

## Henderson County Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Minutes

**August 9, 2022, 12:00pm, Athletics and Activities Center, 708 South Grove Street**

**Board members in attendance:** Milton Butterworth, Philip Ellis, Stephanie Cantwell, Terry Maybin, Katie Breckheimer, Tricia King, Doug Moon, Hunter Marks, and Jeff Donaldson.

**Staff in attendance:** Bruce Gilliam, Chris Todd, Jason Kilgore, Megan Burnette, Autumn Radcliff, Melanie Adams, Bridgette Thompson, Matt Russell, and Lindsay Pressley.

**1. Call to Order: 12:10**

**2. Approval of Minutes: July 2022**

Terry Maybin made a motion to approve the July minutes as written and Stephanie Cantwell seconded. There was a unanimous approval.

**3. New Business**

**a. Welcome Interim Director Bruce Gilliam**

Ms. Dixon resigned from her position as Parks and Recreation Director. Bruce Gilliam will be acting as the interim director while they evaluate next steps. The staff will continue business as usual.

**b. Introduce Recreation Staff**

Melanie Adams does contracted programs and partners with Bridgette on Senior Games. She also works on camps and our Sprouts programs. She was the former principle at Flat Rock Middle School before she came to Parks and Recreation. There were 21 camps this summer with almost 600 registrants. Art Camp and Adventure Camp both had extensive waitlists that the department was unable to accommodate. In order to add more spots to these next year Melanie would have to find more instructors. Adventure Camp had to limit itself to 13 campers per session because of transportation. More sessions could be added for Adventure Camp, but no additional campers per session. Registration paid for all camp supplies for every camp except for Adventure Camp because of the cost of the activities, even with a reduced rate for the group. Milton expressed the importance of getting kids interested in being physically active and reducing health risk down the line.

Matt Russell is over adult softball, youth basketball, sports for Senior Games, and coordinates gym staff schedules. He has been with Henderson County Parks and Recreation (HCPRD) for almost 27 years. The Summer Adult Softball tournament has finished for the season. Registration is now open for Fall Adult Softball.

Bridgette Thompson is the Special Events Coordinator and leads Senior Games. Bridgette has about 22 years of service with HCPRD. The Food Trucks and Flix series will wrap up this Friday. The next big event will be Treat Street. Santa on the Square and New Year's Eve will be happening in December. HCPRD partnered with Fostering Hopes for an event and gave out 200 backpacks.

Lindsay Pressley is a program assistant who runs programming at Edneyville Community Center (ECC). She has been with HCPRD for almost 7 years. The programs she runs are Tumble Bears and Art Start for 3–5-year-olds. Water day is coming up this Thursday. There are already 50 kids signed up for the event. Fall activities at Edneyville Community Center will include Monster Bash in October and Fall Fest in November. Lindsay also helps coordinate Silver Arts for Senior Games. She is at ECC three days a week. Katie asked if the facility could be open longer. Bruce stated we are hiring for another staff member there, which would allow us to stay open longer. Lindsay said that most of the participants for ECC programs are not from Edneyville, Tumble Bears draws a lot of people all over the county. There is always a waiting list for Tumble Bears. HCPRD is looking to make improvements to the building to make it more efficient for set up and clean up.

Jason Powell was not in attendance but is the new athletic programmer. Soccer numbers were 500+. There are up to 42 teams who will play at Jackson Park after Labor Day. Bruce and Jason have been recruiting soccer officials nonstop. Jason will also be programming adult basketball when the season comes.

**c. Accessibility For Parks Grant – East Flat Rock**

This grant is through PARTF. The first step is outreach to the public. Chris, Jason, Bruce, and Megan will go to the park tonight for a public input meeting. The focus will be on access to the park (walkway, parking lot). Playground updates will be the second part of the grant. The goal for the playground would be similar though smaller in scale to Jackson Park. This grant has one of the best ratios for match. For every \$1 we put in we will get \$5 back with a \$500,000 cap (assuming we get the grant). PARTF was 50/50. The event tonight is a stand-alone input event. The Friends of East Flat Rock group have been invited. Parks and Recreation received a motion of support for the project.

**4. Unfinished Business**

**a. Jackson Park All-Inclusive Playground Update**

Project continues to move forward. Hoping for ground breaking September 10<sup>th</sup>. Working with engineering group RVE for the design. HCPRD met with the youth

advisory group to work on the design. Expected to finish construction in the winter and have ribbon cutting in early spring. Groups are continuing to raise money for the playground. There is no expectation of the project slowing down. If something were to happen with the fitness equipment project, it would not affect the playground project. The current cost estimate is \$800,000. There is a local contractor who is going to do pro-bono grading. That cost can come out of the \$800,000 as an in-kind donation. There is still money not accounted for in fundraising today. Milton asked if there is an opportunity to connect this project to the Oklawaha Greenway. Chris stated there is not funding in this project budget for that. If they can get funding for an Oklawaha extension, then they could connect the projects. Future needs include potentially identifying and designating the shoulder for people to walk on to access the park. Board members agreed that they would like to see improved access to Jackson Park. Safe access is currently limited to travel by car. Milton suggested adding markings to show drivers others, such as bikes, are using the road. Philip said the old plan was to use the 3-foot-wide asphalt bird walking path and replace the greenway alignment or add a second alignment to get bikers into Jackson Park. Stephanie emphasized the importance of adding a net of some kind to protect the playground from the ballfields. She talked to a lot of parents this past weekend who are very excited to have this playground for their kids. Chris encouraged donations at this time and expressed his gratitude for those who already have donated.

#### **b. Tuxedo Park Update**

They are working diligently to keep this project moving along. There is work that is still scheduled to be done. People are still using the walking trail every day as well as the playground. Jason got a quote on a shade structure, as there was someone interested in possibly paying for it. It would cost about \$30k for a 14ft high, 40x30 shade. Parks staff did some overseeding on banks where there is erosion. There have been continuous issues with waterline breaks and power off in the winter time. Terry received confirmation of \$14,000 to pay for fencing for multisport court.

#### **c. Ecusta Trail Updates**

RTAC meets tomorrow (8/10) and Vaughn & Melton will be presenting design work. Working on next phase of engineering which will be to finalize scope. Federal funding going through DOT is a cumbersome process. Will be public after the RTAC meeting. Then can do a check to see where they are at with the grant funding. This is just the first 3 sections (Kanuga Rd to Highway 64). They have been looking at erosion and storm water runoffs. Also looking at road crossings making sure the alignment is going to line up and seeing if there needs to be any safety improvements. They may need to get additional funding based on this. Meeting is open to the public tomorrow

at 10am. Milton asked if the developments that are taking advantage of the greenway access will be building right along it. Chris said they have long term encroachments for these new developments. One of these developments will be putting in public parking for the trail. This was decided by the town of Laurel Park even before the land for the trail was acquired. Tricia asked how the new roundabout will be a part of the trail. Chris said this is NCDOT funded partnering with another NCDOT funded project to make sure those crossings are accommodating. It is expected there will be a section that people can walk on a year from now. Constant communication with Conserving Carolina and Friends of the Ecusta Trail.

**d. PARTF Grant – Etowah Park**

Will find out about the grant at the end of the month. If we get the grant, we are planning on putting in 2 pickleball courts, 10 fitness stations, renovate the basketball courts, and update the playground.

**e. Subcommittee Updates**

**i. Mobile Vending**

Draft policy that subcommittee put together went to the BOC and was passed. The expectation is to get the vendors in the park by the start of the new calendar year.

**ii. Greenway Rules/Etiquette**

Suggested not to bother with posting a list of guidelines or rules, should be simple, could be listed on the website. Subcommittee talked about a slogan to represent values for people to think about while using the trail.

**5. Staff Updates**

Jason: Still in the busy season for parks. Camps have been utilizing parks and facilities. Some schools have started back and are utilizing the parks. Pickleball lines have been added to Etowah Park tennis court. This has created two pickleball courts for people to use. Tuxedo Park and Dana Park are getting new mulch. Jason has hired Martin Lee to work weekends full time.

Megan: Hired a new office assistant, Dorine Lafontaine.

Unless the majority of the board is against it, I will no longer be printing out the minutes for your binders. Will still print out the agenda.

Bruce: Added 2 nights of pickup games at Edneyville Elementary School gymnasium. Will start pickleball clinics in September.

## **6. Member Comments**

Doug mentioned that he has seen advertisements for Soccer Shots at East Flat Rock Park on Facebook and Instagram. They state they are charging \$144 for 2–3-year-olds. He wanted to know if they were affiliated with Henderson County, which they are not.

Katie asked for an update on the stream restoration project in Edneyville project with Soil and Water. She called Betsy who said they are working on getting permits for the project, but it has been postponed. Doug mentioned that the property owners do not want the creek moved. Lindsay said that the creek access will be nice for the Edneyville Community Center but also more of a liability and will lower usage of soccer field.

## **7. Adjourn: 1:17**

Our next meeting will be held September 13, 2022, at the Athletics and Activities Center located at 708 South Grove Street, Hendersonville, NC.