

Meeting Summary

Date: August 5, 2020

Place: Virtual Meeting

PRESENT: Haywood Rhodes; Bruce Chinery; Mikki Fleming; Cecily Kritz; Andrew Landstrom; Robert Smith; Tim Tippin; Xilong Zhao

ABSENT: Michael Zelek; John Greeson; Gina Reyman

STAFF: David Stancil; Lynn Hecht

- I. **Call to Order:** From 6-6:30, new members were oriented. Roll was called.
- II. **Additions or Changes to Agenda, Meeting Summary:** The March notes were reviewed. No comments on the March notes. No additions to the agenda.
- III. **Report of the Chair:** Welcome to new members. Everyone introduced themselves and shared a little bit about themselves.
- IV. **New Business**
 - a. Lands Legacy Action Plan 2021-2024 (Parks/Public Open Space priorities). Chris Hirni shared this document with the board. It began in the year 2000. This is the direction that will be taken in the next 4 years. The Historic and Agricultural Boards as well as the Commission for the Environment will be making recommendations for this plan. Part of this plan includes finding land to build a park in Bingham Township. Another main priority is finding land easements to help fill segments of the Mountains to Sea Trail. Rhodes asked about the problem with land acquisition in Bingham Township. Stancil spoke of discussions over the year with OWASA to acquire some of the Cane Creek Reservoir land for a park in that area. Tippen spoke of how the people in that area like their privacy and property and would like to keep it that way. Stancil spoke of conducting a survey of that area to help allow all voices to be heard. Zhao like that idea of a survey. Kritz says that it would be good to ask what the resident want in the future, not just now. Stancil says that the County Investment plan has funding for a future Bingham Park to begin development around 2015-17. There was some explanation by Stancil about the multi-modal trail. He spoke of a rail line from Chapel Hill being used as part of that trail, but that UNC Chapel Hill still uses it now for bringing in coal. Zhao asked that future parks be not just for sports, but also provide cultural and naturally reserved land. Hecht asked Stancil if the group could have a copy of this map to be able to peruse on their own. This will be sent at a later date.
- V. **Old Business**
 - a. Mountains to Sea Trail Update this will be tabled for now until Hirni come and speak on it. An easement has been closed on NC 54 near Mebane Oaks Road. More at a later date from Hirni.
 - b. Recreation Division Update - a written report was presented to the group. Since March, all programs have been virtual. They don't know for sure when this will change. The Governor's order today was to extend the Stage 2 stay at home order to 5 more weeks, going into early September. Virtual classes will continue through the fall. Pre-school and after school programs will continue virtually. Recreation staff has developed a plan for when Phase 3 occurs and small groups can meet. Rhodes

spoke about his concern about week WIFI spots around the county. Stancil said the county is working on this.

- c. Blackwood Farm Park-preconstruction status Stancil spoke about the progress of the design for the next phase of construction. One of the discussions revolves around the amphitheater and trail system for it (like for trucks to get to and from it.) Disc Golf is part of the plan as well as a ranger station, nature center and additional parking. Stancil is hoping it will be under construction by next spring or summer. Stancil spoke of a group wanting to have a local music festival at this park. The old home site also needs much work done on it before it can be used again.
- d. Items for September meeting. The Mountain to Sea Trail update. The Lands Legacy Action Plan will be update by then. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair.

VI. **Report of the Director**

- a. Budget and CIP updates: The County Commissioners will be providing updates on the budget related to the recent pandemic. A budget was adopted for FY 20/21. The County rolled back the previous year's budget. No travel and training will be in this year's budget. No new Capital Funding or small capital projects, like new computers, new park benches and etc. will be funded. Cost off sets came from summer camp not hiring summer camp counselors is one savings. There will be a mid-fall evaluation to determine further cuts, if needed. CIP can have some amendments from the County Commissioners. There was a recent major shift of funds to a Durham Tech expansion project. This shifted some County projects for some years out. The Nature Center at Blackwood Farm Park may be moved out. Soccer.com expansion will shift back 6-10 years out as well as other park and open space projects being delayed. Rhodes says this discussion should be a large part of the next meeting.
- b. Lynn Hecht's upcoming retirement was discussed. Rhodes and Stancil thanked Hecht for all her work on the PRC; photo contest and other work with the county these past 25 years. Hecht thanked them and said she looks forward to other projects and would love to remain in touch. Her retirement is set for the end of August, the 21st being her unofficial last day on the job.

VII. **Council and Committee Reports**

- a. Intergovernmental Parks Work Group (next meeting October 14?)
- b. Items from the Council, no items.
- c. Friends of Orange County Parks and Recreation (FOPR). Rob Robinson, past member, is still involved with this group. Rhodes will be talking with him about this.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 8:15PM. The next meeting will be September 1, 2020, 6:30pm, and will be a virtual meeting as the County will still be in Stage 2, stay at home mode.