

MINUTES OF CARTER COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

MEETING HELD March 23rd , 2021 at 801 East Elk Ave, Elizabethton, TN 37643

OPENING: Chairman Ken Gough called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

ROLL CALL: Erik Anderson conducted a rollcall. A quorum was present.

Patty Woodby (Mayor)	Present	Randall Jenkins (Commission Liaison)	Absent	Michael Warren (1)	Absent
Erik Anderson (2)	Present	Mel McKay (3)	Present	Lisa McGinnis (4)	Absent
Ken Gough (5)	Present	JR Campbell (6)	Present	Charlie Mattioli (7)	Present
Mike Melton (8)	Present	Eliz Park and Rep	Absent		

GUESTS: Chris Schuettler, Carter County Director of Planning and Zoning

PREVIOUS MINUTES: Minutes of the February 23rd 2021 meeting were provided to members before the meeting. The minutes of the February meeting were approved as presented by common consent.

PRESENTATIONS: None

OLD BUSINESS:

- Green Bridge Landing** – The playset has yet to be painted. Ken will work with Unaka High School to get the work accomplished. The walking path along the river is pretty much gone and unusable. Chris S. will look at the water flow and check into possibility that any remedy may be eligible for FEMA disaster declaration (318) funding.
- Shooting Park** – Nothing Significant to Report.
- Mountain Biking** – Wes Bradley of SORBA has submitted a grant request of \$15K for the Hampton Watershed Trails upgrade. Recipients will be announced in May. We have \$10K budgeted for a match.
- Gap Creek Park** – The RFQ for a Gap Creek Park project manager has been sent to likely bidders as well as was published in the paper. Responses are due April 5th. Charlie and Chris will present a summary and recommendation at the next meeting.

Chris Schuettler gave an extensive update on progress at Gap Creek Park. The rain gardens are about 75% completed and are doing their job of water control. The pavilion location has been cut-out. Pedestrian Bridge work continues. Summers Taylor has provided a good price for the concrete for the bridge abutments. He will also query Summers Taylor to see if they can provide a crane to help with bridge emplacement. The bridge has been manufactured. The future dog park has been seeded but we need a volunteer work day to remove rocks. Chris is ready to put out a bid for the fence for the dog park which will include double gated entrances for both the large dog and small dog sections. The "Friends of the Shelter" will be providing three poop stations. Chris is also investigating an AARP grant for the Softball Field. He has also applied for an asphalt recycle grant to pave the parking lot. Expenditures for Gap Creek were also reviewed. Some information appeared incorrect or incomplete. Ken will get with the Mayor and Finance to reconcile.

Charlie initiated a discussion on the potentiality of obtaining some of the COVID Economic Impact funds that Carter County will receive for a one time investment for Gap Creek Park. For example a lighted Ball Park would be approximately \$500K. The Mayor will investigate how much funding will come to the County and any restrictions on its use. Charlie and Chris will develop a list of potential projects.

5. **Overmountain Victory Trail** – Nothing Significant to Report
6. **Elizabethton P&R** – Mike Mains provided a written report separately.
7. **Birding** – The Herndon Birders are starting to meet again. Ken passed on that the wood duck box at Green Bridge Landing has been damaged and Chris asked that they provide several for Gap Creek Park.
8. **Erik Anderson Community Park** – Erik provided a written report. Hikerpalooza, the annual AT celebration, will take place on May 8th. It will be a scaled down to a Hiker hospitality event and will include installation of AT information panels on the community stage. TDOT is installing a replacement bridge at the entrance to Disc Golf course. It will require a re-work of the first hole. The Roan Mountain Recreation Foundation has initiated fundraising for a “Trout Trash Trap Junior” in the Community Park. Fundraising is underway and they have already raised \$600 of the projected need of \$3,900. Mayor Woodby reported that the Budget Committee and the Commission had approved \$2,000 for the Park and Recreation Board to help fund this initiative.
Mel made a motion to disburse \$2,000 to the RMRF for the Trout Trash Trap Jr. Mike Melton seconded the motion. A Roll Call vote was taken.

Patty Woodby (Mayor)	N/A	Randall Jenkins (Commission Liaison)	Absent	Michael Warren (1)	Absent
Erik Anderson (2)	Yes	Mel McKay (3)	Yes	Lisa McGinnis (4)	Absent
Ken Gough (5)	Yes	JR Campbell (6)	Yes	Charlie Mattioli (7)	Present
Mike Melton (8)	Yes	Eliz Park and Rep	N/A		

The motion to disburse \$2,000 to the RMRF was approved unanimously.

9. **Website update** – Nothing Significant to Report
10. **Road Cycling** – Reneau Dubberley invoiced the Park and Recreation Board for our \$500 sponsorship of this year’s Roan Groan. Ken approved the invoice and noted that the \$500 was in a previously approved budget. **Mel made a motion that we approve the invoice. JR seconded the motion. The motion to approve the invoice of \$500 for the Roan Groan sponsorship was unanimous.** We also need volunteers to help with traffic direction the day of the race, June 5th, 2021.
11. **Pocket Parks – Fish Springs.** JR reported that the “Friend of Fish Springs” had an organizational meeting on February 8th. They identified the steps to form their organization and eventually become a 501(c) 3. In the interim they will work under the auspices of Care and Share, an existing 501 (c) 3. They are pursuing additional property adjacent to the County property to improve access to the future park. They also drafted an operating policy for the “Friends of Fish Springs Community Park”. Erik will review the potential MOU and get it out to Park and Rec Board members for consideration at our next meeting.
12. **Blevins Road Lighting: No change.**
13. **Master Plan update planning:** Erik has requested an update on the status of the surveys from the School Administration.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Valley Forge – Hampton land donation:** Management Properties has offered to donate approx. 60 acres of land that follows the original Tweetsie Railroad right of way along the Doe River from Valley Forge to Hampton. The County attorney is doing a title search. The donation is on the Buildings and Grounds’ agenda for the upcoming meeting, then on to County Commission for final action. Ken presented a slide show. It’s a beautiful trail. Should be straightforward to establish a pocket linear park on the Valley Forge side as soon as a sponsor group is found – Randall Jenkins is working on that. The tunnel is in excellent shape. Minimal, inexpensive improvements/fixes are needed to get the trail

ready (although it's already in regular, frequent use.) Chris suggested that future actions may qualify under the TDOT Multi-Modal grant program. The old highway bridge is in very bad shape, and it's not clear what can be done. If we can figure that out, it opens up the intriguing possibility that we could expand the Tweetsie Trail all the way to Green Bridge Landing, increasing its length by almost 50%.

2. **Softball:** Mike Melton resurfaced discussion on the potentiality to develop a multi-field softball park. He requested that County Parks and Recreation Board consider asking TWRA to give or sell us the land that City of Elizabethton previously considered. The City of Elizabethton abandoned the idea at that property due to the projected cost of the project. The consensus of the board appeared to be that while they all agree that a softball park would be an asset to the County and City, that the pursuit of such a capability within the city limits must be initiated by and led by the City of Elizabethton.
3. **Volunteer work day at Gap Creek:** Chris and Charlie have requested that we have a volunteer work day on Saturday, April 10th to gather and remove rocks.
4. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 27nd at 6:00 PM in the Mayor's conference room.

ADJOURNMENT: The Chairman closed the Meeting at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Anderson
Secretary

