

Henderson County Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 9th, 2020, 12pm, Remote electronic meeting through Zoom

In attendance: Jeff Donaldson, Terry Maybin, Milton Buttersworth, Hunter Marks, Phillip Ellis, Scott Rhodes, Stephanie Cantwell, Katie Breckheimer, and Autumn Radclif.

Staff in attendance: Carleen Dixon, Casey Conner, and Cory Blackwell.

Speakers in attendance: None

A. Call to Order: 12:06pm

B. Approval of Minutes: A motion to approve March 2020 minutes made by Hunter Marks, seconded by Phillip Ellis, unanimously approved.

C. Consent Agenda: None

D. Public Input: None

E. New Business:

1. Chair and Vice Chair Election for FY21:

Carleen announced the nominations for the Chair position:

1. Hunter Marks
2. Jeff Donaldson

She then announced the nominates for the Vice Chair position:

1. Hunter Marks
2. Katie Breckheimer

Cory verbally polled voting members in attendance. The outcome was:

Chair: Jeff Donaldson

Vice Chair: Hunter Marks

**2. Department Operations Update with Covid:
Phase 2**

Outside parks and restrooms are open for use, with the exclusion of playgrounds. Users can now reserve shelters and athletic fields so long as they are keeping their activities to a 25-person maximum. Indoor recreation facilities are closed, and reservations for indoor facilities are not being made during this phase. Sports are encouraged as long as they can meet the guidelines provided by the State.

Planning for Phase 3

Expecting to implement phase three at the beginning of July, which would potentially allow groups and individuals to start utilizing Henderson County

indoor recreation facilities. These Covid-19 phases are fluid and change often depending on state and federal guidelines. Preparing and planning Covid-19 safety measures for indoor facilities has been a top priority.

Tournaments

Henderson County Parks and Recreation started field rentals which has allowed tournaments to return to our sports fields. Top Gun Sports Coordinator Shelley Brown hosted the first weekend of tournaments with 20 softball teams. The following weekend Top Gun Sports hosted a tournament bringing in 56 teams. Top Gun Sports created very detailed Covid-19 procedures and hired extra staff to help make the tournaments a safe atmosphere. Henderson County and the community are very pleased with the outcome of the tournaments. Feedback has been very positive. Henderson County was one of the first to host tournaments in the state and set an example for future tournament events. However, certain contact sports are still limited such as football and basketball. Scott Rhodes mentions NC high school athletic association has released "return to play" phase one guidelines and they will possibly be implemented as early as June 15th. Henderson County Public Schools is working to put out their guidelines based on this direction, we should be seeing this very soon.

Carleen also noted that at this time concessions stands are closed in the parks and that all restrooms have been opened and additional portable restrooms have been provided to give visitors more resources that are less crowded during this time.

3. July Meeting:

It was suggested that the July Recreation Advisory Board meeting will be hosted at Tuxedo park to help with social distancing and so members can visit the park. Everyone was in favor of this. Carleen will make the needed adjustments to host the meeting at the Picnic Shelter in Tuxedo Park on July 14, 2020.

F. Unfinished Business:

1. Budget Update – Carleen Dixon

Due to the challenges with budget cuts because of the impacts of Covid the county was not able to fund new staffing positions that were requested and the capital requests were also denied. However, our operations budget was fully funded and this is a great success during this time. Carleen noted that many agencies have had to make drastic cuts to operating budgets so we are thankful to not have to do this.

Carleen did want to make everyone aware that because the capital request to replace the playground at Jackson park was denied we will be removing that playground without a replacement. It has become a safety concern and will be removed soon. The playground is dated and does not meet current

playground safety standards. We will seek funds in future years to replace this playground.

2. Community Needs Assessment – Carleen Dixon

Community needs assessment presentation was delayed due to Covid and travel restrictions. We are hoping to be able to schedule this for some time in the fall.

G. Staff Updates:

1. Parks Update – Jason is on vacation, so Carleen is sharing.

Jason Kilgore and his crew have done an amazing job being on the frontlines of park maintenance during the wake of the Covid-19. The Parks crew have continued to maintain parks at a high level, but have also intensified cleaning and sanitation procedures. They have also had the chance to take on some projects that have been delayed in the past due because of lack of time. This has included items such as putting in new picnic table pads, repairing picnic tables, tree clean up, fence repair, etc.

2. Recreation Update – Casey Conner

The staff have been working on virtual recreation options since our facilities have been closed. Recreation Staff created “follow along” activity videos and put together activity bags with materials to craft from home. Activity bags have been made available every 2 weeks free of charge for the first 100 that sign up. They also developed online puzzles, word finds, and jokes for our customers to enjoy from the comfort of their home. These virtual activities are published on the recreation website and sent through our newsletter. If you are not signed up for our newsletter you can do so at our homepage: www.hcprd.com.

Casey shared that Plans for adult softball are being made to start after the July 4th week.

Carleen noted that the July 4th event that normally takes downtown will not happen due to gathering restrictions however, alternative options are being worked on and we will have activity packets that are July 4th themed.

First Ever Drive-in Movie at Jackson Park! - Carleen

Henderson County Parks and Recreation partnered with Mast General Store and Moe’s BBQ to host our first drive in movie, **Spider-man: Far From Home**. The event was an alternative to movies in the park, reservations were required and participate numbers were limited to help encourage social distancing. Everyone who made it out had fun and we plan to potentially host another one in the future.

Carleen noted that Autumn Radcliff was in attendance from Planning and that if there were any questions on greenways that she is available to speak.

Autumn gave a brief update to include: Henderson County put in for 5 grant applications for STBG (Surface Transportation Block Grant) which are federal funds set aside by the DOT. The estimated costs for preliminary engineering and

construction for the entire length of Ecusta trail was included. Henderson county is competing with surrounding areas for STBG monies of approximately 18 million dollars. If approved of the STBG funding, Henderson county will be allocated 18 million and would need to start construction within 10 years. The regional NPO has approved of further development of Hellbender trail, which falls into Henderson county greenway plans.as

Kate Breckheimer mentioned she would like to see the section of the Oklawaha repaired in Jackson Park because of the flooding. She asked if we were seeking PARTF funding for this. Carleen shared that we applied for PARTF in the last cycle and were not awarded. We were informed that this project was not a good fit for PARTF. So, we are looking into other grant possibilities.

H. Member Comments:

It was suggested that the July Recreation Advisory Board meeting will be hosted at Tuxedo park to help with social distancing and so members can visit the park. Everyone was in favor of this. Carleen will make the needed adjustments to host the meeting at the Picnic Shelter in Tuxedo Park on July 14, 2020.

Milton Buttersworth stated parks remaining open during COVID-19 has been a great positive for the community.

Katie Breckheimer said she would like to see grant funding allocated to repair easily flooded greenway areas.

Stephanie Cantwell mentioned "kudos to the recreation department". She has been assigned to Parks since the schools have been closed and that she has seen parks she did not know existed and that she is very impressed with the work our staff have been doing during this challenging time.

Motions:

1. Motion to approve March minutes made by Hunter Marks, seconded by Philip Ellis, unanimously approved.

I. Call to Adjourn: 1:02pm