industrial development.
- Ken provided an update on discussions with DOE on Gallaher Bend trail development. There is a feasible path to approval, but ongoing ecological studies complicate the process. It may take another 9 to 12 months to acquire approval. DOE has offered to support trail development at West BORCE in the interim, in cooperation with TWRA. Ken is looking at RTP and other grants to fund the construction of machine-built trails.
- Steve reported that he had a recent discussion with one of the new City Council members-elect on trail development.

Clark Center Park:

- No report.

Grant Proposals and Opportunities:

- No report

Long Term Strategy/Needs Assessment:

- No report.

Programming Promotion:

- No report

National Park Service Collaboration:

- Dan advised the Board that the National Park Service has a newsletter for the new National Park.
- Ken reported that the ETPP History Center design is on track for final design, with construction anticipated to begin before summer.

UT Arboretum/City Trails Integration:

- Jon reported that he had discussed the proposed 5K Fun Run collaboration with the City Manager, who is supportive of the idea. He has given tentative approval, pending development of safe parking and race areas on the City parcel proposed for the start/finish line of the race. The area is a former landfill site and the terrain is uneven due to irregular settling of the ground.

Updates and Observations (Non Action Items):

- Steve attended the most recent CVB Board meeting, which included updates on the 8th Lane project and reports on the Spring Training schedule for the rowing course. The Oak Ridge Rowing Association (ORRA) has a goal of attracting 35 teams this year, they currently have commitments from 38 teams. Jon provided additional information on the 8th Lane project based on a meeting with the contractor and project engineer earlier on the 10th. Excavation is about 30% complete and work is progressing well, in part due to the extremely dry weather and also the quickly draining nature of the dredged material.
- Steve also mentioned the ½ marathon and 5K coming up on November 19th. Jon reported that the 8th Lane project contractor had committed to try to have the greenway open for the races to minimize the impact on Melton Lake Drive.
- Fay noted that the Oak Ridge Garden Club will be dedicating a Blue Star Memorial Marker at Emma Spray Garden in Jackson Square on Friday the 11th at 1 pm. The Mayor of Oak Ridge is scheduled to attend to accept the dedication of the marker to the City and the High School chorus is scheduled to perform.
- Dan reported 85 GWOR volunteer hours in October. He will hold the GWOR Christmas Party at his home on December 14th, all are invited.

Director's Report:

- Jon noted the upcoming Boards and Commissions appointments by City Council. Jon asked that all Board members actively seek out qualified candidates and encourage them to apply for open positions that current members may not wish to reapply for.
- The Recreation & Parks Department hosted the Great Smokey Mountains Regional Greenway Council's quarterly meeting earlier that day. Jon provided a presentation on the 911 location markers installed along Melton Lake Greenway earlier this year.
- Jon also noted that the Planning Commission had met earlier that evening to discuss the upcoming FY2018 – FY2023 Capital Improvement Program. City departments are unified this year in focusing expenditures on Capital Maintenance, with less emphasis on new projects. As discussed by the Board when the Rec & Park CIP was reevaluated last year, there is a substantial backlog of major maintenance projects in need of funding. That said, there were a couple of new projects presented, including the Friendship Bell Peace Pavilion and the Rails to Trails project, for which the City has a \$40,000 master planning grant and approval from the TPO for a \$1.2M grant for acquisition of the CSX rail line in town. Capital funds would be used to match the acquisition grant.

Future Agenda Items:

None

Fay made a motion to adjourn at 8:15 pm., with Naomi seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Alan Tatum