

**MINUTES
PARK WORKSHOP MEETING
ASSEMBLY ROOM
OCTOBER 3, 2016
10:30 A.M.**

1. Spreadsheet financial update – Nick Weedman

Mr. Weedman distributed a revised project costs spreadsheet – actual and projected income and expense plan through FY 2018+ totaling \$5,096,669.00. (see attached copy)

2. Plan for moving forward without Ed Lastein and how that might impact park budget and development schedule.

Steve Jamerson and Judy Boleman met with Natalie Berry and Andrew Bick to discuss what is necessary to obtain the proper permits for the extension (Section J) of the perimeter trail. Steve explained the process that the Village has to obtain a permit for each piece or group of trails from the State of North Carolina, then obtain a drainage permit from Henderson County. He recommends hiring Civil Design Concepts, the engineering company, to apply for the permits from the state.

In a discussion of Ed Lastein's vision of the park, Steve Jamerson and Don Farr advised that they are currently looking at design concepts of projects for the park.

Steve reviewed with Council the perimeter trail plan on the south and east side of park, the Nature Center, and the construction of the Quiet Place to start in approximately 1 - 2 weeks. These projects are to be completed in this fiscal year. Steve stated he is currently working with Andrew Bick and Civil Design Concepts in determining which elements, if any, are in the non-encroachment floodplain area.

Nick Weedman expressed concerns with the segment of the trail next to Highland Lake Road on the other side of the parking lot that is scheduled to be done in the future, not this fiscal year.

John Dockendorf mentioned in tying together the perimeter trails and making sure it's in the plan, the widening of Highland Lake Road, there will be a 10-foot bike path that Council voted for along the park perimeter part of the strategy is so that it does not affect the homeowners of Highland Golf Villas.

Nick Weedman asked Steve Jamerson with respect to the projects that have been defined and budgeted for this fiscal year, with the loss of Ed Lastein are we on schedule to continue with these projects? Steve stated we are on schedule with the exception of two outlooks: Eppler Observation Deck, which has been budgeted for this year, and the Hester Observation Deck, which is not budgeted for this year.

3. Foundation update, especially information on any planned fundraising campaigns – Maureen Adams and Duncan Fraser

Duncan Fraser reported a board retreat was held recently and they have committed to finishing the fundraising for the naming opportunities for trail sections within the park.

The Board has concerns about the number of trees that will be lost in NCDOT's widening of Highland Lake Road, and they plan to campaign to replant mature trees along Highland Lake Road.

The Foundation was asked to provide the Council with details of designated donations for projects that have either been completed or planned for this fiscal year.

4. Prioritize, and alter as agreed, the list handed out by Don Farr in August 2016 regarding the park master plan (list attached).

Don Farr suggested having the Park Commission and Park Foundation review the list, the Park Foundation give the Park Commission guidelines as to what amenities from the list they can get donations for. Don stated he is currently working on a spreadsheet of the 125 responses received from the recent citizens' survey, and he will come to Council at a later date with the results. He suggested this be completed before Council prioritizes future amenities.

5. Discussion of setting a minimum fund balance that will not be breached to do park development, per John Dockendorf's request.

Nick Weedman stated by the end of the 2016/2017 fiscal year, approximately \$2.4 million will be spent on the park. He asked Council how far it wishes to drop the fund balance. In discussions, Nick mentioned in the current fiscal year we are operating in a deficit.

After discussions, by consensus, Council agreed with projects moving forward, by policy the fund balance be set at a minimum of \$2.0 million, which excludes any contributions from the Park Foundation.

6. Review current year park projects – Steve and Ginger

7. Set first pass at projects for 2017.

8. Discuss/resolve perimeter trail plan that goes from termination points on the south and east side of the park.

Agenda items 6, 7 and 8 were dealt with at other points during the meeting or not discussed.

9. Results/summary of the invasive plants study completed at the park with the help of CMLC – Ginger and Wendy.

A. Invasive Species Summary

Wendy Beville presented a summary of the survey performed by Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy in June 2016 of the twenty-two invasive plant species identified in over 120 locations within the park, and discussed plans to deal with invasive plants. However, it was agreed that it is too late in the season to begin a program other than one already underway, and that Ms. Beville would give thought to a more timely plan for next year.

The purpose of this report is to provide a blueprint and a management plan to improve and maintain the natural habitat and species, but also to protect the water resources and land downstream and prevent invasive seed distribution. Goal is to protect and maintain the natural communities and species found as well as the water resources. Plants that interfere with this goal will negatively impact rare and endangered plant species as well as wildlife left unmanaged. Seeds from these plants will spread to native habitats within the park as well as surrounding areas.

B. Priority areas include about 2.5 acres

- Southeast corner adjacent to Highland Lake Road
- Corridor bordering Highland Golf Villas near the northern corner of the park
- Riparian areas beginning with King Creek

C. Hours required for Treatment

- Volunteer Workdays – need 2 workdays this Fall on Dye Creek and other interior edge habitats – 5 volunteers to work two 5 hours per day. This should be done first. Additionally, we will need four volunteer workdays in 2017 – 2 in Spring and 2 in Fall on riparian areas, the same for 2018. Forecast for 2019 is 200+ volunteer hours.
- American Conservation Experience (ACE) – need 4 workdays in 2017 to work the priority areas noted above – a 7-person ACE crew to work four 10-hour days (280 hours). An additional 200 ACE hours is forecasted for 2018 followed by 0 ACE hours in 2019.

D. Cost of ACE Labor

- 2016 - \$4,500
- 2017 - \$4,700
- 2018 – 2020 - \$1,100 per year

E. Cost of CMLC Staff Labor

- 2016 - \$325
- 2017 – 2019 - \$575 per year

F. List of Weed Species (see Table 2 of report/page 17)

G. High Priority Weeds

Tree of Heaven, Barberry, Oriental Bittersweet, Autumn Olive, Burning Bush, English Ivy, Yellow Flag Iris, Privet, Japanese Honeysuckle, Asian Spiderwort, Multiflora Rose, Wineberry, Japanese Spirea, Wisteria

H. Wildflower & Perennial Garden & Other Landscaped Areas

- Important not to introduce invasives.

I. Suggestions

- Invite David Lee to meet with us to provide an overview of his report and review the mechanical and chemical control of suggested means to treat the invasives.

10. **Update on use of park facilities (how often have the Pavilion, Rudnick Room, and areas of the park been reserved so far; impact on Michelle's time; how are the areas being left post use by those reserving the spaces, do our fees handle any additional cleaning that has been required, etc) – Michelle and Ginger.**

Ginger explained the process and fees to Council that people take in reserving these amenities. So far this year the Rudnick Room has been reserved 82 times. She expressed concerns that, due to the increase in use, and the wear and tear of the room for birthday parties, the room needs painting and carpet needs to be replaced earlier than expected. She is also concerned about the impact of such use on Michelle's time. Michelle explained that the way things are handled in reserving these amenities works the best, and prefers not to change anything. After discussions, it was agreed to continue the way reservations are currently handled.

Terry Hicks commented on the poison ivy located in the area on the northern end of King Creek. The Park Commission will review and handle.

Chris McDonnell suggested having the floodplain area color coded on the master plan. Steve Jamerson explained the drawings are in the process of being amended.

Barbara Coladarci inquired as to why the new parking lot configuration could not be done sooner, even while awaiting the widening of Highland Lake Road. Steve explained it's not worth the cost for a temporary parking lot, when the current parking lot is not completely filled. It is better to use the money towards better-use amenities.

At 11:55 a.m., the meeting was adjourned.

Michelle Parker, CMC
Village Clerk

Nick Weedman
Vice Mayor