

## **Henderson County Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting**

Tuesday, January 9 2018, 12pm, AAC

In attendance: Jeff Donaldson, Chair, Corum Smith, Terry Maybin, Phillip Ellis, Ralph King, Scott Rhodes, Jennifer Hensley. County staff present: Carleen, Dixon, Laura Rice, Erin Hendrix, Jason Kilgore, Autumn Radcliff, Rachel Kipar.

Call to order by Jeff at 12:12

No Public Input

December minutes approved by Terry seconded by Scott and then Phillip.

### **Capital Needs Overview by Carleen**

Replacement of Parks vehicles. Installation of 28 hand dryers. Currently spend about 11,00 per year on paper costs, within two years costs are recouped. Mower replacement for soccer, softball, and open fields in the parks. Large ticket items are not included until a comprehensive master plan is established to work in and prioritize other capitol issues. Right now, we have 75,000 on the table for requests for capital needs for next fiscal year. Other capital work gets sent to central services for things like parking lots and larger things like that.

Jeff asks if we contract out garbage and trash pickup. Jason clarifies that he and his staff drive to each park under our jurisdiction to clean and remove trash. It is a lot of drive time. Terry asks if maintenance is requesting additional staff. Carleen says that we potentially are, but that those requests do not fall under capital needs, which is what is being presented today. It does not include our staffing or operational budgets, which will be presented later.

### **Update on Kuntz Farm project by Rachel Kipar**

Some grants that we have applied for have been approved and others were not successful. Kuntz Farm is a property that the county owns across from Westfeldt Park. Its been directed to turn it into a county park working with NC State University Cooperative Extension to be an agricultural heritage park and a connection with nature on the other side of the river. NC State will potentially be signing a MOU for an upkeep agreement that will mean that they have the upkeep of the park area while also being able to continue farming on a portion of the property as they are already doing. There will be a timeframe on the MOU of 20 or 25 years. It is tied up in legal issues in Raleigh as it is tied to the university, but we hope to have that soon. Several businesses such as Sierra Nevada and GF Linamar and Continental Teves have sent letters pledging money to complete the project.

The biggest piece of this is that we are going to construct a pedestrian bridge down from the boat ramp at Westfeldt Park across to Kuntz Farm Park because that is the only way to access the park. Division of Water Resources has awarded us a dollar for dollar grant for 250,000 which would be 500,000. The money from the businesses will go toward matching the grant and the county has 33,000 in a reserve account from leasing the project. We do not have

to match the money immediately, but we do need to match within 2 years with a possible 1 year extension. We're hoping that we can get other companies to get more people on board with sponsoring the project. Phillip asks who the face of the project has been and Rachel answers that she has so far been the one making presentations and reaching out to people and companies.

Other grants that we have applied for are the big one from the Division of Water Resources. We also will be reapplying for the Recreational Trails Program which has a 100,000 dollar for dollar match. Jenn asks about the Partf grant and wonders why we aren't using that to match some of the money for the other grants. Carleen says that the concern is that Kuntz Farm is greenways and water resources and it is eligible for other monies whereas a park like Jackson Park doesn't have many other pockets to pull money from. We are discussing the long-term implications of using Partf money for different things. Jenn asks about certified research facilities to be placed on Kuntz Farm and collecting funding from things like that. Rachel says that she will check with the Cooperative Extension Office and see if they have considered that. Terry asks when the last time we received a Partf Grant. Carleen answers that she believes it was when they built Edneyville Community Center. Rachel pulls up a map of Kuntz Farm and explains the area and boundaries of our property.

There will be a walking trail that will connect to our greenways and trails to Buncombe County in the long term. The pedestrian bridge to access the park will be around \$400,00 – \$430,000 and will be one of the biggest expenses of this park. The county was given the property with the understanding that there would be an industrial park built eventually.

We were denied Appalachian Regional Commission Grant and it's not worth going back to apply for that. We are also looking into the Duke Water Resources Fund and Federal money for Transportation. Corum suggests soccer fields for the area. Rachel explains that we are trying to avoid putting in too much infrastructure so things like large amount of parking, restrooms and things like that that would require maintenance and more money from the recreation budget. Rachel will send an updated slide show to the board members that contains more information than the presentation she is using in the meeting to contain better maps and projections for the space at Kuntz Farm.

## **Updates on Parks and Recreation**

Carleen says that the MOU for the Etowah concessions has been sent to the commissioners but has not been approved yet. It is set to be on the agenda for February. Jenn asks if there were any changes that the board needed to be aware of. Carleen and Laura explain that the only changes were to verbiage and no structural changes were made to the document. Jeff cites one example of verbiage in the document to Jenn and Laura relays that verbiage was also changed in the concessions agreement that will be used in other parks as well to be more of a blanket and less specific.

Carleen says that they are meeting this week on the master plan to give us a clearer idea of where we're headed.

Laura gives us a park update for things that have been happening in our facilities for November and December. We had the Grand Prix in Jackson Park on December 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> with 300 racers each day in the snow. We had the #3 nationally ranked racer out racing each day. Saturday was snowy and puffy and Sunday got Icy and rutty. Phillip asks if there is a route map available. Laura answers that the entire route is on Strava. We had our annual gym closing to refinish the floor. It is typically closed over the Christmas holiday but we closed a little bit early this year and also installed new LED lights. There is also a new concrete pad across the top of the soccer field at the AAC that includes steps from the backside of the gym that should help the area be safer and creates easier access to the restrooms. Phillip asks who the grading and concrete contractor was. Jason answers that it was Cane Creek Contracting.

We celebrated Karen's 30+ years of service and her retirement. We also had a New Year's Eve celebration with a new apple to raise with Pardee and Park Ridge as sponsors. It was cold for the first session but we still had several brave souls who still participated. The second session of the evening was cancelled due to ice. Jenn thanks Laura and the department for the event and says that the community really enjoys it. Hopefully next year the weather will be better. Youth Basketball started this year with over 500 players and had very good enrollment. That program will continue until the end of February. We have our annual Christmas Tree Recycling at Jackson Park and people are always excited about that. They also recycle old Christmas tree lights.

In the future we have the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Daddy Daughter Dance on February 10<sup>th</sup>. We expect about 200 people per session. Registration is going on now. We have a manager's meeting tonight for our Men's Basketball season which will feature two separate leagues. Parks and Recreation will be participating in Be Active day at the Blue Ridge Mall which is a good opportunity for us to be seen and market our name. We have also just opened Spring Soccer registration.

Jason says that we have started an energy saving campaign for our parks in tandem with Rachel and the environmental department starting with some simple stuff. Changing bulbs to LED in our facilities and shelters and installing hand dryers. We have almost finished the batting cages in Etowah Park that should be up and running by the beginning of February. We are trying to fix issues at East Flat Rock Park and complete our winter projects before spring sports and events take up the majority of the maintenance hours. Carleen says that we are having difficulty getting applications for part time maintenance staff so if the board members know anyone who might be interested, let them know. There are 3 positions open. Jenn asks if it is because they are part time positions and not benefit eligible. Mostly likely, yes, and there is talk of putting that in the next fiscal year's budget.

Erin says that we have been able to hire two new hire for the front desk position, Kaleb and Melissa. We will potentially have an intern over the summer from East Carolina and will get you more information as that becomes available. We are currently using Activenet but we will be sitting in a demo for Rec Desk to update our current calendars and operating systems. Terry asks if Karen's position has been filled. Carleen's answers that Tim has taken over ECC, Bridgette is on the classrooms at the ACC, and Laura is taking over stuff in the gym and dance room. Her position will be filled, but we are looking at the distribution on responsibility before we advertise that position. Jeff asks if we have the capability to register and pay online. Erin

answers yes, for the most part we can. Carleen adds that Activenet does have limitations which is why we are looking into a new system.

Terry updates that there will be a picnic shed constructed at Tuxedo Park. The original open shed was too small, but the newest quote for a larger shed took the cost up \$22,000. She is asking for input on contractors or cost saving options. Terry also asks about the Tobacco Free policy. Carleen answers that we do have tobacco free sign in our parks. At one point, the board recommended adopting the policy that was adopted by the County Commissioners. A second motion was approved to limit the tobacco use in all facilities, but the ordinance was never presented to the Board of Commissioners. It is something that we should look at so that we can present it for approval and enforce it properly. Phillip makes a motion to include that in an upcoming agenda. Terry and Jenn agree.

Jeff asks if there are any further questions. Stand adjourned at 1:10pm.