# MINUTES
## ECUSTA TRAIL ADVISORY BOARD 2.0

**Wednesday, August 27th, 2025 – 3:30 pm**
City Hall Council Chambers

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| Members Present: | Aaron Baker, Chair, Council Member<br>Mac Morrow, Vice Chair, Council Member<br>Larry Chapman, Transylvania County Commissioner<br>Dee Dee Perkins, Transylvania Development Authority<br>Doug Miller, Heart of Brevard<br>Sheila Carland, Transylvania Economic Alliance<br>Meredith Carli, At-Large Appointment<br>John Ditillo, Friends of Ecusta Trail<br>Rebekah Robinson, Conserving Carolina |
| Absent: | Madeline Hanley, At-Large Appointment |
| Staff Present: | Maureen Copelof, Mayor, Ex-Officio<br>Madalin Baker, Board Secretary<br>Wilson Hooper, City Manager<br>Aaron Bland, Assistant Planning Director |
| Guests: | Mark Tooley, Friends of the Ecusta Trail<br>Tad Fogel, Friends of the Ecusta Trail<br>Lonnie Watkins, NCDOT<br>Dave Bradley, Transylvania Times |

**A. Welcome and Call to Order**

Committee Vice Chair Mac Morrow welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:31 PM.

**B. Certification of Quorum**

Quorum was certified by Board Secretary Madalin Baker.

**C. Approval of Agenda**

Motion to approve the agenda as written by D. Perkins, seconded by M. Carli. The motion carried unanimously.

**D. Approval of Minutes**

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A motion to approve the draft minutes as written was made by M. Carli, seconded by D. Perkins, carried unanimously.

**E. Public Comment**
Dave Bradley mentioned he is working on a story about the trail's economic impact in Brevard, and encouraged board members and guests to share their thoughts with him.

**F. New Business**

1. Funding Update: W. Hooper provided an update on the trail's funding status. The trail design money is coming from a number of grants, which W. Hooper provided specifics on. L. Watkins contributed as well, saying NCDOT is currently negotiating with engineering firms. W. Hooper noted that although funding remains challenging, no progress has been stalled. M. Morrow thanked L. Watkins for his hard work and dedication. W. Hooper and L. Watkins took questions from the Board, clarifying specifics about funding for the Henderson County portion of the trail, which was not taken up as a NCDOT project in contrast to the Brevard portion.
2. FOET Director: J. Ditillo shared the exciting news that the Friends of the Ecusta Trail have hired a new Executive Director, Laura Rice.
3. M. Tooley shared updates from FOET regarding the opening of the Henderson County portion of the trail, which happened in July. He shared they are working with Watermark to bring proposed signage options before the board. The feedback from trail users has been generally very positive, with minimal complaints. T. Fogel shared some folks have called with difficulty locating parking near the trail, and some calls with folks suggesting portable restrooms along the trail before a permanent restroom solution can be reached.

**G. Unfinished Business**
None.

**H. Remarks/Future Agenda Considerations**
Many Board members shared their excitement that the Henderson County first 6 miles of trail were open. D. Miller expressed excitement regarding the new FOET director, and emphasized the need to prepare a MOU between the City and FOET to set expectations for the continued partnership. A. Bland shared that those conversations have been started at the staff level.

**I. Adjourn**

There being no further business, M. Morrow motioned to adjourn, A. Baker seconded, the motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:13 PM.

X _____
Aaron Baker, Chair

Minutes Approved-_____

X _____
Madalin Baker, Board Secretary

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