



LAKE LURE PARK & RECREATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES April 3, 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, Linda Turner, Larry Czajkoski, Jonathan Hinkle, Martyn Watts, and Jim Walters.

Board members absent: None

Town officials present: Commissioner Diane Barrett Town Council Liaison, Mayor Bob Keith, Town Manager Chris Braund, Parks & Recreation Supervisor Melodie Potter, Environmental Management Officer Clint Calhoun,

Approval of Minutes and Agenda

The agenda for the April 3, 2014 Board meeting was revised in order to put most important items that needed to be addressed at the beginning of the meeting. A motion was made to approve the revised Agenda by Linda Turner and seconded by Jim Walters. The motion was passed.

The minutes for the March 6, 2014 Board meeting were reviewed and a motion to accept was made by Linda Turner and seconded by Martyn Watts and all were in favor.

Budget Review

Ed mentioned that there were still some funds left in some line items in the budget not yet committed for (all totaling approximately \$10K) and that Melodie was working with Ed on getting some of those needed tasks done. There was a meeting scheduled with Sam after the P&R meeting to go over exactly where things were at. Melodie has plans on finishing out the planting around the area by the marina gas tank in Morse Park Meadow.

Open Issues

Parks and recreation budget priorities for 2014/2015-

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) - Ed distributed a proposed CIP budget request for Parks and Recreation projects for next budget year starting in July 2014 which was reviewed by the board members. Larry had a question about using the grant funds that we have for the parking area of the Buffalo Creek Park Trailhead. Town Manager Chris Braund replied that those funds have been spoken for and explained that they were used development of the initial trails and bridges. The second grant that the Town has received was for development of the Summit Trail from Buffalo Creek Park to Eagle Rock in Chimney Rock Park and that trail did not have a parking area included in the grant submission. Chris confirmed that \$20K was appropriate to put in the FY14/15 CIP budget request.

Larry also questioned the funds being proposed for the Lake Lure Flowering Bridge development. After discussion it was agreed extension of the Town Center Walkway from the bridge to Boys Camp Road was an appropriate CIP project and that Melodie would get an estimate for the remainder part of the Walkway from the bridge to Boys Camp Road, an area that was slated for a walkway before the Flowering Bridge efforts even began. Chris suggested renaming the project budget request to Town Walkway Extension instead of Flowering Bridge Development and the funds be restricted to that. Once a more firm cost estimate is received, the \$10K which is currently identified for the FY14/15 CIP request may be lowered.

There was further discussion regarding the other proposed projects. Ed explained that the \$250K promised by a private donor to help the Town cover the cost of the Morse Park pedestrian bridge to connect Morse Park Gardens with the Point of Rocks parklands would not be a onetime gift, but scheduled out over the span of 10 years. Ed suggested that even if the Town were to finance the money for the bridge, historically low rates now available would help ameliorate the project cost. There was further discussion concerning the focus group design recommendation and then the issuing of Request for Proposals (RFPs) to bridge manufacturers and contractors to get more firm design proposals and related costs. Chris recommended that the Board delay putting the pedestrian bridge project in the coming fiscal year CIP budget request since firm budget numbers are not yet available. There is \$50K in the proposed CIP budget request planned for FY15/16 that was to build trails once the bridge was done. It was discussed and suggested to go ahead and request \$5K in FY14/15 instead to build some of the proposed trail system in the Point of Rocks area this coming fiscal year, so that there would be trails in place before the pedestrian bridge was built to provide the destination and increase interest and support for the bridge.

There was continued discussion regarding the priority of each project. Larry proposed that the prioritization for FY14/15 should be 1) Buffalo Creek Park Trailhead Development, 2) Town Center Walkway Extension, and 3) Town Center Trails Development. The motion was then made to approve the CIP Budget request totals as Larry proposed them, Jim seconded the motion and all were in favor. Ed will get this change completed and sent to Chris for Council consideration.

Operational Budget – Ed discussed the P& R Operational Budget request proposal that he sent to the Board. The three items named are separate of what Melodie has already submitted for parks maintenance. Chris suggested that the Line Item 215 earmarked Supplies and Materials – the purchase and installation of an aeration system for the waters near the beach in the amount of \$15K for FY14/15 be moved to the CIP budget request since it really was a onetime capital improvement expenditure. There was discussion and agreement to move this item to the CIP.

Larry asked to revise his motion of the prioritization showing the addition of the Aeration System. Larry made a motion that the Buffalo Creek Park Trailhead be 1st, the Aeration Project be 2nd, the Town Walkway Extension be 3rd and the Town Center Trails Development be 4th on the CIP Budget. The motion was seconded by Jim and all were in favor.

There was continued discussion regarding the P&R Operational Budget request. There was a brief discussion regarding Canada geese control using swans and that Martyn would discuss with the Board his latest findings later in the meeting. The new proposed line item for geese control would be \$10K. Melodie discussed that she had Sam up her operational budget by \$1K to allow for more mulch with all the new landscaping.

There was discussion regarding the prioritization of Line item 698 and the new line item for geese control. There was further discussion regarding the contractual cost of an additional part timer for park maintenance support necessitated by the increased parklands being developed and landscaped. There was clarification as to how much was being asked for in FY14/15. It was agreed that only an additional \$10K increase was being requested over what was provided in this current year.

There was a motion made by Martyn to prioritize the P&R Operational Budget by putting the new line item for Geese Control as #1, and the Line Item for increased contractual services as #2. The motion was seconded by Linda and all were in favor. There was further discussion regarding the workings and purpose of a budget for clarity.

Update to the Lake Lure Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan – The Board had time to review the emailed copy that Ed had sent to them. Linda made a motion that the Board accept the Proposed Amendment to the Town of Lake Lure Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan dated March 2014, Larry seconded, and all were in favor. Diane noted a few typo errors in the draft which Ed will correct before forwarding on to Council for approval.

Status of Canada geese aversion/mitigation planning – Martyn updated the board on recent findings regarding the use of swans to rid a lake of Canada Geese. Martyn reviewed his discussions with a town that had used the swans with success. The lake was in Illinois. Martyn had spoken with the Chamber of Commerce there and confirmed this information. His contact there did state that they have a person who looks after the swans and that they need feeding daily. Additionally, the caretaker clips their wings to deny flight. The purpose is that the swans are very territorial during mating season and being bigger and more aggressive will intimidate the geese and cause them to go elsewhere. There was further discussion regarding the swans. Jonathan searched the web and found that you can purchase a pair of geese for \$900-\$1000. Martyn explained that once the swans produce, the young are caught and sold back to the company from where they were purchased and could recover the cost of the initial swans. Jonathan read from the web that the swans can be kept from being so aggressive is that you get either 2 males or 2 females. Martyn is further researching this aspect of using the swans for geese aversion. Jonathan thought that it was definitely worth a try. Jonathan suggested that we use the swans in the Town Center public area, and if Rumbling Bald Resort was interested, they could address it on that side of the lake.

There was firm commitment on continuing the oiling of any found goose eggs, as well as using the swans. Larry felt that further research was needed, for instance the geese that were originally used years ago in the lake in Illinois, has this geese aversion strategy continued to work. There was concern about how the swans knew to stay in one area. Clint commented about how he has read to not use swans in that they destroy wetland plants and parks as well as have an impact on water fowl. Clint felt that more information was needed as well, including more scientific data. For instance how many does it take to rid of so many geese. Linda suggested using swans for a 1 to 2 year period then sell them back to the company if a problem develops. There was further discussion. Martyn agreed that he will get more information and that the person he spoke to said there was no detrimental damage from the swans. Both Clint and Martyn will continue to research the use of swans to avert the geese. Larry reminded the board that Canada geese that have been hatched here will never leave, which is why it was important to continue the oiling of geese eggs. Clint mentioned that the geese are already beginning to nest. Ed asked Clint to head up the volunteers to oil the geese eggs, but Clint stated that he was too busy right now, but would try to get out on the lake soon to scout out nests. Jim informed the board of when he lived in the Chesapeake Bay area that swans tore up the bottom of the bay and created a lot of difficulty with the sediment which caused problems with oyster beds. He said another thing was the noise nuisance of whistler or trumpeter swans. The noise they make can cause lots of complaints. Only mute swans should be considered. He explained that the swans are large, and that we need to be very careful in the decision made. He also agreed to make sure we researched this further. There were further comments made by the Board members regarding further research.

Status of Buffalo Creek Park development – Chris updated the Board on BCP development and stated that the trails were in great shape and getting great use. He said that the trail counters should probably be installed within the next week that will count pedestrians as well as count the bikers (by using a magnetic counter). Chris mentioned that temporary signs, using corrugated plastic on metal post, will be used for about six months and we'll evaluate if where they're located, their size and if they are useful for the trail users. This way we'll know if they need to be changed to be more useful, before we make the permanent signs. Clint has been working on a trail map for this first section which will be posted at the trail head. Chris discussed further updates regarding the trail and its progress. A design contract has been signed for the Phase 2 to Eagle Rock and should be started within the next month or so. There is progress on the desired expanded public trail head and the Town has a Sale and Purchase Contract Agreement with Wyndham Resort. Chris is negotiating with the State Park on this. There was discussion regarding how this purchase agreement all hinged on an agreement with Rumbling Bald POA. Larry and Chris are working together on this. The Carolina Climber's Coalition is interested in developing and overseeing the bouldering and climbing areas in the park. Chris discussed his talks with them. Martyn briefed the board on very favorable feedback he got recently on the trail from some bikers. Chris felt that these trails were a benefit for so many, including the restaurants out at Rumbling Bald Resort which trail enthusiasts might use after hiking and biking. Ed mentioned about a meeting next week with the fire department rescue squads to get everyone on the same page. Chris discussed a drafted rescue plan that will be reviewed. Emergency rescue plans were further discussed.

Status of planning for aeration/fountains for beach/marina/Morse Park Gardens pond – Martyn reviewed the bid he has received from Foster regarding an aeration system. They arrived at the number of aerators by using a scientific thought of the size of water source by how much the water moves a day. Foster was asked for and has given separate quotes for six, twelve and eighteen aerators. The estimate for six aerators was \$11,400. Clint discussed that he had a conversation with Kerry and that he would not be able to put in a competitive bid. Clint suggested that Martyn talk to Foster regarding getting the bid lower, using our own manpower, boats, etc. to assist in the aerator system installation. There was further discussion regarding installing the aerators in the bay only from the beach area toward the boardwalk and stop before the Marina, and that this area would be adequate. After further discussion the Board felt that starting with six aerators, then if needed to add more. Jim suggested putting those six in, test the area and see if more is needed. Clint mentioned that that would be the idea and that if the fecal coliform amounts are lowered, then that amount of aerators would be adequate, if not, possibly add additional. Clint will talk with Foster about reducing the bid. Ed mentioned about putting in \$10K into the FY14/15 CIP budget request.

Martyn discussed getting bids as well for fountain aeration in the pond in Morse Park Gardens. These two bids were \$7,500 and \$4,700, both for two fountains. Installation would be extra. Martyn explained that the only difference in the bids is the manufacturer. There was discussion regarding the spray of the fountain. Ed stated at this point that the primary concern was for aeration of the beach area, and recommended that the Board move ahead with that. He additionally asked for Martyn to go ahead and find out more regarding the spray, pump size, and other details regarding the fountains. Ed suggested putting in 10K into the FY 14/15 CIP budget request for the beach area aeration, and defer the fountains in Morse Park Gardens for now.

Status of planning for new Morse Park pedestrian bridge – There will be a public meeting on the 24th of this month from 3:00pm to 5:00pm. Ed discussed a meeting last month where the bridge focus group received comments regarding the bridge design. Most of the comments were favorable, but that there were some comments that it was too expensive and there has been a follow-up suggestion of a swinging bridge. The meeting on the 24th will discuss this. There is a lot of support for the bridge and the trails. There is a major cost in building it. There was discussion on the cost and that if you used concrete it would cost more but if you were to use the preformed or manufactured components, it would reduce the cost considerably. The footings and pilings would have to be done on site. There was discussion about what an asset it would be for the town.

Status of work on parkland maintenance punchlist – This item was not covered since Melodie had to leave the meeting early.

Chairman Ed Dittmer adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

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

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