

MINUTES OF CARTER COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

MEETING HELD Mar 2, 2017 at 801 East Elk Ave, Elizabethton, TN 37643

OPENING: Chairman Ken Gough called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

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

Leon Humphrey (Mayor)	Absent	Randall Jenkins (Commission Liaison)	Present	Michael Warren (1)	Present
Erik Anderson (2)	Present	Mel McKay (3)	Present	Jeff Smythe (4)	Absent
Ken Gough (5)	Present	J.R Campbell (6)	Absent	Charlie Mattioli (7)	Present
Mike Melton (8)	Present	Eliz Park and Rep Mike Mains	Present		

Guests were introduced: Mr. Bill Watson and Mr. Larry Jeffers – Back Country Horsemen of East Tennessee; Mr. Kim Birchfield – City of Elizabethton; Mr. Wesley Bradley – Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts; Mr. Metin Eryasa – IDEAS group; Commissioner Danny Ward.

PREVIOUS MINUTES: Minutes of the Feb 2nd, 2017 meeting were provided to members before the meeting. Mel made a motion to approve. Michael Warren seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS/SIGNINGS:

1. MOU with Back Country Horseman of East Tennessee and Carter County Parks and Recreation Board for the development of single use trails was signed.
2. MOU between City of Elizabethton Parks and Recreation and Carter County Parks and Recreation for the purpose of developing a Multi-Sports Park was signed.
3. MOU with Carter County Hunting and Fishing to develop a shooting range has been approved and will be signed at a later meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Community Tour:** Last Saturday's tour focused on the western portion of Carter County. This area is well populated and is in as much of a need for pocket parks as some of the more remote areas of the county. On the way to the tour the board visited the potential Hampton Doe River Access site. Specific areas visited included the potential Sugar Hollow Mountain Biking area; an inactive water plant on Rockhouse Road, the graveyard where Mary Patton is buried, the Laurels Picnic area, and the Gap Creek property that is being investigated for a potential pocket park. Mel and Erik took an action to draft a letter to the NFS concerning the Laurels.
2. **Elizabethton Parks and Rec:** (Mike Mains): Mike reported that he really appreciates the team approach that is being used by the two Parks and Recreation boards. Specific projects for this year include bathrooms in several parks, lighting at the ball field by the jail, new swing sets at Douglas, City, and Kiwanis parks and a splash pad. They have 16 outdoor concerts scheduled and Covered Bridge movie nights in July, August and September. The youth baseball leagues have been consolidated. They will have a Farmers Market on Tuesdays at 5:00 PM from May through October. Projects being investigated include a

skateboard park and off road biking. They are starting to prepare for the 2018 State grant cycle.

3. **Birding:** (Charlie Mattioli) Nothing significant to report this month
4. **Mountain Biking:** – Ken reported that he and Mike Mains walked the Sugar Hollow property with Mr. Bob Little (former Greenways and Trails commissioner for TDEC). The biggest challenge for this property is site access. Mr. Little is preparing a proposal to develop a Pre-Engineering Master Plan for the property.
5. **Carter County's Tweetsie Extension:** Mel will contact the Highway Department to purchase the additional paint needed to complete marking the first phase.
6. **Roan Mountain Community Park:** Erik provided a written report. All equipment is operating. The RMRF plans to start construction on the stage/pavilion the 3rd or 4th week of March. Planning is underway for the AT Community celebration and the Farmers Market. Board members are encouraged to attend the AT dedication ceremony on April 24th at 1:30 PM and the Trail Celebration day on May 6th. Erik added that they should have funding to get them through the first part of the mowing season and at this time it looks equipment will hold up another year and a replacement mower for this year may not be needed.
7. **Website:** (Ken Gough) A webpage has been added for the Back Country Horsemen. A page for the Carter County Hunting and Fishing is in work. A page for whitewater sports is also in work with the RiverAPEs.
8. **Road Cycling:** (Ken Gough) TDOT has some reservations about part of the proposed Powder Mary's loop. More information will be provided next month.
9. **Overmountain Victory Trail** – (Mel McKay) The contract for the OVTA Master Plan is being finalized. Mel will contact Tom Vaughn of the OVTA to ensure they know that our matching contribution is available.
10. **Carter County Hunting & Fishing Assn.** It appears that the Landfill will not a suitable property for a shooting Range due to continued use and expansion of the dry dump. Randall will contact the hunting and fishing association about a way ahead.
11. **Recreation Master Plan:** Mr. Reece has not been able to make progress due to illness. Mel made a motion that we postpone the delivery date indefinitely and revisit the subject in June. Randall seconded. Mr. Reeves should have a more complete prognosis by that time. The motion passed unanimously.
12. **Pocket Parks** – No new information on Elk Mills. Michael Warren identified two potentials. There may some renewed interest in the Buladean area. The Town of Watauga may also be pursuing an effort at the City Hall. Michael will invite the interested Buladean folks to our next meeting.
13. **Public Health Grant Application:** (Ken Gough) Ken provided a copy of the final grant submission to the Board. Feedback indicates that the Parks and Rec Board will receive the grant. The funds will be used to refurbish and improve a portion of the Roan Mountain Community Park playground. Mel has contacted the TN Municipal league for assistance. Dave McQueen form City of Elizabethton Parks and Rec is a certified playground

specialist and may also be able to assist. Erik has secured pledges of a total of \$2,000 in match funds from the community of Roan Mountain.

14. **Boundless Playground:** Ken updated the board on some initiatives that are taking place in the Tri-Cities area focused on special needs recreation. Johnson City has recently installed a facility at some cost.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Hampton Doe River Access (AKA Green Bridge Park) Pocket Park.** The development of a pocket park which would provide ingress and egress access to the Doe River in Hampton was discussed. The Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts and the IDEAS group provided status update and information on the opportunity such a park would provide to residents and white water enthusiasts. Carter County has some of the best whitewater for kayakers east of the Rockies. The Doe River Gorge is considered a class 3/4 river and the portion of the Doe between Hampton and the Covered Bridge is a class 2/3 river. Donation of the land from the Carter County Schoolboard to the County is in work. A survey is underway. A concept exploration/ pre-planning workshop will take place Tuesday March 7th at the Courthouse.
2. **Tourism Council:** Ken reported that he has been asked and will fill a position on the Carter County Tourism Boards Executive Council. Other board members will likely be asked to assist in Tourism Council task forces.
3. **Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts MOU:** A draft MOU to develop white water paddle sports opportunities was provided to Board Members before the meeting. Randall made a motion to approve the MOU. Mike Melton seconded. The board approved the MOU unanimously.
4. **Budget Committee Presentation:** Ken will present our proposed budget to the Budget Committee on April 10th.
5. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be April 6th, at 6 PM in the County Courthouse.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mike Melton made a motion to adjourn. Randall seconded. The Chairman closed the Meeting at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Anderson
Secretary