

MINUTES OF CARTER COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

MEETING HELD April 5th, 2018 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)	Absent	Michael Warren (1)	Present
Erik Anderson (2)	Present	Mel McKay (3)	Absent	Jeff Smythe (4)	Present
Ken Gough (5)	Present	J.R Campbell (6)	Absent	Charlie Mattioli (7)	Present
Mike Melton (8)	Present	Eliz Park and Rep	Absent		

Guests were introduced: Kayla Carter, Outdoor Development Manager with the Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership (NETREP); Chris Lennon, Overmountain Trout Unlimited; Bill Watson and Russ Sutton, Back Country Horsemen of East Tennessee; Wes Bradley and Jerry Griffin, Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts; Todd Emma, SORBA.

PREVIOUS MINUTES: Minutes of the February 8th, 2018 meeting were provided to members before the meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS:

- 1. Kayla Carter:** Kayla Carter, formerly Tourism Director with the Carter County Chamber, now Outdoor Development Manager with the Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership (NETREP) told us about her new job, creating regional economic opportunity through outdoor recreation. Her focus in the first year will be developing a Master Plan. She made us aware of a "Meet the Mountains" activity on Aug 24/25th at Founders Park in Johnson City.
- 2. Potential "Doe River Fishing Trail":** Chris Lennon of the Overmountain Chapter of Trout Unlimited briefed us on a potential 3.5-mile Doe River Fishing Trail. The trail would run from Roan Mountain (perhaps Happy Trails Park) downriver to Bear Cage Road Bridge. Trout Unlimited has been working with Chris Schuettler from the Planning Office to identify at least 6 access points along this route. Most access points are on existing County Property, but a few are on private property. The lead National Forest Service biologist supports the fishing trail. Trout Unlimited is pursuing several funding sponsors. The role they perceive for the Carter County Parks and recreation is to support the project and perhaps interact with land-owners should the need arise. **Jeff made a motion that: The Carter County Parks and Rec Board support the "Doe River Fishing Trail" and adopt it as a project. Michael Warren seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. Doe River Trail Grant submission:** Erik informed the group that while the Community and landowners were supportive of the concept of a walking/bicycle trail along the Doe from the Community Park to the Happy Trails Park, three landowners would not agree with granting access across their property. Based on that reality Erik recommended that 1st TN Develop Agency suspend grant efforts. **Erik made a motion that we table the Doe River Trail effort, suspend the RTP grant submission for this year, focus our efforts**

on The Happy Trails Park, and readdress the potential trail next fiscal year. Mike Melton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. **Green Bridge Landing:** Wesley Bradley and Jerry Griffin provided a status report. Very little accomplished the last 2 months because of weather. Park is already seeing frequent use by paddlers and fishermen, a few others. Wes provided the final drawings for the Changing station. He has secured a 20% discount on materials. With the discount he estimates that the materials will cost \$1600. They have pledges totally \$750 and are therefore short \$850. **Mike Melton made a motion that we allocate an additional \$1000 to the Green Bridge Landing Project with \$850 of that earmarked for materials for the changing station. Charlie seconded.**

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

The motion passed unanimously. It is unlikely that we can finish work by May 12, so the dedication will be delayed – now tentatively scheduled for June 9.

3. **Community Tour:** Nothing Significant to Report
4. **Shooting Park:** Nothing Significant to Report
5. **Happy Trails Park:** Bill Watson gave a status report. Due to weather, little has been accomplished in the last couple of months. BCHET would like to get the parking lot in basic operation this spring – need to put down Geotech fabric and spread gravel. They requested \$6,500 for gravel and additional Geotech fabric. We noted the Horsemen have contributed plenty of labor but very little money and asked them to come back next month with a more comprehensive plan and associated funding request.
6. **Mountain Biking:** Wesley Bradley presented a plan for SORBA volunteers to start work on a skills park on the Sugar Hollow property (working title Bryant Ridge Park). First stage is modest. There is already parking for up to 8 vehicles. Bryant Ridge has been endorsed by the Elizabethton Parks & Rec Board and SORBA. The city is determining if there are any problems with proceeding – none so far. No request for funds at this time. **Charlie made a motion that Carter County Parks and Recreation endorse SORBAs initial development of Bryant Ridge. Jeff Smythe seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Separately, the designer/construction manager of the Tannery Knob Bike Park in Johnson City is going to tour the Sugar Hollow property and advise us on development potential and cost. Date TBD, all will be invited.

7. **Gap Creek Park:** Ken and Charlie have had several meetings with city staff to develop an ownership and management scheme, which must precede development. We have decided on an approach involving management by a Board-appointed committee and ironclad contracts detailing city and county obligations. Ken and Charlie will write up a proposal for review by the attorneys and political leaders, then revise as needed, then start the round of approvals.

8. **Overmountain Victory Trail:** OVT Section I Master Plan – preliminary results were presented to the partners by Destination by Design in mid-March. Trail corridor has been identified. Next step is to determine the final route, which requires contacting every land owner and obtaining easements. Scheduled to finish in September. Then we will have to decide how we want to go about developing the trail.
9. **Elizabethton Parks and Rec:** Charlie reported that Eliz Park and Rec are very busy and will be challenged to take on new projects. Projects underway include redoing the Covered Bridge Park; opening of a splash pad at Franklin pool; a pavilion at Harmon Park with restrooms; and Tweetsie Trail beatification.
10. **Birding:** Charlie reported that the Herndon Birders working diligently on the Guide to Birding in Carter County, but it's complicated and going to take a while. The TN Ornithological Society will hold its 2019 annual meeting in Johnson City or Elizabethton. One of the items to be discussed will be a proposal for a 2020 birding festival.
11. **Roan Mountain Community Park:** Erik provided a written report. Work on the playground has resumed and expect to have the playground finished in May. Planning for Appalachian Trail Days continues – to be held weekend of May 5. The RMRF has asked the Highway Department to delay work on the Handicap Parking Lot improvement until after the softball season concludes. No issues requiring Parks and Recreation Board attention.
12. **Powder Branch Park:** Ken reported that the County Commission approved the money for a survey of the property. Mike Melton reported that he had been informed by TDOT that we can get the deed to the 25-acre parcel rather than just a lease, which would be wonderful – he is pursuing.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Risk Management:** Erik presented a draft plan for risk identification and mitigation for our facilities and activities. He requested all members review the plan and be prepared to vote at our May meeting.
2. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be Thursday May 3rd at 6:00 PM at the County Courthouse. One of the topics will be the meeting schedule for the next FY.
3. **Budget Presentation:** After the meeting Ken reviewed the presentation he will take to the budget committee on April 9th,

ADJOURNMENT:

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 8:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Anderson
Secretary