

Henderson County Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

January 9th, 2024, Athletics and Activities Center & Zoom

Board members in attendance: Jeff Donaldson, Bob Smith, Katie Breckheimer, Doug Moon, Mary Davis, Tricia King, Stephanie Cantwell, Phillip Ellis, and Milton Butterworth

Staff in attendance: Bruce Gilliam, Jason Kilgore, Cory Blackwell, and Brooklyn Bishop

Public in Attendance: None

1. Call to Order: 12:09

2. Approval of Minutes: November 2023

Jeff asked for a motion to approve the November minutes as written. Mary motioned to approve, Bob seconded, and there was a unanimous approval from the board.

Public Input - None

3. New Business

a. East Flat Rock Park – Disc Golf and Walking Trail – Vote – Bruce

Bruce is seeking approval from the board to add a disc golf course and walking trail to the new land acquisition in East Flat Rock Park. Terry Maybin is not present but gave her vote to Bruce prior to the meeting. Jeff asked to entertain a motion for approval.

Katie asked if we have someone lined up to do this work. Jason stated the walking trail, concrete pads, and baskets will be completed in house, but the layout will be professionally done. The walking trail will be stone dust inlayed into the natural elevation of the path. Doug asked if there will be exclusive of each other to prevent issues with overlap and Jason confirmed. Tricia asked how many parking spaces are currently adjacent to the field near the property. Bruce estimated around 20 spots. Mary asked how long the trail will be and Bruce stated around 1 mile. Disc golf

will be a 9-hole course with 3 practice holes. Milton mentioned that Jay, the designer for this project is the premier designer in WNC with a lot of experience. Milton mentioned how great the course at Flat Rock Middle School is also only being 9-holes. Bruce stated that this EFR course would be the same set-up.

Katie motioned to approve the walking trail and disc golf course, Bob seconded, Jeff asked for a vote and all approved.

b. Advisory Board – Bi-Monthly Meetings – Vote – Bruce

Bruce would like to move our meeting schedule to bi-monthly meetings to value the time of everyone involved. Brooklyn checked the bylaws, and we can vote to change to bi-monthly meetings and possibly hosting additional meetings if needed. Milton is in support and open to meeting in between scheduled meetings if necessary. Milton asked if we are asking for a bylaw change. The board agreed a wording change in the bylaws would be the best option.

Stephanie asked if the board would be okay with the possibility of meetings extending past an hour. Milton suggested we try for an hour and a half and extend if needed. Katie asked if we change the verbiage to state meetings will be an hour and a half unless extra time is needed.

Jeff asked for a motion to approve, Milton made a motion, Tricia seconded, and there was a unanimous approval from the board.

c. Ecusta Trail Update – Autumn

The contractor has done some clearing on the first section that has gone well. They are beginning prep work for the bridge work. Engineering and design for the next section is still in the works and moving along well. Katie mentioned that she was asked by the City of Hendersonville to write a letter of support for a pedestrian bridge over the new round-a-bout on the south of town where Church and King St come together. Milton asked if the round-a-bout would be a city project. Autumn stated the city has a plan to do a study on this area and have agreed to take the

lead on this but still work with the county. Mary mentioned that the city is doing a wetland restoration project in the South Grove area.

d. Soccer Update JP with High Schools – Bruce

We will not be using the Jackson Park fields for practice this soccer season in attempt to help the grass repair. We have been working with different county schools to use the high school fields for practice times. Games will still be held at Jackson Park on Saturday's. As of now, all practices will be at county high schools, but Bruce is still meeting with athletic directors to work on a schedule. Hendersonville High School will continue to use the AAC turf field for practice. ABYSA has given up 2 hours on Wednesdays to let our program use the turf field. We will also use fields at East Flat Rock and Edneyville. We will have to have 4 supervisors and help from our park deputies to make sure schools are secure. The program is continuing to grow, and we are expecting around 55 teams this spring season. Mountain Community and Immaculata use our Jackson Park fields during the week but unfortunately, we won't be able to accommodate their games this season. Phillip asked if ABYSA is still using the turf field this spring and Bruce confirmed they will still be using the field but have given us 2 hours on Wednesday's before they start.

We had to move the start date for soccer games to March 30th, as we will have our Easter Egg Hunt the on March 23rd. This is early this year but will work the best to make sure the season is over by Memorial Day. Tricia asked if you could see the field schedules online and Bruce confirmed this is still available. Phillip wanted to confirm that the ABYSA academy will not be changed, and Jason stated that they have been able to figure their schedule around this without hurting their schedule. Milton stated that it is exciting that the communication has gone so well while navigating this issue with schools and ABYSA. Milton wanted to confirm that Bruce has spoken with Mike from ABYSA, and they are good with this schedule. Bruce confirmed Mike was okay with this option. There are a great deal of Henderson County kids that play for

ABYSA and we would not want to do anything to hurt those kids with this change.

There is a lot of work maintenance will have to do for this upcoming season. Tricia wanted to echo Milton for how hard the department has been working on this soccer issue. Milton asked if it would be safe to say that open communication has been making this work and Bruce agreed.

e. Robert Murray Foundation Grant – Bruce

We have been awarded a \$5000 Community Foundation Grant from Robert Murray to use in Jackson Park. This will allow us to do improvements in the park. The Community Foundation and Dan Barbor will purchase a swing to be put in at Etowah Park in honor of Dan's group. Katie suggested that we have a priority list to pull needed improvements from when we receive funds like this.

f. WNC Comm Foundation Grant for JP – Bruce

There is a WNC Community Foundation Grant that we would like to apply for to use for a sidewalk from the playground to the greenway in Jackson Park. Brooklyn will be working on this grant. Milton mentioned that he is on the board for the Foundation and is more than willing to help Brooklyn with this grant process.

g. New Floors at ECC and AAC Dance Room – Jason

The AAC dance room just received new flooring along with the Edneyville Community Center. Bruce presented photos to the board.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Bell Park Trail Update – Jason

Jason, Bruce, and Cory visited the trail and go onto the overlook that has now been completed. Bruce presented photos of the trail to the board.

b. Dana Park Grant from State Update – Jason

Bruce and Jason visited the park with facility services, and we will be able to put \$120k in renovations toward the building in the next few months. We will be renovating the kitchen, floor, ceiling, looking into the bathrooms, and possibly new doors. Bruce would like to talk to Leroy Nicholson about possibly using the funding he wanted to donate toward the building.

c. JP Maintenance Shed Completion – Jason

Jason and his staff have been very excited about this new facility. It is a 40x80ft building with a 16ft roof off the back for equipment. The old shed suited our needs for a long time, but this has been a needed upgrade. The parking lot will be paved in April, we will get the building insulated, and heat installed as well. Bruce has added security cameras for the rear of the building to our budget.

d. Etowah PARTF Update – Jason

We have gotten several quotes but still need a few and then movement will be seen on progress.

e. Signage for JP Trails and Parks - Cory

Cory showed the board a new map that has been created so far. This map would identify all trails and amenities. This map will also have a QR code that leads to our website for people to find more information. Cory would like to add smaller signage throughout the park as well to help guide visitors. Milton asked how this will relate to the kiosk. Cory and Katie will be meeting Friday to discuss the kiosk and the possibility of adding an additional kiosk to the area near the nature trail. Tricia stated she is willing to assist with creating signage if needed. Milton stated this is great to start with small signage and QR codes throughout the park to keep people informed. Cory mentioned that this trail unfortunately doesn't qualify as an ADA compliant trail for Track Trails but that could be possible in East Flat Rock. Milton and Jason had discussed the loop at Etowah Park and other options within the county.

5. STAFF UPDATES AND EVENTS

Cory presented a slideshow to the board including videos and photos of recent events and progress. Melanie will be doing sprouts basketball starting on the 6th that is already full. Some of our new contracted programs include a writing class and hand drumming. Registration for summer camps will open on March 1st and these fill up very quickly.

Cory showed a video created by Mike Morgan about our senior activities. These have been indoor for the winter and will move back outdoors as the weather warms up. Mary suggested that everyone remind people you only need to be 50 to join. Senior Games and SilverArts will begin in April.

Youth basketball will begin on the 13th, and we have 800 kids registered this season. Pick-up volleyball has become increasingly popular in our AAC gym, and we are starting registration for our adult volleyball league. Adult basketball is currently ongoing, and the season has been going very well.

We will have a Dolly and Me Tea Party this Thursday at the Edneyville Community Center. There are several programs at ECC for younger children.

We participated in this year's Christmas Parade and our float won first place. Santa on the Square was slower due to the rain but still a success. The New Years Apple Rise was a huge success with a great turnout and the board was shown a video of the end of the apple rise. Our Daddy Daughter/Family Dance is coming up on Feb. 2-3rd and is filling up very quick.

Cory hosted a bike park workday in Jackson Park that was a big success to help revamp the area. Cory has been working with different local biking business and groups for this improvement. There is a strider bike program every Wednesday at 10am through Cognitive Brew House. The Wildlife Resource Commission and Cory will be offering a free fly-fishing course in February. A schedule for Cory's hiking program has been posted and will be featuring some private property hikes this year.

6. MEMBER COMMENTS

Doug proposed we change the RAB bylaws to remove the line stating we meet every month and to submit this to the commissioner's office. Milton suggested a verbiage change to state bi-monthly meetings and additional as needed.

Katie reminded the board she has formed an impressive subcommittee for a swimming complex, and they will be meeting tomorrow at the AAC for the first time and will report back at the next meeting.

Jeff stated that there are a lot of exciting projects and programs happening in our parks and it has been rewarding to see as a board member.

Katie asked if we could share our draft budget proposal with the board. Bruce said we will provide an update on our planned budget at our next meeting.

7. ADJOURN: 1:23

Next Meeting: March 12th, 2024 – AAC Classroom