MINUTES
City Council Parks, Trails, & Recreation Committee

Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 3:30 PM
City Council Chambers

Members Present:	Lauren Wise, Vice-Chair, Council Member Howie Granat, Citizen Member Nancy DePippo, Citizen Member Reba Osborne, Citizen Member (Arrived 4:20 PM) J.D. Powers, Citizen Member Mayor Maureen Copelof, Ex-Officio Member
Staff Present:	Dean Luebbe, Finance Director Wesley Shook, Acting Public Works Director Alex Shepherd, Assistant to the City Manager Aaron Bland, Assistant Planning Director Becky McCann, Communications Coordinator Katherine Buzby, Planner
Guests:	Craig Ruhland, Pisgah SORBA
Media:	John Rich, Transylvania Times

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chair Aaron Baker welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm.

B. Certification of Quorum

Quorum was certified by Assistant to the City Manager Alex Shepherd.

C. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Mr. Granat to add H. ATIIP Grant, seconded by Mr. Powers, to approve the agenda as revised. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Approval of Minutes from February 21, 2024 Meeting

Motion by Mr. Granat, seconded by Mr. Granat to approve the minutes of the February 21, 2024 meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

E. Green Space Adoption

Ms. Buzby announced that there is a new application for a green space adoption. Someone is requesting to add flowers to their existing green space and needs committee approval, as well as a one-time cleanup that she wanted to inform the committee about. She mentioned that Jameson's Joy wishes to adopt the green space in front of O.P. Taylor's in honor of their son. They want to plant flowers if approved, but there appear to be space constraints.

Mr. Granat inquired if Ms. Buzby had received a map of where the flowers would be planted.

Ms. Buzby responded no she has not received a map.

Mayor Copelof suggested that Blue Forget Me Nots and Orange Milkweed could be added into any bump out. She added that Orange Milkweed does not get terribly tall, so planting one or two in the bump out should be fine. Mayor Copelof also mentioned that Blue Bachelor Buttons are small and should be suitable as well, as long as they do not overwhelm the bump out.

At 3:40 PM, a motion was made by Mr. Powers to approve the green space adoption of Jameson's Joy, seconded by Ms. Depippo. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Ruhland introduced himself and offered to answer questions regarding Pisgah SORBA and Bracken Preserve Maintenance.

Ms. Buzby informed the committee that bump out number four in front of Beverly Hanks wants to plant Hostas.

Mayor Copelof cautioned against planting Hostas due to excessive sunlight in that bump out.

Ms. Buzby mentioned a request from Suburban Propane to weed the garden at Tannery Skatepark on Friday, April 26th, from 9 am to 12 pm. She requested more volunteers to participate and suggested having someone from the master gardeners present to provide guidance.

Mayor Copelof asked if mulching is needed.

Mr. Shook suggested that it could use mulching.

Ms. Fisher from the Transylvania County Democratic Party proposed adopting two bump outs in front of Beverly Hanks. She suggested planting Hostas because they are not tall and would like to plant flowers next spring. She noted that mulch has been added to the bump outs, improving their appearance. They have someone from their

group attending to the bump out every week. The reason for choosing Hostas is to avoid planting pollinators that could attract butterflies killed by passing cars.

Mayor Copelof expressed concern about Hostas not doing well in a lot of sunlight.

Ms. Fisher assured that the Hostas she will donate have been in the sun in Brevard and are accustomed to sunlight.

Ms. DePippo suggested removing Orange Milkweed from being planted in bump outs.

The committee reached a consensus to remove Orange Milkweed from the planting plan and approved planting Hostas at the bump out in front of Beverly Hanks.

F. Bracken Preserve Maintenance Update

Mr. Granat informed the committee that we were not awarded the American Trails Grant for $10,000. We are awaiting a response from Conserving Carolina because there is $10,000 from a particular donor. He mentioned that we have some items to work out with the Brevard Music Center easement to build a climbing trail. Mr. Granat explained that we will have Conserving Carolina act as the contractor to pay Long Cane Trail to perform phase one of the construction, assuming that we have a large number of volunteers. He added that over the next few months, we will have a couple of trail work days.

Mr. Powers inquired if the Brevard Music Center has issues with people parking in their lot to access the trail.

Mr. Granat clarified that they do not want people to park on their property to access the trail. He mentioned that we are going to continue working on the development of the Friends of Bracken. This organization needs to be in place to help drive fundraising for phases two and three of the trail construction, for which we will need around $50,000 for each phase.

Ms. McCann mentioned that as part of the donation from the TDA, we have agreed to let them make use of the kiosk as long as our information is maintained about no fires. She said that Mr. Lovelace from the TDA will be in touch with her soon about items to post.

G. Pisgah SORBA MOU

Mr. Bland mentioned that we have had a couple of Zoom calls with the City of Asheville discussing their agreement with Pisgah SORBA, and we have really liked what we have heard. He stated that we are comfortable moving forward with drafting our own MOU.

Mr. Granat added that one of the key things we would like to develop is a more specific scope of work within the document. He explained that we would like to see specific dates for trail assessment and work.

Mr. Ruhland expressed that we would be happy to add additional information to the MOU.

H. ATIIP Grant

Mr. Granat informed the committee that there appears to be around $45 million in grant opportunities through the ATIIP grant.

Mr. Bland mentioned that the grants are allocated to projects with at least $100,000 in planning and design.

Mr. Shepherd added that the grants also support projects with at least $15 million in total costs and expenses.

Mr. Granat emphasized the urgency of the situation, stating that he believes the deadline is in June.

I. Public Comment

Mr. Bland informed the committee that the pump track does not qualify as a trail for the purposes of the Great Trails State grant. He mentioned that everyone he has spoken to seems to think that the PARTF grant would be a good fit to apply for the grant.

Mr. Wise mentioned the discussion about an Ecusta Trail Head during the City Council meeting on Monday. He noted that there were discussions about shifting that process over to the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Committee or the Ecusta Trail Advisory Board.

Ms. DePippo added that it sounded like the decision would come back to them.

Mayor Copelof informed the committee that it was discussed that it should be reviewed by the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Committee. She noted that it was a complicated package because it had two pieces: a potential trailhead and the Pisgah Health Foundation Park. She expressed anticipation for a possible joint meeting between the Ecusta Trail Advisory Board and the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Committee.

J. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Parks, Trails & Recreation Committee was scheduled for Wednesday, April 17, 2024 at 3:30 PM.

K. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:48 pm.

X _____

Aaron Baker
Chair, Council Member

Minutes Approved: April 24, 2024

X _____

Alex Shepherd
Assistant to the City Manager