

FROM: Parks and Recreation Council

SUBJECT: Monthly Meeting

DATE: September 2, 2015

LOCATION: Blackwood Farm Park

MEMBERS PRESENT: Neal Bench; Tori Williams Reid; Joel Bulkley; James Carter; Evelyn Daniel; John Greeson; Betty McDade Khan, Haywood Rhodes; Rob Robinson; Allan Green; Rachel Massai

MEMBERS ABSENT: Daniel Siler (excused)

STAFF PRESENT: David Stancil; Lynn Hecht; Dan Derby

- I. Beginning time of meeting: 6:00.
- II. a. **Meeting Summary** (8/5) No comments.
b. **Additions or Changes to the Agenda.** None.
- III. Report of the Chair.
 - a. **Letter to BOCC.** Bench spoke of the letter, penned by Allan Green, from the PRC to the BOCC related to the upcoming bond. The question was to ask the BOCC to include things such as parks in their bond referendum, not just the schools. Bench commended Green on this saying that the BOCC now will have a meeting with public comment on October 6. Stancil said the BOCC read the PRC letter into their record on September 1, and then soon after announced the October 6 meeting.
 - b. **Moorefields.** An informal discussion took place about Moorefields. Bench was wondering about the possibility to camp on this site. Stancil said that we'd have to run it by the Friends of Moorefields.
 - c. **Disc Golf.** Bench noted that the December 2014 disc golf presenter was Tim Halpin. Bench recalled from a previous meeting that a board member had asked who the person was who presented on the disc golf..
 - d. **Millhouse Road Park Master Plan Volunteers.** Millhouse Road Park Master Plan will potentially involve three members from Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation Board and three from our board. Stancil said that Siler already expressed a desire to be on this committee. Additionally, Massai and Greeson

volunteered their services as members from this board. Daniel volunteered to be a backup for the committee. Stancil will coordinate with this committee as plans are finalized.

- e. **Fully Accessible Playground Plans.** Bench says that Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation plans to build a fully accessible playground in Chapel Hill. The friends of Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation are helping fund this effort.

IV. New Business

- a. **Brumley Forest Trails Network-Triangle Land Conservancy**

Bo Howes, with the Triangle Land Conservancy, spoke with the group about the potential for a grant that would allow them to develop a trail system in Brumley Forest. Brumley Forest is near New Hope Church Road and Old NC 10. The trails would accommodate bikes and hiking, but not horses. Most of TLC's land is in Orange County. Some of it lies in Durham County. The amount of the grant is \$100,000. If they get the nod from this board, it would help in their application process. Daniel moved to approve this project, and McDade seconded the motion. All voted in favor of recommending this project for the grant.

- b. **Annual State of the Parks Update-Dan Derby.** Derby says that since he came on board 11 years ago, the County has gone from 49 acres to over 1100 acres. Parks have gone from 4 full time staff to 12 full time staff during that time period. This includes a new full time staff member who is coming on board now. Derby spoke of Hollow Rock Park opening soon with final projects being finalized this fall. He addressed the Blackwood Farm Park and plans in the future to include moving the park base there and building a new Environmental Education center on the site. In February, the staff will have a controlled burn in the upper meadow at the park. This will allow the eventual regrowth of original plants to come back in. In March, five American Chestnuts will be planted as part of the Arbor Day celebration. Eventually, a bee colony will be a part of the park. At this time of year, park hours begin to change and all parks close earlier. Those hours are posted on our website and at each park. Millhouse Road Park is in the planning phase as previously discussed. In the spring, there will be a pond health clinic with the help of the State Soil and Water Division. Williams Reid asked about Blackwood Farm Park having its own Facebook page. Stancil stated that this has been the topic of much internal discussion. At present there is a preference in the County for one page for departments and functional areas. Currently news is posted through the DEAPR page, although Little River has a pre-existing Facebook page that is very popular and well kept up. He hops to have individual pages for some of the higher profile parks in future. . Massai asked about if Soccer.com will expand. Derby answered that we will expand if we can acquire the land adjacent to it. Massai also asked if the SportsPlex would expand. Stancil says there are plans to build an indoor annex with soccer and gymnasium facility in the next few years. Derby said we now have the Emerald Ash Borer in the county and that he will be looking at the canopies of the ash trees to see which ones are currently infected and will treat accordingly.

V. Old Business

- a. **Disc Golf Location.** Stancil report that there are 3 existing disc golf locations in the county, all in the southern part of the county. The Town of Hillsborough is looking at building a 9 hole course at their King's Highway Park. If they do this, this may be an opportunity for the County and Town to work together. Staff will have a report on disc golf options at the October meeting.
- b. **Orienteering Layout-** More on this at the October meeting.
- c. **Primitive Camping Status-**more on this at the October meeting.

VI. Report of the Director (Stancil)

- a. **Updates on Park Projects and Other Activities.** Stancil spoke on various stages of park development. Staff has been asked to proceed with planning a parking lot in the northern section of Fairview Park. Since June, staff has met with other stakeholders and staff, such as the landscape architect and original engineer for the park, to come up with a plan for this parking lot. The parking lot permit was recently approved for Hollow Rock Park. Millhouse Road Park was discussed earlier in the meeting. The Town's pedestrian improvements that impact RiverPark should begin work by late winter or early spring, which will push the RiverPark planning out into the spring. There is much discussion on Community Centers. There is one new full time staff Community Center Coordinator who will coordinate planning for the Community Centers at Efland-Cheeks and the new Cedar Grove locations, as well as provide support for planning for the Rogers Road Center. There will be meetings soon in Cedar Grove to solicit specifics about what should go in/happen at these community centers. Cedar Grove Community Center is now under construction at the Old Cedar Grove School. The center of the building will house the community center while the wings will be used for storage. Stancil says that staff will continue to work this winter to plan how to connect the missing links of the Mountains to Sea Trail in Orange County, perhaps focusing first on the segment from Seven Mile Creek to Hillsborough.

VII. Council and Committee Reports

- a. **Items from the Council.** None.
- b. **Intergovernmental Parks Work Group** (Khan). None. Next meeting is October 14.
- c. **Friends of Orange County Parks and Recreation** (FOCPR) report. McDade spoke with a person from the Friends of the Orange County Senior Center. They said people pay \$25 to be friends of their group. She had plans to put a table up at a recent Soccer Tournament at Soccer.com, but was advised that those present would not likely be from Orange County, so she decided not to do it. She may set up a table during regular season games held the next few months on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

8:15 VIII. Adjournment 8:20pm

Next Meeting – **October 7, 2015** (Environment & Agricultural Center,
Hillsborough)

Meeting adjourned at: 8:15pm

Name of Notes Taker Lynn Hecht