

**Orange County
Parks and Recreation Council**

Meeting Summary

Date: November 6, 2019

Place: Animal Services Center Conference Room

PRESENT: Haywood Rhodes; Gina Reyman; Robert Robinson; Tim Tippin; Michael Zelek; John Greeson; Cecily Kritz; Alice Armstrong (CHP&R Commission)
ABSENT: Rachel Cotter; Tim Braddy; Robert Smith
STAFF: Lynn Hecht; David Stancil; Chris Hirni, Land Conservation Manager

- I. **Call to Order:** Introductions. All the board introduced themselves and Stancil introduced Chris Hirni, new Land Conservation Manager
 - II. **Additions or Changes to Agenda, Meeting Summary:** No comments were made about the October meeting summary.
 - III. **Report of the Chair: Membership/Vacancies:** There are now two vacancies for the Hillsborough Town Limits slot and the Cedar Grove Township slot. Four applications were made available for review. The Council expressed interest in a more diverse board as it has recently lost two minority members. Based on discussion, the Council will postpone recommending any of the applicants. Staff was asked to post a notice for these two positions at the Central Recreation Center; Cedar Grove Community Center and Efland Cheeks Community Center. The director will ask that the department's social media outlets have this posted as well.
- IV. New Business**
- a. Chris Hirni presented the quarterly update of the Mountains to Sea Trail. Hirni created an outline for the group to follow as he spoke. Orange County recently acquired a small portion of land near Cane Creek from Eric Knight. This will provide a section of the MST corridor and trailhead. Hirni spoke of additional work to connect Occoneechee Mountain to Seven Mile Creek (Phase I.) Phase II, connects the Cane Creek area to Seven Mile Creek. Hirni also addressed the connection of the trail with Eno River State Park. He noted that the Department of Transportation (DOT) will help connect the trails as they do renovations on several bridges on highway 70 through Hillsborough.
 - b. 2019 Annual Report/2020 Work Plan-Initial Discussion. Stancil presented the template for doing the 2020 report and gave the group a copy of 2019 Work Plan. Stancil will write up the areas that are constants, and have the group spend time on what to keep and what to postpone. Alice Armstrong said that Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation is currently designing an Inclusive Playground. Greeson wants to see the Multi-Modal Trail on emerging issues. Armstrong spoke of the Orange County Greenway Alliance working on some of the same trail issues. Reyman asked about Pickle Ball, which generated a discussion. She is very concerned about space for Recreation programs as well. The River Park stage was discussed. The Soccer.com expansion is coming up. Stancil says that it may be time to do a new community needs assessment, perhaps targeted to a location or to specific topics. Reyman

asked if the board could create a subcommittee within the group could pursue specific needs.

V. Old Business

- a. Multi-modal trail update: The Intergovernmental Parks Work Group discussed the topic (including the PRC letter) concerning the multi-modal trail. Some members of the public attended and addressed the topic. There were concerns at the meeting about the price tag for this trail. There was a question about a GIS group working on mapping for this as a draft. One County Commissioner on the group asked where the money would come for this. Robinson asked if this was something the Friends groups from either or both jurisdictions could help with this.
- b. Blackwood Farm Park-Update, Open House, Next Steps. Good progress has been made. There was a small turnout at an Open House held recently to discuss plans with neighbors of the park or others interested. There was positive feedback. The primary question from that meeting was about DOT involvement in creating a turn lane for the park and whether that could continue to the intersection. Plans are continuing to be finalized. By spring the plan will go out to bid.

VI. Report of the Director

- a. Project and initiative updates were discussed. October 26 was one of the most successful Spooktaculars. River Park work is going on to include the bus turn out and shelter, retaining wall, steps down to the park, paved walk to the River Walk, rain garden, an art sculpture, and paving of the gravel areas around the Farmer's Market Pavilion. The work is almost done. Recent Millhouse Road Park conversations are going on with CHP&R.

VII. Council and Committee Reports

- a. Intergovernmental Parks Work Group, last meeting was October 9. Robinson will provide the group with notes with the meeting. He'll send them to all by next meeting.
- b. Items from the Council, none.
- c. Friends of Orange County Parks and Recreation (FOPR): need a new director for the group.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 8:05PM. The next meeting will be December 4 at **the Environment and Ag Center Conference Room, 306 Revere Road, Hillsborough.**