

Minutes of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting

October 15, 2015 Regular Meeting

The October 15, 2015 Regular Meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board was convened at 7:00 pm in the Social Room of the Oak Ridge Civic Center with Alan Tatum, Chair, presiding.

Roll Call

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

Absent: Naomi Asher, John Clayton.

Approval of the May 18, 2015 Work Session August 13, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes for the May 18, 2015 work session and the August 13, 2015 regular meeting was made by Ray and seconded by Ken. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Appearance and Citizen Comments

None.

Committee Reports

Bell Update:

- Alan reported that the Bell Committee is currently reviewing the information from the two public input sessions and considering how the Bell project should be integrated into the upcoming National Historical Park. Public comments generally were positive, though many would like to see more Japanese style reflected in the structure. The Committee has contacted a number of large local businesses to attempt to identify Foundation-level contributors (\$50K or greater) and they have received positive responses, but no firm commitments at this time. The committee is considering possible cost-savings to reduce the overall budget. David suggested that the Committee contact the Hospital Foundation about project funding.
- DOE and the National Park Service will hold a local MOA signing ceremony at the Oak Ridge High School on November 12, 2015. The Bell Committee will have an informational booth at the event. The City will also be printing four different styles of commemorative postcards for the event, one of which will feature the Bell. The Japanese Consul in Nashville will be invited to attend the signing event.
- There will be a follow-up event at Jackson Square on November 14, 2015 celebrating the Park designation. The Bell Committee will also have an informational booth at the event.

Bike/Ped Committee:

- Ray reported that he is trying to find out what the tax assessment value of the CSX rail line is. The rail line is treated as a utility, so the information is not as readily available as it is for a regular business. Jon noted that Community Development Director Kathryn Baldwin has sent out an information packet to

State representatives about the proposed acquisition to try to enlist their support in the negotiations with CSX. Ken suggested contacting Legacy Parks about the project, as they recently negotiated the use of 3.5 miles of rail line for a trail in South Knoxville.

- Ray reported no action on the proposed parking lot on North Illinois Ave by the City Manager's office.
- East Fork Poplar Creek – Ray requested that Jon walk the proposed trail route with him after the leaves fall from the trees in a few weeks. Several other Board members expressed an interest in participating. An announcement will be sent out to the Board when the walk through is scheduled.
- Sinkhole Trail: A work day for the trail is scheduled for Saturday, October 17th to finish the trail. Well designed by Larry Creech, the trail line has already been raked out. A ribbon cutting ceremony is being planned to commemorate the opening of the new trail and the individuals and organizations that joined together to make it happen.
- North Ridge trail maintenance – Ray noted that the maintenance crew for North Ridge has installed trail marker posts at some areas where the trail layout is unclear.

Community Funding Opportunities Committee:

- Jon distributed a draft of the brochure that had been completed by Naomi Thompson, Rec & Parks Administrative Assistant. After some discussion the Board recommended several changes. Alan suggested adding the date to the brochure so that it could be updated annually. Ken suggested that the Department look into setting up a Pay Pal account to accept donations. This has worked well for other organizations. Steve recommended upgrading to better paper stock than that used for the draft printings. Fay suggested switching the bullet points under the "Why Should I Donate?" heading. Alan made a motion to approve, pending the suggested revisions. Dan seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.
- Distribution of the brochure was then discussed. The brochure will be available at Rec Centers and the Senior Center and on park and trailhead kiosks. Jon will look into distribution at other City offices. The Board will solicit local businesses for distribution points. A press release will also help to publicize the program.

Long Term Strategy/Needs Assessment:

- Jon outlined changes made to the draft CIP based largely on recommendations made by the Board. He also noted that the Planning Commission would be reviewing the draft CIP on October 29th at 5:30 pm in the Municipal Building Training Room.

Trail Stewardship:

- Steve reported that Friends of Haw Ridge has determined that there is no need for them to change their name or charter. The model used to design and build the Sinkhole Trail, in which they partnered with other interested parties (Legacy Parks, UCOR, and the Appalachian Mountain Bike Club (AMBC) in this case), worked very well. They will continue to follow this model in the future as other projects are presented.

Grants:

- Steve reported that he is working a draft of a letter from the Board making a formal recommendation to the City Manager that a grant writer be hired by the City.
- Ken noted that Legacy Parks has excellent grant writers on staff who may be able to assist with some projects.
- A recommendation was made to identify CIP projects that would likely be grant fundable and present them as such.

Programming:

- No report.

Unfinished Business:

- Doug Colclasure presented a slide show illustrating why AFORR has recommended that Clark Center Park be added to the National Park Service list of cultural landscape sites. In addition to Clark Center Park, the recommendation would include the entire Three Bends Area and other sites of historical significance on the reservation.
- Doug requested that the Board endorse the plan and noted that EQAB has already done so.
- Alan asked about the form of the endorsement. Doug noted that he has drafted a letter that could be signed by the Board and submitted.
- Dan made a motion to approve the endorsement of the plan. Steve seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

- Jon reported that applications are now being accepted for open City Board seats, noting that two seats on the Park Board were up for election. He also encouraged the Board to help recruit members for open seats on other boards.
- Ken reported that he has had discussions with Legacy Parks on other opportunities to partner in Oak Ridge and in Roane and Anderson counties. Suggestions included an expanded license agreement with to allow new singletrack at Gallaher Bend, possibly including a cyclocross track, and assistance with the transfer of Clark Center Park. He also suggested that the Board invite Legacy Parks Director Carol Evans back to speak to the Board again.
- David reported that 2016 would be the last year that the Boys & Girls Club of Oak Ridge would offer youth sports due to the cost of insurance and operations. A committee has been established to look at options for youth programming.

Updates and Observations (Non Action Items):

- Convention and Visitor's Bureau: No report.
- Dan reported on the Greenways Oak Ridge bluebird house matching grant program. He stated that Willow Ridge has plenty of houses available, but GWOR does not have the matching funds for all available.

Director's Report:

- Jon reported that the Secret City Festival would once again be planned and implemented by the Festival Executive Committee, composed of the Arts Council of Oak Ridge, the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the City, while the non-profit is being established in the coming year. The Festival will be June 10 & 11, 2016.

Future Agenda Items:

- None.

Fay made a motion to adjourn and Ken seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 pm.

Alan Tatum