



**Parks and Greenways Board
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 10, 2024 – 9:30 a.m.**

Chair Gary Anderson called to order the Regular Parks and Greenways Board Meeting at 9:30 a.m. on September 10, 2024.

The following attended in person at Town Hall, 441 White Pine Drive, Laurel Park NC 28739:

- Chair Gary Anderson
- Vice Chair Judy Lyons
- Secretary Terry Pierce
- John McGregor
- Denise Layfield
- Joseph Robustelli
- Todd Plessel
- Town Manager Cara Reeves
- Parks Operation Coordinator Bryan Hensley
- Resident Jennifer Brown
- Resident Nancy McKinley
- Resident Ann McFadden

The following were absent:

- Council Representative George Banta

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Anderson asked if there were any public comments. Ms. Brown commented on her plan to divide two lots into four lots on Prior Preserve property. Due to an administrative misunderstanding, she was unaware her request was on the August Parks and Greenway Regular Meeting Agenda. Subsequently her request was delayed one month. Chair Anderson and Todd Plessel both stated that the P & G Board looks forward to working with Ms. Brown on adding walking paths through the Prior Preserve property. Town Manager Cara Reeves apologized to Ms. Brown and Ms. McKinley for the delay.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Anderson asked to add Ms. McFadden to the agenda under Old Business. Chair Anderson asked for discussion; there was none. The amended agenda was unanimously approved on motion by Ms. Layfield and seconded by Vice Chair Lyons.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Anderson asked for discussion on the August 13, 2024, Minutes. Mr. Robustelli made a motion to approve the minutes and seconded by Ms. Layfield. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

BUDGET REPORT

No Budget Report.

OLD BUSINESS

Minor Subdivision 2 lots into 4 – Prior Preserve

No comments on the proposal. Motion by Vice Chair Lyons to approve and seconded by Ms. Layfield was unanimously approved.

Recognition Plaque Donation - Ann McFadden

Ms. McFadden presented her plan to place a donated commemorative plaque at the start of the foot path on Olds Trails in honor of Paul and Heidi Landolt. See attached.

After much discussion, there was concern that this could be setting a precedent for signs to be placed all around town in the future. The Board supports the concept and will be happy to help develop this with approval and guidance from the Council. Ms. McFadden agreed to present her plan to the Council.

Adopt a Garden Updated List

Chair Anderson added Resident Paula Thum to the Volunteer List. He will share this list with FOLP to include in their welcome packet.

2024-2025 Goals List

Secretary Pierce motioned to approve the 2024-2025 Goals List. Seconded by Vice Chair Lyons.. Unanimously approved.

Bird Sanctuary Sign Update

The sign has been approved by the Town Council and will be installed at Rhododendron Lake Nature Park.

“No riding of bikes in park” sign update

Mr. Plessel pointed out that the current published bike trail maps route bicyclists through RLNP via the boardwalk. There is concern that the boardwalk is too narrow to safely accommodate bicycles along with anyone that may be walking or fishing. He will change the maps and signposts to reroute bicycles. Changes will be made to PDFs for future printing.

There is an immediate need for signs in Laurel Green Park. Mr. Plessel will find 4 signs and present them to the Council for approval.

Wetland at Rhododendron Lake Nature Park

Board members reiterated that this project is beyond the scope of their expertise or ability. Ms. Layfield will contact Dr. Roderick to ask for referrals for contractors experienced in this type of restoration. Waiting for directions from the Town Council.

NEW BUSINESS

Staircase repair at Jump Off Rock

Chair Anderson shared recent photos of the failed staircase at JOR. He noted the broken railing and decayed steps. All agreed that the staircase needs immediate attention for safety concerns. It was decided

Park Technician Hensley would ask Commissioner Banta for the building plans and materials list. Chair Anderson and Mr. Plessel will meet Mr. Hensley at JOR on Friday, September 13, 2024, at 9:00 am to discuss the repairs.

Tree Removal at Rhododendron Lake Nature Park

A large willow tree in the conservation area has fallen onto the walking path near the triangle garden bed and pavers. Mr. Hensley will need help from Public Works to safely remove the tree from the park.

Volunteer Thank You Gathering

Tentative plans are to hold an evening casual “get-to-know-you” gathering at Trailside Brewing sometime during the week of October 15-19. Invitations will be limited to those volunteers currently active in the Town Parks. No alcohol will be purchased. Chair Anderson will ask Trailside if we can order pizza to be delivered or are we required to purchase from a food truck? Discussion to continue at the October 8, 20024, meeting.

PARK TECHNICIAN’S REPORT

Mr. Hensley is focusing on fall maintenance of Jump Off Rock Park and prepping for the installation of the Laurel Green water fountain. Ms. Layfield will investigate possible signs to encourage children to keep the sand inside the tower.

INVASIVES SPECIES COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. McGregor said the committee has the following goals:

1. Incentivize property owners to remove invasives species from their properties.
2. Identify and prioritize kudzu hotspots for removal.

3. Find common language to be used across all Town Boards and subcommittees. He suggested “Habitat Preservation” applies in all areas. Robert Fain, Brandon Johnson and John McGregor are working together to prioritize work and develop a comprehensive plan.
4. A critical need has been identified in the new Laurel Green stream restoration. John has identified an abundance of the invasive species – *Murdannia keisak*, or Marsh Dew-flower. This is an unusual species to find in Henderson County. The health of the stream will be severely compromised if allowed to grow. It was decided that the next Volunteer Work Session will focus on safely removing this plant from the stream. On Tuesday, September 17, 2024, Mr. McGregor will instruct volunteers how to safely and effectively remove it. Vice Chair Lyons will notify volunteers by email.

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Anderson suggested that a flower bed be planted with a “100” to help celebrate the Town’s Centennial. Possible locations in Laurel Green Park will be identified.

BOARD AND COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

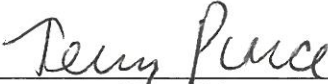
No Commissioner present.
Chair Anderson and Secretary Pierce will not return as members of the Board after their terms expire in December. New members are needed.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Lyons motioned to cancel the Site Meeting on September 22, seconded by Ms. Layfield. Chair Anderson asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

There being no further business, Chair Anderson adjourned the meeting at 11:25 a.m. on motion by Mr. Robustelli and seconded by Mr. McGregor. Chair Anderson asked for discussion; there was none. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Board members adjourned to meet at Laurel Green after the meeting.

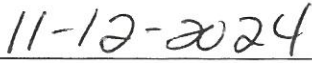
ATTEST:



Terry Pierce
Secretary



Gary Anderson, Chair



Date