

MINUTES

City Council Parks, Trails, & Recreation Committee

Wednesday, August 17, 2022 at 3:30 PM

City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present: Aaron Baker, Vice-Chair, Council Member
Larry Faison, Interim City Manager
David Lutz, Public Works Director
Howie Granat, Citizen Member
Nancy DePippo, Citizen Member
Maureen Copelof, Mayor, Ex-Officio Member

Absent: Mac Morrow, Chair, Council Member
Paul Ray, Planning Director
Tim Robinson, Citizen Member
Matt Christian, Citizen Member
Ryan Olson, At-Large Member

Staff Present: Tyree Griffin, Community Center Director
Denise Hodsdon, Executive Assistant

Guests: Alvin Fuller, Summit Engineering
Matthew Busche, Resident

Media: Jonathan Rich, *Transylvania Times*

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Vice-Chair Aaron Baker welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

B. Certification of Quorum

Executive Assistant Denise Hodsdon certified that there was a quorum with five members present.

C. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Mr. Granat, seconded by Ms. DePippo, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Approval of Minutes from May 18, 2022 and June 9, 2022 Meetings

Motion by Ms. DePippo, seconded by Mr. Granat, to approve the minutes of the May 18,

2022 meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Mr. Faison, seconded by Mr. Lutz to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2022 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

E. Introduction of Community Center Director Tyree Griffin

Mr. Faison introduced Community Center Director Tyree Griffin. Mr. Griffin shared his background and explained that, in addition to the Mary C. Jenkins Community Center, he will also oversee the Depot and the French Broad Community Center.

F. Update re Railroad Avenue Portion of Estatoe Trail

Mr. Lutz reported that the project was delayed due to an 8-inch waterline that had to be lowered and a sub-contractor had to be brought in. The waterline has been lowered and the contractor has remobilized and is actively on the site. Mr. Lutz said that as of this time the contractor has been unable to give the engineer a definitive timeline, but the engineer is going to reach out to the contractor again and request a timeline for completion.

Mr. Lutz noted that there has been discussion about a flashing pedestrian light on Probart Street and he has asked the engineer to send information regarding the different style options of lights for us to choose from. Those options will be brought to this committee for recommendation. Mr. Baker requested that we also look into making the intersection a 3-way stop, which would need to be considered by the Public Safety Committee.

G. Update re Norton Creek Streambank Restoration at Silversteen Park

Alvin Fuller of Summit Engineering reported that the design plans have been completed and permits have been received from DEQ and Army Corps of Engineers. He submitted for the No Rise Certification to DEQ in July and received comments back that he is currently addressing and should be able to resubmit by August 22nd. Once that is in place, we can put the project out to bid, however we are up against a trout moratorium which begins October 15th until April 15th. With this moratorium approaching, there are 2 options: 1) wait until February to bid the project; or 2) request a waiver from the moratorium. He said we are going to contact NCDEQ and US Fish and Wildlife Services to ask for a waiver because the tree covers we plan on using for this project are canopy trees that are very friendly to aquatic life and these trees perform best when planted in the fall. Once all documentation is in place, bidding and award should take approximately 60 days and construction should take approximately 60 days to substantial completion. Mr. Fuller mentioned that the project also includes a walking trail around the park.

Mr. Baker asked for a status update on the design for the Tannery Park section of the trail. Mr. Fuller said the design is very close to completion and they just need to finish the specifications. They are working on an erosion control permit as well, but will hold off on submitting that until we decide we are going to fund it because the permit is only good for two years. Mr. Fuller explained that this section runs from Cashiers Valley Road to Rosman Highway, around the skate park and the community garden. He noted that due to the planned streambank restoration in that area, this leg of the trail will be closer to the homes and not the stream. The corridor through the Tannery section is 30-feet wide with a 10-foot paved area and 10-foot shoulder on each side to do plantings that will provide screening from the neighboring homes. As required by the Brownfield Agreement, there will be a 6-foot decorative 3-rail wooden fence with a vinyl coated mesh behind it to keep people on the trail and off the contaminated area.

H. Sidewalk Survey

Mr. Lutz informed the committee that City Council had requested a sidewalk condition survey to prioritize the repair and maintenance of existing city sidewalks. The survey was completed in June by LaBella Associates and they reviewed and rated all sidewalks, curbs, and handicap ramps. Based on results of the study, staff has recommended replacement of the two worst sections this year and continue to work down the list in future years. The two sections being replaced this year are: 1) 710 feet of sidewalk on W. French Broad Street from Railroad Avenue to Salem Lane; and 2) 64 feet of sidewalk on Franklin Street. Mr. Lutz said this would all be done with in-house labor and cost of materials would be \$12,000.

I. “Laps of Bracken” Fundraiser – Howie Granat

Mr. Granat recalled that the City has a contract to purchase a 34-acre parcel to expand Bracken Preserve. The purchase price for the property is \$300,000 and according to the contract, the closing would take place on October 7th. Conserving Carolina is spearheading fundraising efforts to purchase this property and currently has approximately \$90,000 in donations. Conserving Carolina has recently put out a press release and email blast.

Mr. Granat explained that the overall project is in three phases. The first phase is to purchase the land; second phase is engineering and development of 2 to 3 miles of trails; and third phase is construction and completion of the trail. The first part of the project will be to make it easier to access the rest of the trails in Bracken Preserve.

Mr. Granat informed the committee that a fundraising ride, “Brackenfest” is scheduled

for Sunday, September 25th. The ride will start at the Depot up to Probart Street and into Bracken. The premise is for riders to get people to sponsor them in how ever many laps they can do within Bracken in a 3-hour time period. Lunch with a band at 185 King Street will be included in the event. They are working on prizes for the most fundraising and most laps. He hopes to raise around \$25,000 from this event.

Mr. Granat said the team continues to work on donations and larger sponsorships, but could use more help in that area. There are opportunities for grants when it comes to building the trail, but the main focus at this time is to raise enough funds to purchase the land.

Additional Comments:

Mr. Baker informed the committee that our RAISE grant application was not successful, but we are moving on and looking for other opportunities for the Ecusta Trail.

Mr. Baker also informed the committee that Alta has sent the draft Bicycle + Pedestrian Plan to NCDOT for review and they are awaiting feedback from them.

J. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Parks, Trails & Recreation Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, September 21, 2022 at 3:30 PM.

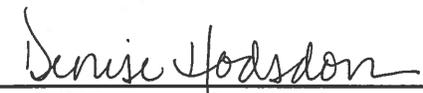
K. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:53 pm.

X 

Aaron Baker,
Vice Chair, Council Member

Minutes Approved: September 21, 2022

X 

Denise Hodsdon
Executive Assistant