

MINUTES OF CARTER COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

MEETING HELD February 15th, 2022 at 615 E., Elk Ave, Chamber of Commerce , Elizabethton, TN 37643

OPENING: Chairman Ken Gough called the meeting to order at 6:08 PM.

ROLL CALL: Erik Anderson conducted a roll call. The Board approved Aaron Frazier participating by phone. A quorum was present.

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

GUESTS: Mr. Roy Knispell (Herndon Birders); Mr. Bob Richards

PRAYER: Mike Melton provided an opening Prayer.

PLEDGE: Mike Melton also led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PREVIOUS MINUTES: Minutes of the January 25th, 2022 meeting were provided to members. They were approved with corrections by common consent.

PRESENTATIONS: Mr. Roy Knispell brought a draft of *Birding in Carter County*. It is nearing completion and is ready for the graphics art work. They replaced a wood duck box at Green Bridge Landing and installed two Bluebird Boxes at the Happy Trails Park.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. Financial Report:** Ken provided an updated spreadsheet. The one expenditure in the last month was to Bob's trails for project management at Gap Creek Park. The County Commission recently agreed to reestablish our FY 21/22 budget to \$160K.
- 2. Erik Anderson Community Park:** Erik provided a written report. Plans are underway for Hikerpalooza, AT festival from May 6th -May 8th; a disc Golf Tournament TBD; and planting some American Chestnut saplings.
- 3. Elizabethton Park and Recreation:** The City and County held a grant priorities workshop last Thursday to determine a candidate for a TNDoH project diabetes grant. The grant would be up to \$150K/yr for three years. Gap Creek was the chosen as the candidate project. Wes Bradley, the Mayor, Abby Frye, and Chairman Ken Gough will work with Ashley Davies of TNDoH to complete the submission.
- 4. Green Bridge Landing (GBL)** – Lisa continues to work the playground equipment refurbishment.
- 5. Fish Springs Park** – Planning continues. JR stated that the tentative name for the park will be "The Park at Fish Springs"

6. **Carter County Tweetsie Extension:** The TDOT continues to work the emplacement of the signage.
7. **Tunnel Trail – Tweetsie Trail and Hampton Watershed Trail Extension –** Wes Bradley and SORBA are applying for 3 grants to continue work on the phases of the Master Plan. The City of Elizabethton is considering funding of phase 2 in FY 22/23 but not ready to expend effort on the skills park. The Doe River Gorge is starting the planning/development of a bridge that will connect their camp with the Watershed Trails. The facebook page is up and running and would be of interest to Commissioners and the public.
8. **Gap Creek Park –** Charlie and Bob met with Elizabethton Water and Sewer. They also investigated electrical power routing. Coming from the Gap Creek road side of the property will require extensive underground conduits. They will examine the potential of an easement from the trailer park across the sliver of land that connects to the park. That sliver of land is estimated to cost between \$5K and \$7K and significantly reduce the cost of utilities by reducing the need for conduit/pipe. Charlie and Bob are also working permitting and engineering issues. The resolution of these issues will cause a 2-3 month slippage in work. Plans for the rest of this FY include completing the pedestrian bridge, the dog park and a portion of the walking trail. **Charlie made a motion to modify the Purchase Order with Bob Trails by adding \$1,600 to support project planning for a Special Needs playground that will be executed in the next FY. Mel seconded. A voice vote was taken:**

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

The proposed contract modification was approved unanimously.

9. **Roan Mountain State Park Pool Closure:** Erik reported that there will be a meeting of the working group on Feb 16th to review data and discuss a way ahead. The working group is led by the Mayor and the TDEC regional head. During data gathering it became clear that TDEC will be getting out of operating pools statewide. The working group is focused on either the TDEC or Carter County executing the necessary repairs to re-open the pool and then Carter County operating the pool. Challenges facing Carter County operations include a almost full time employee; working memorandums of agreement with the State Park on property and liability insurance; and developing a method to prorate utilities cost. The cost for seasonal personnel and chemicals is estimated at approx. 77K/yr offset by approx. \$31K in revenue recouped annually. Key challenges for Carter County is developing the expertise and full time staff to operate the pool, liabilities and agreements and an unclear understanding of remediation requirements once/if Carter County ceases operation of the pool.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Budget Follow-up:** The Budget approved last month remains the same. It will be parsed into four portions to aid in financial management. One portion is the O&M supplements to our partners for Erik Anderson Community Park, Green Bridge Landing, Fish Springs Park, Covered Bridge Days, and our other annual projects. A second portion will be requested to be placed in a reserve fund for Gap Creek Park. This portion proposes the Commission to commit all the money needed to finish Gap Creek Park - \$1,230,000 including management fees. The third portion would also be placed in a reserve fund. It is a \$200,000 contribution for the Tunnel Trail - Tweetsie Trail/Watershed

Trails Expansion as the county's portion of the \$1,325,000 matching fund pledge. The fourth portion is \$175,000 for the establishment (in some form) of a Parks & Rec/Economic Development office. The Mayor and Commissioner Frazier are working the details of this portion of the budget request..

2. **Bill Dance Signature Lake:** Watauga Lake has been designated as a Bill Dance signature lake. TWRA and the State of Tennessee will invest \$15 million in improvements both above and below the water at 18 lakes which bear fishing legend Dance's stamp of approval. Tennesseans will benefit from increased stocking, habitat and fisheries management, as well as improved access for fishing and boating. Michael Warren and J.R. Campbell will represent the Board at a Feb 23rd meeting at 1:00PM.
3. **Commission Update:** The Chairman is now on the agenda for February 22nd.
4. **Chairman Retirement:** Ken announced that he will not be seeking another term on the Parks and Recreation Board and retiring in August after 8 years of service.
5. **Next Meeting:** It will be on Tuesday March 22nd, 2022 at 6:00 PM in the Mayors Conference Room.

ADJOURNMENT: The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:10 PM and the Board reconvened in an executive session.

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Anderson
Secretary