MINUTES
City Council Parks, Trails, & Recreation Committee

Wednesday, May 21, 2025 - 3:30 PM
Mary C. Jenkins Community & Cultural Center

Members Present:	Aaron Baker, Chair, Council Member Lauren Wise, Vice Chair, Council Member Howie Granat, Citizen Member Reba Osborne, Citizen Member Nancy DePippo, Citizen Member Wyn Birkenthal, Citizen Member JD Powers, Citizen Member Mayor Maureen Copelof, Ex-Officio
Staff Present:	Dean Luebbe, Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Paul Ray, Planning Director Aaron Bland, Assistant Planning Director Wesley Shook, Public Works Director Becky McCann, Communications Coordinator Denise Hodsdon, City Clerk
Guests:	Dave Bradley

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chair Aaron Baker welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:33pm.

B. Certification of Quorum

A quorum was certified by City Clerk Denise Hodsdon.

C. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Baker asked to switch agenda item E and agenda item F. Mr. Wise made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Ms. DePippo seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

D. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Granat made a motion to approve the minutes and Ms. Osborne seconded. All voted in favor.

E. Updates

1. Bracken Trail/Climbing Trail Loop

Mr. Granat provided an update on the Bracken Trail, reiterating that there are three potential trail builders being considered. He shared that he expects to receive quotes within the week. He anticipated that the 1.5 miles will cost an estimated $70,000-$110,000. He stated that he will share updated information at the next meeting. He also noted that Pisgah SORBA has been doing some work on the trail and there is still an effort to develop the "BrackenFest" in September to continue fundraising.

2. Sports Complex Restrooms and Parking

Mr. Ray noted that all had agreed the restrooms were needed at the Sports Complex, along with the paving of the parking lot. He updated the committee that the city had received a proposal from McAdams Design Firm for $60,000. He stated that some of the work could possibly be completed in house with the Public Works Department. He distributed a copy of the proposal and scope of work received from McAdams and the committee members asked to further discuss the proposal at the next meeting.

3. Estatoe Boardwalk Assessment

Mr. Ray noted that this item would be discussed under item F, Menu of Choices.

4. 30% Design for Remaining Sections of the Estatoe Trail

Mr. Ray shared that he expected to have a report on 30% design from Summit Engineering and hopes to have preliminary plans for review within the week. Mr. Baker asked that the report via email when staff receives it.

F. Menu of Funding Choices

Mr. Ray distributed a summary of the findings and funding required according to the recently submitted boardwalk assessment report. He and Mr. Bland shared the following funding table for committee discussion.

	With Handrail	Without Handrail	Difference	Lifespan
Permatrek (Concrete)	$1,282,295	$929,695	$351,600	50-75 yrs
Composite Wood	$773,160	$557,360	$175,800	25-30 yrs
Pressure Treated Wood	$615,960	$440,160	$175,800	Up to 20 yrs

The committee discussed the differences between building the boardwalk with materials including the Permatrek concrete, composite wood, and pressure-treated wood. The committee had extensive discussion about the state of the existing boardwalk and implications for replacing it.

The committee had significant discussion about potential funding options for the boardwalk, trails, and other recreational amenities, including grants and the potential for issuance of bonds. The pros and cons of grants and bonds was discussed at length.

Mr. Baker asked that staff investigate the need for easements and firm up cost estimates. Ms. Copelof also asked that staff evaluate whether the existing boardwalk could remain safe for the public for the next couple of years until funding is in place for the replacement.

Mr. Baker shared that he has been working with the TDA for obtain funding for the Estatoe Trail. He stated that the TDA has pledged $1.0 million for the project.

G. Follow-up on Playground Equipment Discussion

With Mr. Hooper unable to attend the meeting, this topic was tabled for the next committee meeting for discussion of public input sessions and plans for replacement.

H. Public Comment

No public comment.

Ms. Copelof asked that staff add Pisgah Health Foundation and Conserving Carolina acreage around the hospital on the next agenda.

Mr. Granat asked Mr. Luebbe if funds were in the budget for Pisgah SORBA. Mr. Luebbe responded that funding is included within the budget within the contracted services line item for trail maintenance.

I. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for June 18, 2025 at 3:30pm.

J. Adjourn

Mr. Granat made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Wise. All voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 5:03pm.

Approved: June 18, 2025

Aaron Baker, Chair or
Lauren Wise, Vice Chair

Selena D. Coffey
Assistant to the City Manager