

Minutes of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting

May 10, 2018 Regular Meeting

The May 10, 2018 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: Mark Cantrell, Ray Garrett, David Kitzmiller, Melissa McMahan, Dan Robbins, Ken Rueter, Brad Spears and Alan Tatum

Absent: Naomi Asher

Approval of the February 8, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes

The February 8, 2018 meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Appearance and Citizen Comments

Present: Huey Sides, Mary Lou Daughtery, Doug Colclasure

- Huey Sides expressed concern about the greenbelt adjacent to his home, which is being overtaken by non-native invasive plants. Staff discussed the challenges faced by non-native invasive species in greenbelts and the lack of available resources to address the concerns, which are widespread through the greenbelt system. Staff also discussed opportunities for partnerships with concerned citizens and groups to try to address specific issues.
- Doug Colclasure reported on a walk organized for young mothers and their children on the North Boundary Greenway, which was very successful.

Unfinished Business

- 2018 Board Work Plan. Motion to approve by David, second by Ken. Unanimously approved.

New Business

- 2018 Park Board annual Report. Motion to approve by David, second by Ray. Unanimously approved.
- Review of the proposed TVA Public Land Protection Policy. The Board requested that Alan send an email to the City Manager expressing Board support for the plan as proposed.

Board Work Plan

Bell Update:

- The new goal for project completion and ribbon cutting is August 23, 2018, when the exchange students from Naka, Japan will be visiting.
- Ray noted that there has not been much progress at the construction site recently. Alan updated the Board on “behind the scenes” activity associated with finalizing design details that has been ongoing, along with noting recent gravel placement for the base of the plaza and paths.
- It was noted that the project will still be under construction and fenced off during the Secret City Festival.
- Alan updated the Board on progress with the carbon fiber trellis beams, 3D printed bench backs and the fabrication of precast concrete benches.

Rails to Trails:

- Staff provided an update on contract negotiations for design & engineering.
- Dan commented on the recent UT MBA student presentation on development potential centered around the proposed trail.
- There was a brief discussion of the acquisition process with CSX railway.

Trail Development:

- CVTA update – working on a membership drive. Brad requested that the City and CVTA move forward with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) now that the Friends of Haw Ridge has been dissolved.
- Dan noted evidence of trail riding at Haw Ridge when trails are wet and requested additional signage to remind riders not to ride when trails are wet. Brad noted that Haw Ridge has been abused in this way for years and that CVTA plans to engage in an educational push, using social media and other resources while pushing for a revitalization of Haw Ridge. That work will include rerouting of poorly draining trails, including a workday this coming Saturday in collaboration with AMBC.
- Ken reported efforts to provide advocacy and support for CROET conservation easements. A recent stakeholder meeting looked developable properties vs undevelopable, including the environmental value of preserving undevelopable land. Stakeholders represented included CROET, Foothills Land Conservancy, Legacy Parks and CVTA.
- Ray reported that he has reached an agreement with the kennel club for the proposed East Fork Poplar Creek (EFPC) Trail. He has also crafted an agreement with local Scouts to assist with construction of trail on approved parcels. He has one last holdout property owner with whom an agreement is needed to complete the trail alignment.

Long Range Planning:

- None

Promotion Collaboration Opportunities:

- City staff are working with Explore Oak Ridge to hold the US Cycling Time Trials Championship in Oak Ridge in June.

Events:

- Ray is working on plans for a trail build day on EFPC Trail with CVTA, with a multi-use focus. The trail is seen as ideal for kids to learn to ride trails due to its flat nature.
- David provided an overview on planning for the upcoming Secret City Festival.
- Jon noted that Graduation Celebration would be taking place May 31st.

Updates and Observations (Non Action Items):

- Dan noted that Greenways Oak Ridge logged 8,600 volunteer maintenance, that fire ant numbers were on the rise, bluebird houses were occupied and the iris were blooming ion the wetland along the Melton Lake Greenway boardwalk.

Director's Report:

- Work continues on Blankenship Field Revitalization plans.
- The Senior Center and Preschool projects are on the upcoming City Council agenda for approval to move forward with construction and bidding documents.

Future Agenda Items:

- None

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 pm.

Alan Tatum