

Lake Lure Parks & Recreation Board

Meeting Minutes

May 1, 2014

Call to Order

Chairman Ed Dittmer called to order the regular meeting of the Parks & Recreation Board at 1:30pm

Roll Call

Board members present: Ed Dittmer, Jessica Kendall, Jonathan Hinkle, Martyn Watts.

Board members absent: Linda Turner, Larry Czajkoski, Jim Walters

Town officials present: Commissioner Diane Barrett Town Council Liaison, Parks & Recreation Supervisor Melodie Potter

Approval of Minutes and Agenda

The agenda for the May 1, 2014 Board meeting was revised at the request of Jonathan Hinkle to speak on the Gateway Project. A motion was made to approve the revised Agenda by Jessica Kendall and seconded by Martyn Watts and all were in favor.

The motion was passed. It was discussed during this time that Shannon had put a call out for help with a couple of steering committees. With their agreement, Ed will appoint Jonathan Hinkle to the Gateway Steering Committee and Martyn Watts to the Town Center Street Design Steering Committee.

The minutes for the April 3, 2014 Board meeting were reviewed and a motion to accept the minutes with typing errors corrected. The motion was made by Jessica and seconded by Martyn and all were in favor.

Budget Review

Ed shared that as of today, we are about 75% through this year's expenditures. There is about \$3K in the discretionary fund for supplies and materials. Melodie suggested hiring someone to plant the trees. Sam has put a hold on any further expenditure after next week. Ed agreed to authorize Melodie to hire someone to plant the trees. There are about 8 trees. There was further discussion regarding the drainage in that area near the picnic tables in Morse Park Meadow.

Martyn Watts suggested getting Vic Knight to draw up a plan for the sediment spoils berm area in Morse Park. Discussion was brought back to the drainage problem. There was further discussion regarding the maintainance of the berm area. Melodie stated the tractor would not go on those hills. Martyn suggested developing a landscape plan. Diane Barrett suggested using the area by putting some seating area on the berm on the side facing the river up and then using a floating platform for events. Martyn agreed and there was further discussion regarding such. Ed didn't know if there was money to pay for the planning of such out of this year's budget. He did agree to make Morse Park more attractive and a nicer place to visit. Martyn talked about what a great opportunity it would be to enhance this part of the park. There was discussion regarding the push back received when there was an attempt to put steps on the berm earlier in the year. Martyn asked to put this on the next agenda to ask Clint and Dean to what the Board can do with this area. There was further discussion regarding this. Diane further spoke about building a platform and a dance area. Ed agreed to put this on the agenda for next month.

Open Issues

Status of Buffalo Creek Park development–

Ed reviewed information that Chris had provided. The temporary railhead signs are up as well as the directional signs at the loop intersection. The trail counters are installed. The Trail map and information appears in online mountain biking directories (MTBProject, MTBReviews, Singletracks). Clint and Amy are working on the GPS mapping of the new flag line (green loop). Clint needs to submit the NCDENR permit application for the new flag line. As soon as this is approved Trail Dynamics can come out and start work on it. Rumbling Bald Resort has installed picnic benches, trash bins, and recycling bins at their trail head. The Phase 2 (to Eagle Rock) design is on hold pending the two previous mentioned items and the required permit process before that project can begin.

There was mention of adding picnic tables along the creek area on the Town land. There was a Climbing team laying flag lines up the ridge to the boulder field. The objective is to create a gentle and sustainable path that reaches the boulders and splits the 3.5 mile blue trail in half. There will be further work done on this trail using steps at one end and boulders at the other end to clearly along with signage to clearly mark this trail for hikers/climbers only. The Carolina Climbers Coalition will partner with Amy and local volunteers to construct the trail.

The planned public trailhead on a lot now owned by Wyndham Resorts is currently awaiting a use agreement with Rumbling Bald Resort which is waiting for a design which Vic Knight is working on. Once that agreement is finalized, the Town will negotiate a transfer of the property from Wyndham. . Ed continued updating regarding the trails toward Eagle Rock. It will take six months or more for permits.

Morse Park Improvements –

Ed reviewed with Melodie about the planting of the trees near the picnic grounds. Melodie has purchased some pine bark mulch. There was discussion regarding the fence around the tank. Melodie said she got some Coppertini to plant in this area. She is also doing some annual planting. Melodie mentioned how nice it would be to have a large picnic pavilion. Ed

mentioned putting that into next year's capital improvement plan. There was further discussion regarding replacement of picnic tables.

Ed updated the Board on the Morse Park pedestrian bridge project and reviewed a recent public Open House where there were also other Town Center projects on display. There were a few persons that were not in favor but more that were in support of the bridge. There were concerns about the cost. Ed discussed funding options such as grants, matching grants or long term funding by loan. This will be Council's decision. No commitments have been made. Ed mentioned that one individual has been advocating a swinging bridge rather than the design that has been proposed.

There was discussion regarding the dog park and that Ed had been asked about it. It was concurred among the Board members that the group advocating a dog park knows what steps to take to go further with any dog park and then bring it back to the Board. This has not been done. Ed mentioned there have only been two to three people that have come to the Board regarding this. The Board mentioned they have just not seen the support of it. It was brought up again that Donald Ross Park is a dog friendly park.

Status of planning for aeration/fountains for beach area and Morse Park Gardens Pond –

Martyn reviewed what was discussed at the last meeting. Martyn got with Foster Fountain Co. and discussed with them about the possibility of reduced cost if our boats and manpower were used to place the aerators in the water. He has received no response. Since the last meeting when the Board approved a prioritized list of spending needs for next year, the Town manager has put them in his draft budget for the Council to review later this month.

Martyn discussed the fountains and the pumps for the pond in Morse Park Gardens. He suggested that we have the manufacturer where we could just go buy the pumps and install it ourselves. There was discussion again on the height of the fountain. Ed said we had \$3K now that could be used if Melodie could check on how much she would need for her planting needs and Martyn said he would get the price of the pump together. Ed suggested getting one pump this fiscal year.

Status of Canada geese mitigation planning –

Ed advised the Board that he, Larry Czajkoski, and Chuck Watkins were able to find 15 nests and oiled 76 eggs. He did mention that they had seen some hatchlings already. All the nests from last year but one was covered on this trip. They did not get up Buffalo Bay to RBR. The maintenance crew at RBR has not found any nests this year around the golf course ponds, but there have been hatchlings there as well. There was discussion that the oiling seems to be an effective method and people have seen a reduction in the numbers of geese in Morse Park.

Martyn had an update regarding using mute swans as an aversion method in driving away the Canada geese. Overall the swans at two towns that he conversed with tend to destroy the aquatic plants. He said they seem successful in smaller ponds at keeping the geese away, but there are

still draw backs. He mentioned that in New York City, they've tried to issue an ordinance to exterminate the mute swan population there.

There was further discussion about the use of swans on the lake. Martyn said he was told not to spend money on getting the swans. The man he spoke with gave him the methods they've tried to get rid of the geese and the only thing that worked was to cull them. There was further discussion on culling of the geese. Martyn said that everyone he's talked to agreed that the oiling of the eggs should be continued, and additionally culling them. Diane mentioned the possibility of culling the geese and donating them to charity Christmas Goose programs. Diane stated that in order to corral them and euthanize them for cooking use, you would have to abide by certain FDA requirements. It was discussed that if the geese were euthanized by chemical means, they would not be able to be used in that program. There were other recommendations. There was discussion again using a dog to run the beach to keep the geese from roosting there. It was suggested that using swans would only be trading one problem for the other. There was further discussion on this. Jonathan mentioned that out in his area (Firefly Cove) residents have put up fishing lines and they've been very effective at keeping the geese off their land.

Jessica mentioned that the Board continues (and has for the last several meetings) to discuss the same geese control problem. She asked what the general consensus is and when it would need to be done. Jonathan mentioned that you would have to have not only the Council's agreement but then you would need broad public support for any culling. There was continued discussion. Melodie stated she has seen a huge reduction in the number of geese from years prior. Martyn suggested tabling the geese issue. See if the work that is being done is helping. Martyn suggested leaving it for this year and see what's happened after all the oiling this year, and we do not discuss it again, and then at some point if we decide the problem is getting worse this summer then we have all of next winter to prepare and discuss the solution then. The Board agreed to take it off of the agenda. Melodie said she would keep track of how many geese were out there.

Status of work on parkland maintenance punchlist –

Ed had previously talked to Melodie regarding some downed trees blocking trails at Donald Ross and the drainage problem on the Rhododendron Trail that needed work. There was discussion on different solutions to the drainage problems at this wet spot on the trail. Melodie will look at it and give a recommendation. Martyn mentioned how well the trail is being used in that he's always seeing cars there.

New Item

There was discussion that the police had several calls regarding swimmers off the point at Morse Park Gardens his last weekend. There are currently no signs saying "No Swimming". Ed said there are plans to put up new branding signs. Ed passed out a sample of what the new signs were proposed to say and it was mentioned that they were "ridiculous" and "hokie". He read the proposed sign which states, *"This is our private swimming area. Yours is out on the beach out on the Lake. Signed, the Fish, Ducks and Geese."* Jonathan suggested even putting a sign that shows a swimmer with the red line through it. Another sign was read by Ed that they wanted to put in Morse Park to discourage feeding the geese that reads, *"Between your generosity and our*

lack of willpower, we're eating too much and going to the bathroom all the time, please help us stay on our regular diet, and not feed us." Jonathan mentioned that just like with his kids sometimes, you just have to tell someone "no". Ed agreed stating that when there is a danger, you don't use cutesy wording. Ed said he would bring this to the attention of Lake Operations Administrator and the sign branding coordinator.

There was further discussion regarding fishing out on the boardwalk pier areas. There was someone seen fishing by the gas pumps and employees at the marina didn't discourage them. There was discussion regarding how fishing line can get tied up in the boats and the danger it could cause with people walking on the boardwalk getting hurt by flying hooks being flung backwards. There was further conversation regarding the danger of lures left as well as the fishing line. Martyn suggested something he had seen at another end of the boardwalk that prohibited fishing, but that there was no sign at the closest access to the pier area. Also there is a problem with a depository for the fishermen's trash. With the Board's suggestion, Melodie said she had some extra no fishing signs at Public Works and she would look to get them installed.

Gateway Project –

Jonathan reviewed with the Board an idea that he had regarding the space by the Flowering Bridge. He suggested using that area as rentable space, making it an area where they could grow a vegetable or flower garden. He suggested that plot renters bring in their own soils and mulch to use. He said the town would not be putting any money into this. The people at the Flowering Bridge would monitor the area. Melodie mentioned that she tried to mow the area but there is still a lot of debris left there. Jonathan said he had spoken with the ladies at the Flowering Bridge and he said he would bring this suggestion to the Board. Diane suggested raised beds with bordering timber. She suggested uniformity. There was further discussion and the Board agreed for Jonathan to talk some more with her about it.

There was concern about some areas at the Flowering Bridge that needed addressing and cleaning up. Jonathan also suggested that the port-a-john be moved to another area where it wasn't right out in the middle of things. There was further discussion regarding the port-a-john and Jonathan said that if it came down to it, he could use his equipment to get it moved and dressed up.

Chairman Ed Dittmer adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

Minutes were taken and transcribed by Kat Canant, Town of Lake Lure Liaison

The next Parks & Recreation Board Meeting will be June 5, 2014 at 1:30pm