



# MINUTES OF CARTER COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

**MEETING HELD June 18th, 2015 801 East Elk Ave, Elizabethton, TN 37643**

**OPENING:** Chairman Ken Gough called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

**ROLL CALL:**

Erik Anderson conducted a roll-call. A quorum was present.

Leon Humphrey (Mayor)	Present	Randall Jenkins (Commission Liaison)	Present	William Birchfield (1)	Present
Erik Anderson (2)	Present	Charles Dykes (3)	Present	Jeff Smythe (4)	Present
Ken Gough (5)	Present	J.R Campbell (6)	Present	Charlie Mattioli (7)	Present
Jim Hughes (8)	Present	Bonnie Peters (Eliz Park and Rep)	Absent		

**Guests were introduced:** Chris Schuttler (Carter County Planning Officer), Mike Hill 2<sup>nd</sup> District Commissioner, Meeting Eryasa, Kim Stroud (TOS), Fred \_\_\_\_\_ (TOS)

**PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

Previous minutes of the May 7<sup>th</sup> meeting were provided to members before the meeting. Randall made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes and approve with two corrections. Charlie seconded. The corrected minutes were approved unanimously.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

None Scheduled

**OLD BUSINESS.**

1. **Source of Compensation:** The Mayor reported that the Commission had decided that Parks and Rec Board members compensation would come out of the General Fund

**2. REPORTS:**

- a. **Tweetsie Donation :** Jim Hughes summarized the opinion of CTAS regarding a potential contribution for the County to the City of Johnson City for the purpose of contributing to the completion of the Tweetsie Core Trail through Elizabethton and to the State Line. The Parks and Recreation Board may not make the contribution. Funds must be appropriated by the County Commission and an MOU between the County and City of Johnson City would be appropriate. The cost of completion would be approximately \$50,000.00.

Ken Gough (Board Chairman) recused himself from the discussion due to potential conflict of interest and turned the meeting over the Jeff Smythe (Vice Chairman). The following resolution was discussed:

**It is hereby resolved that:**

1. The Tweetsie Trail is a rail-trail owned, developed and operated by the City of Johnson City in accordance with the federal Rail-Banking Law.
2. Approximately 90% of the completed trail will be located within Carter County.
3. Approximately 7 miles of the trail has been completed and opened, and approximately 2.7 miles remains to be completed. The entire remaining portion is within Carter County.

4. The opened section has proven enormously successful, with usage exceeding the most optimistic estimates.
5. Completion of the remaining section will increase the usage of the trail by Carter County residents and visitors.
6. A very substantial portion of the benefits of the trail accrue to Carter County residents and businesses.
7. It is appropriate that Carter County contribute to the estimated \$50,000 cost of completing the trail.

Therefore the Carter County Parks & Recreation Board requests that the Carter County Commission make an appropriate contribution to the City of Johnson City for completion of the trail. The Parks & Recreation Board hereby pledges to provide up to \$10,000 of the contribution from its existing fund balance.

Charlie made a motion that the resolution **“Be approved by the Parks and Recreation Board and advanced first to the County Attorney to draft an MOU with the City of Johnson City for the receipt and expenditure of the funds and that upon completion of the MOU that the resolution be provided to the County Commission for consideration”**. The motion was seconded by Jim. A roll call vote was taken:

Leon Humphrey (Mayor)		Randall Jenkins (Commission Liaison)	No	William Birchfield (1)	No
Erik Anderson (2)	Yes	Charles Dykes (3)	Yes	Jeff Smythe (4)	Yes
Ken Gough (5)	Abstain	J.R Campbell (6)	No	Charlie Mattioli (7)	Yes
Jim Hughes (8)	Yes	Bonnie Peters (Eliz Park and Rep)	Absent		

The motion carried by a vote of 5 yes, 3 No and one abstention. Jeff then returned the lead of the meeting to Ken Gough.

- b. **Elizabethton P&R Liaison:** No report
- c. **Greenhouse** – JR reported that further coordination will need to wait until School is back in session.
- d. **Birding-** Ken introduced two members of the Lee and Lois Herndon Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society. They provided background information on birding in Carter County to include the numerous activities and opportunities that currently take place in the County. The concept of various events to include even a Birdwatching Festival were broached. Ken provided the following motion to help move along this potential partnership:

**“It is moved that:**

The chairman of the Parks & Recreation Board (or his designee) is hereby authorized to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Lee & Lois Herndon Chapter of the Tennessee Ornithological Society (TOS) for a Birdwatching Project in Carter County, subject to the following considerations:

- The MOU may include, but is not limited to, topics such as preparation and distribution of maps, pamphlets, brochures, checklists, books and other publications; ownership of copyrights (if any) on said publications; technical assistance on creating and maintaining bird-friendly habitat in the county;

establishment and operation of birdwatching events in Carter County; and other topics as may seem appropriate.

- The MOU shall neither commit nor require the expenditure of funds by either party. If funds are required to carry out a project, TOS shall submit a request to the Board for its consideration.
- The MOU shall be subject to review and concurrence by the County Mayor and County Attorney, and final approval by the Board and TOS. “

Charlie mad a motion to accept the proposal and Ken or his designee negotiate an MOU. Randall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**e. Tourism Council Update – No change in status**

**f. Mountain Biking:** Ken reported that SOBRA was interested in working future biking opportunities. Discussion revealed that there are currently tow Mountain Biking Trails within Carter County. He submitted the following resolution to the Board.

“The chairman of the Parks & Recreation Board (or his designee) is hereby authorized to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the TriCities Chapter of the Southern Off-Road Biking Association (SORBA) for a Mountain Biking Project in Carter County, subject to the following considerations:

- The MOU may include, but is not limited to, topics such as preparation and distribution of maps, pamphlets, brochures, and other publications; ownership of copyrights (if any) on said publications; technical and volunteer assistance on funding, building and maintaining mountain bike trails in the county; establishment and operation of mountain biking events in Carter County; and other topics as may seem appropriate.
- The MOU shall neither commit nor require the expenditure of funds by either party. If funds are required to carry out a project, SORBA shall submit a request to the Board for its consideration.
- The MOU shall be subject to review and concurrence by the County Mayor and County Attorney, and final approval by the Board and SORBA’s Board of Directors.”

Jim made a motion to authorize the Chairman to negotiate an MOU. Jeff seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

**g. Roan Mountain Community Park**

- i. Erik provided a monthly report to the Parks and Recreation Board. All equipment operating. Park being maintained. No significant issues required immediate Parks and Rec Board attention. The Parks and Recreation Board will hold the August 13<sup>th</sup> meeting at the Roan Mountain Community Park at 6:00PM
- ii. Farmers Market: The Farmers Market has been in operations for four Saturdays. 19 vendors have registered to date. We average between 9 and 12 vendors on any Saturday and expect this number to increase. The FFA received a \$2,000.00 economic development grant and will purchase storage, tents and tables for Farmers Market

**h. Pocket Park Properties -** Four properties have been taken off the County excess property disposal list. One of the properties has been identified to the City of Johnson City as a potential location for restroom facilities adjacent to the Tweetsie Trail. The County Commission will eventually need a designated purpose for each of the properties.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Proposed future meeting dates:** (All meetings would be held 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month at 7:00 Pm at the Mayors Conference Room except August 2015)
  - a. July - None
  - b. August 13<sup>th</sup> at Roan Mountain Community Park at 6:00 PM
  - c. September 3rd
  - d. October 1st
  - e. November 5th
  - f. December - None
  - g. January - None
  - h. February 4th 2016
  - i. March 3rd 2016
  - j. April 7th 2016

**The proposed meeting dates were approved by common consent.**

2. **Tweetsie Trail Extension (Southern End of County):** Chris Schuttler and Mike Hill presented a detailed listing of signage costs associated with identifying four miles of existing state identified Biking Trail in the Roan Mountain area as an extension of the Tweetsie recreational Trail. The proposed identification follows along Railroad Grade Road from Whitehead Flats headed south to the intersection of Railroad Grade with the existing Hwy 19E. This is essentially the renaming or better naming of an existing State Bike Trail. The cost of signage and safety mirrors is estimated at approximately \$2537. Additional safety and ease of access improvements were estimated at approximately \$1800 per mile. Ken and Chris will meet and review the path and potential ideas to extend this trail into the Roan Mountain Community Park. A written proposal for this portion of the Tweetsie Trail will be presented at the August 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.
3. **Community Visits:** The first community visit will take place Jul 18<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM. Members will meet at the courthouse. J.R will orchestrate. The focus of this first visit will be Stoney Creek and perhaps another area if time permits.
4. **Community Parks and Recreation Survey:** Charlie discussed several options which could be used to accomplish a survey of our populace on the needs and desires for Parks and Recreation activities. We could team with the City to accomplish the survey. The benefit of the survey would be multi-fold, among the benefits better enable our goal setting as well as providing statistical support for future grant submissions. Chris Schuttler suggested that an alternative approach would be to request the TN Dept of Environment and Conservation accomplish the survey. He had them do one in the 1999-2000 time frame which led to the creation of the Roan Mountain Community Park. Chris will provide the contact information to Charlie so he can pursue this approach to conducting a survey.
5. **Walking Trail at Great Lakes Property.** Ken pointed out that there was a walking trail at Great Lakes. The discussion noted that Charles Dykes and the previous Board had been instrumental in the establishment of the ½ mile walking trail.
6. **Tweetsie Trail DRG extension – W&CP letter.** Board members had been provided a copy of the W&CP letter. Ken proposed that he draft a response that would be coordinated though the Mayor and the County Attorney. The gist of the letter will be to emphasize the Boards approach to work any Tweetsie Trail extensions in a win-win manner and the Parks and Recreation Board is

Approved

sensitive to the concerns of private property owners. The Board approved proceeding with a response by common consent.

7. **Old Stone Schoolhouses:** There are several attractive old stone schoolhouses in the county. JR reported that all have been sold and are currently owned by private citizens.
8. **Website:** ken reported that the Tourism Board does have a webpage on the County Website. The Board discussed potential outlays and the concepts for a Parks and Rec web page. A potential web page is estimated to cost approximately \$2,000.00 for set-up. The Mayor will work with Susan to see what options might best serve the needs.
9. **NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will August 13th at 6:00 PM at the Picnic Sheds behind the Post Office in Roan Mountain. A meal will be provided,

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 9:08 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
*Erik Anderson*  
Secretary