

MINUTES OF CARTER COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

MEETING HELD September 3rd 2015, 801 East Elk Ave, Elizabethton, TN 37643

OPENING: Chairman Ken Gough called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

ROLL CALL:

Erik Anderson conducted a roll-call. A quorum was present.

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|---|---------|---------------------------|---------|
| Leon Humphrey (Mayor) | Present | Randall Jenkins (Commission Liaison) | Present | William Birchfield (1) | Present |
| Erik Anderson (2) | Present | Charles Dykes (3) | Absent | Jeff Smythe (4) | Present |
| Ken Gough (5) | Present | J.R Campbell (6) | Absent | Charlie Mattioli (7) | Present |
| Jim Hughes (8) | Present | Bonnie Peters (Eliz Park and Rep) | Absent | | |

Guests were introduced: Jerry Morrel, President Buladeen Citizens Club, Earl Coup Vice President Buladean Citizens Club, Sherry Morrel and Patsy Coup.

PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Minutes of the August 13th meeting were provided to members before the meeting. Jim Hughes made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes and approve. William Birchfield seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS:

None Scheduled

OLD BUSINESS.

1. **Charles Dykes:** Erik Anderson reported that Charles would be unable to attend tonight and perhaps the next meeting as his wife is going through rehab for a stroke.

2. **REPORTS:**

- a. **Southern Off Road Bicycling Association MOU** - A final draft of the MOU was provided in the read-ahead package to Board Members. The County Attorney added some language regarding rights of way clarification. SOBRA has concurred with the change as well as the Elizabethton Attorney. The Elizabethton Parks and Rec will address the MOU at their September 14th meeting. Charlie Mattioli made a motion to accept the final draft. Jeff Smythe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. **Birding-** The TOS, Carter County Attorney and Elizabethton Attorney all approved the draft MOU. The Elizabethton Parks and Rec will address the MOU at their September 14th meeting. We will plan a signing ceremony during the October 1st meeting.
- c. **Tweetsie Donation:** Ken reported that we were waiting for approval from the Johnson City Commission before we can write the check for the \$10,000 donation.
- d. **Beautification/Greenhouse** – Beautification of County Offices and entrances to the County was discussed. Randall Jenkins and Leon Humphrey will pass on to county agencies that the Parks and Recreation Board would like to assist them next year in efforts to improve landscaping and plantings.
- e. **Community Survey:** Charlie Mattioli detailed the progress on the efforts to conduct a Parks and Recreation Survey in concert with Elizabethton Parks and Rec. He expects the

surveys and address labels to be ready within a week to 10 days. It was the consensus of the Board that each representative will pick up 150 surveys and send them out to the address labels that will be provided. More detailed instructions as to when to mail and return date will be provided separately by Charlie.

- f. **Community Tour** – JR Campbell was absent. Randall Jenkins took the action to check with JR as to the next community tour.
- g. **Tweetsie Trail South extension:** Ken Gough reviewed the path of the proposed extension. He and Chris Schuettler had discussed the potential project with the Road Superintendent. They will brief the Highway Committee next Tuesday. Efforts are on track for a vote at the next meeting on allocation of funds to enable this project.
- h. **Website:** - Ken Gough reported the website is progressing and will provide members a log-in. It looks like and has links to the Carter County website but will be easier for us to maintain and update. We should have something usable in a week or two.
- i. **Tourism Council:** There is no update on the status of the Tourism Council and the situation does not look to improve in the near future. If approved by the County Attorney, Randall Jenkins will check with the Chamber of Commerce to see if there is some way to make progress on some of our initiatives that require cooperation with the Tourism Council.
- j. **Roan Mountain Community Park.**
 - i. Ken Gough reported that the Sherriff had passed on our letter concerning hooliganism at the Roan Mountain Community Park to his Patrol Captain. Erik Anderson will follow up with park neighbors to see if there are noticeable results
 - ii. Erik described the status of community park mowing equipment. He recommended that the board consider setting aside a contingency fund of approx. \$3,000 for future equipment replacement. Leon Humphrey will determine if a set aside reserve is possible and the mechanics that would be required.
 - iii. Erik reported that the Farmers Market last day of operation this year would be the Saturday of Labor Day. The first year was successful.
- k. **Elizabethton P&R Liaison:** No report

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **BULADEEN CFOMMUNITY CENTER:** Representatives of the Buladeen Citizens Club gave an overview of their organization and activities that take place at the Community Center. They shared some ideas on their needs. William Birchfield will work with the Club to develop a more detailed proposal so that we can plan and possibly fund a portion of the efforts. Leon Humphrey will check to see if the County must own the property or can we expend funds on rented or leased property. Erik Anderson and the Roan Mountain Recreation Foundation will assist the Club with pursuit of 501 c 3 charity status if they desire.
2. **TWEETSIE TRAIL TREASURE TRIP AND GRAND OPENING:** The Parks and Rec Board will take advantage of the Grand Opening to gather up to 50 surveys for the Community Survey effort.
3. **ADVENTURE TOURISM DESIGNATION:** Board members were provided information on the process and potential benefits of the County being designated as an Adventure Tourism locale. Ken Gough will check with the TN DoR to see if applications are still being accepted for 2016. If so Ken will prepare a draft resolution for Board Review on October 1st and a subsequent future County Commission consideration.
4. **APPALACHAIN TRAIL COMMUNITY DESGIGNATION:** Ken reported to the Board that he may have an interested individual who would be willing to lead this effort. It was the sense of the Board that Ken should pursue this lead and report next month.

Draft

5. **CARTER COUNTY ROAD CYCLING GUIDE:** Ken Gough reported that he may have an individual who would be willing to lead an effort to develop a Road Cycling Guide. It was the sense of the Board that Ken should pursue this lead and report next month.
6. **NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be October the 1st at 7:00 PM in the County Courthouse. We will have a signing ceremony for the two MOUs as well as hear from Mr. Jim Richards, Tennessee Greenways and Trails Coordinator.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 9:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Anderson
Secretary

DRAFT

Cost estimates for the Southern portion of the Tweetsie - Overmountain Trail

| Item | Price/ea | Qty | Extended cost |
|---|----------|-----|---------------|
| Carsonite trail post | 14.95 | 20 | \$299.00 |
| Recycled Plastic 4x4 post | 59.00 | 4 | \$236.00 |
| Recycled Plastic 3x3 milemarker post, engraved | 136.00 | 5 | \$680.00 |
| Respect LO signs and posts | 12.00 | 20 | \$240.00 |
| Decals for Carsonite post | 12.20 | 6 | \$73.20 |
| 18"x 18" trail use/warning sign | 27.00 | 6 | \$162.00 |
| Bubble safety mirrors nondestructible | 230.00 | 3 | \$690.00 |
| Carsonite post driver | 205.00 | 1 | \$205.00 |
| Total cost for minimum signage for 4 miles +/- of trail | | | \$2,585.20 |
| Estimated cost per mile | 1862.24 | 4 | \$7,448.96 |
| Estimated cost of project | | | \$10,034.16 |

A Resolution by the Carter County Parks & Recreation Board

To the Carter County Commission

The Carter County Parks & Recreation Board has become aware of the State of Tennessee's Adventure Tourism District Program, which gives tax benefits to certain tourism-related businesses within the district. After thorough study, we believe that this program would materially affect tourism development within Carter County by (1) providing an opportunity to market the county as a "Certified Adventure Tourism Location" and (2) providing significant tax benefits for both new and existing tourism-related businesses that create new jobs in the county.

It is therefore the recommendation of the Parks & Recreation Board that the county commission adopt the attached resolution and business plan, modified as the commission sees fit, which empowers the mayor to pursue said designation.

Resolution adopted by the Carter County Parks & Recreation Board this 1st day of October, 2015.

Kenneth D. Gough, Chairman

Attest by:

Erik Anderson, Secretary

A Plan to Create Adventure Tourism Districts in Carter County

Executive Summary:

The Adventure Tourism and Rural Development Act of 2011 created a mechanism by which communities can apply to be certified as an adventure tourism district ("district"). Certification as a district allows certain businesses to qualify for a jobs tax credit specific to the Adventure Tourism Act. Certification of a district must be obtained by receiving approval from both the Commissioner of the Department of Revenue and the Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development. This approval is based upon a "best interests of the state" determination made by DOR and approved by ECO. All interested local governments must submit their completed plans and applications to ECD between January and April each year. Approved plans will receive certification for a period of three (3) years. Upon expiration of the three (3) year period, a local government must submit a new, complete plan for certification.

This District sets the stage for an economic benefit for any new tourism business that invests significantly in the district. Accordingly, any "tourism related business" including restaurants, lodging establishments and other tourism-related attractions may form the basis of a local governing body's application for creation of a district and may benefit from the tax credits provided for in the Adventure Tourism Act once a district is certified by DOR and ECD.

This application requests the establishment of several districts in Carter County, comprised of much of the county other than purely residential and farming areas.

Attachments:

1. Resolution
2. Adventure Tourism District Map

A RESOLUTION OF CARTER COUNTY, TENNESSEE
DECLARING ITS INTENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
TENNESSEE ADVENTURE TOURISM AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2011 BY DEVELOPING A CERTIFIED
ADVENTURE TOURISM DISTRICT PLAN

WHEREAS, Tenn. Code Ann. section 11-11-204 authorizes the creation of an Adventure Tourism District and an Adventure Tourism District Plan in the county upon approval be a two-thirds majority vote of the county commission; and

WHEREAS, adventure tourism, such as road biking, mountain biking, motorized trail riding, all-terrain vehicles, rowing, kayaking and canoeing, equine activities, rappelling, paragliding, zip lining, hang-gliding-, shooting sports, and other such activities, offer economic development opportunities for all businesses in the county;

WHEREAS, approval as an Adventure Tourism District allows qualified businesses located within the district to earn a jobs tax credit to offset a portion of the Tennessee franchise and excise tax liability; and

WHEREAS, the county will work closely with the State of Tennessee Economic and Community Development and Department of Revenue to ensure approval of the Adventure Tourism District Plan.

Now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNTY COMMISSION OF CARTER COUNTY as follows:

SECTION I.

That pursuant to the Tennessee Adventure Tourism and Rural Development Act of 2011 the county hereby creates the following Adventure Tourism Districts:

The Roan Mountain Adventure Tourism District, comprised of Roan Mountain, Ripshin Mountain, Roan Mountain State Park, the town of Roan Mountain, and environs;

The Watauga Lake Adventure Tourism District, comprised of Watauga Lake, its shoreline (including Iron Mountain to its crest), Pond Mountain Wilderness Area, and environs;

The Elizabethton Adventure Tourism District, comprised of the city of Elizabethton;

The Watauga River Adventure Tourism District, comprised of the Watauga River and its environs below Watauga Lake (including Wilbur Lake) to the border with Washington County, and the town of Watauga (excluding lands lying within the Elizabethton Adventure Tourism District);

The Stony Creek Adventure Tourism District, comprised of the environs of Stoney Creek and surrounding mountains (Holston and Cross Mountains, and Iron Mountain to its crest);

The Doe River Gorge Adventure Tourism District, comprised of the Doe River and its environs (below the Roan Mountain Adventure Tourism District), Doe River Gorge, the town of Hampton, Laurel Fork Gorge, Dennis Cove, and environs; and

The Tweetsie Trail Adventure Tourism District, comprising the Tweetsie Trail and its environs between the border with Washington County and the Elizabethton Adventure Tourism District.

SECTION II.

That the county commission approves an Adventure Tourism District Plan set out as follows:

Adventure Tourism District Plan

Carter County, Tennessee

Overview

In a targeted effort to attract growth for our existing Adventure Tourism businesses and to recruit additional Adventure Tourism Businesses with the goal of increasing revenue and generating additional jobs, Carter County has created a number of Adventure Tourism Districts within Carter County.

Carter County has a multitude of natural resources which fit the criteria for building our Adventure Tourism industry. Carter County desires to reduce unemployment and draw tourism, which plays a large part in our economic outlook. We see these districts' designation as a way to assist in increasing our local and state tax revenue for improved economic growth.

Targeted Business

Tourism is big business across the nation and in Tennessee. The economic impact of Tennessee Tourism was more than \$17 Billion in 2014. One niche area of great impact is Adventure Tourism. This category includes "outdoor recreational opportunities such as equine and motorized trail riding, white-water rafting and kayaking, rappelling, rock climbing, hang-gliding, spelunking, and other such activities."

Products and Services

The Adventure Tourism Districts in Carter County contain a wealth of outdoor recreational assets, including:

- Roan Mountain, one of the highest mountains in the eastern United States, incorporating one of Tennessee's largest state parks, the largest natural

rhododendron garden in the world, breathtaking mountain vistas, popular campgrounds, cabins, and other tourist facilities;

- the Tweetsie Trail, Tennessee's longest rail-trail;
- Watauga Lake, TVA's highest and most beautiful reservoir, a popular boating, sailing and fishing destination;
- Wilbur Lake, TVA's smallest reservoir, a little "jewel in the mountains";
- over 40 miles of the Appalachian Trail, the nation's premier hiking trail, the Overmountain Victory Trail, and many miles of other popular trails;
- many campgrounds and back-country camping sites;
- the Doe River, a well-known kayaking and fishing destination, including the spectacular Doe River Gorge;
- dozens of miles of some of the finest cycling roads in the state, including the "Roan Groan", the famous climb up Roan Mountain;
- the beautiful Watauga River, a popular fishing destination and trophy trout stream;
- hundreds of square miles of mountain wilderness in the Cherokee National Forest;
- mountain bike trails;
- acclaimed birding habitat, with over 200 species identified, and
- nationally-significant historic sites recognizing Carter County's distinction as the first frontier settlement west of the Appalachians, its pivotal role in the southern campaign in the War for Independence, historic homes, Elizabethton's famous covered bridge; and others.

Nonetheless, the tourism industry in Carter County is considered substantially underdeveloped, with limited lodging and restaurant facilities

Customer - Target Market

A survey conducted in 2009, in cooperation with George Washington University, Adventure Travel Trade Industry and Xola Consulting, had a goal to 'gain better understanding of the size and characteristics of this market segment.' The study results concluded that the typical adventure traveler is between the ages of 35-47 years, is fairly evenly divided between male and female, 70% of them have post-secondary education, and their trips last between 7-8 days. In addition, their expenditures are trending upwards. This market continues to change; however, one important note is that Adventure Tourism is a subjective activity: what is adventure to one person, may not be to another. A couple of things hold true for this class of the tourism industry - they are physically active, enjoy interaction with nature, and may include a cultural learning experience or exchange in their adventure.

Summary

Since there are currently limited active businesses in this area that meets this designation, our goal is to provide information and support to potential businesses about the benefits of locating in this designated district.

SECTION III.

That the mayor is further authorized and directed to make such changes approved by the mayor and the county attorney to the plan set out herein that do not substantially alter the material provisions of the plan and the execution thereof by the mayor and the county attorney is conclusive evidence of the approval of such changes

SECTION IV.

That the mayor is authorized and directed to apply for such designation with approval from the Tennessee Department of Revenue and Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development and execution of a notarized letter containing the following statement:

I, Leon Humphrey, Mayor of Carter County, hereby confirm that this application, including all attachments, does not contain any representations of fact which are false or misleading in any respect.

SECTION V.

That the mayor is authorized and directed to execute all other documents necessary and proper, and to take such acts as necessary, to effectuate the purpose of this resolution.

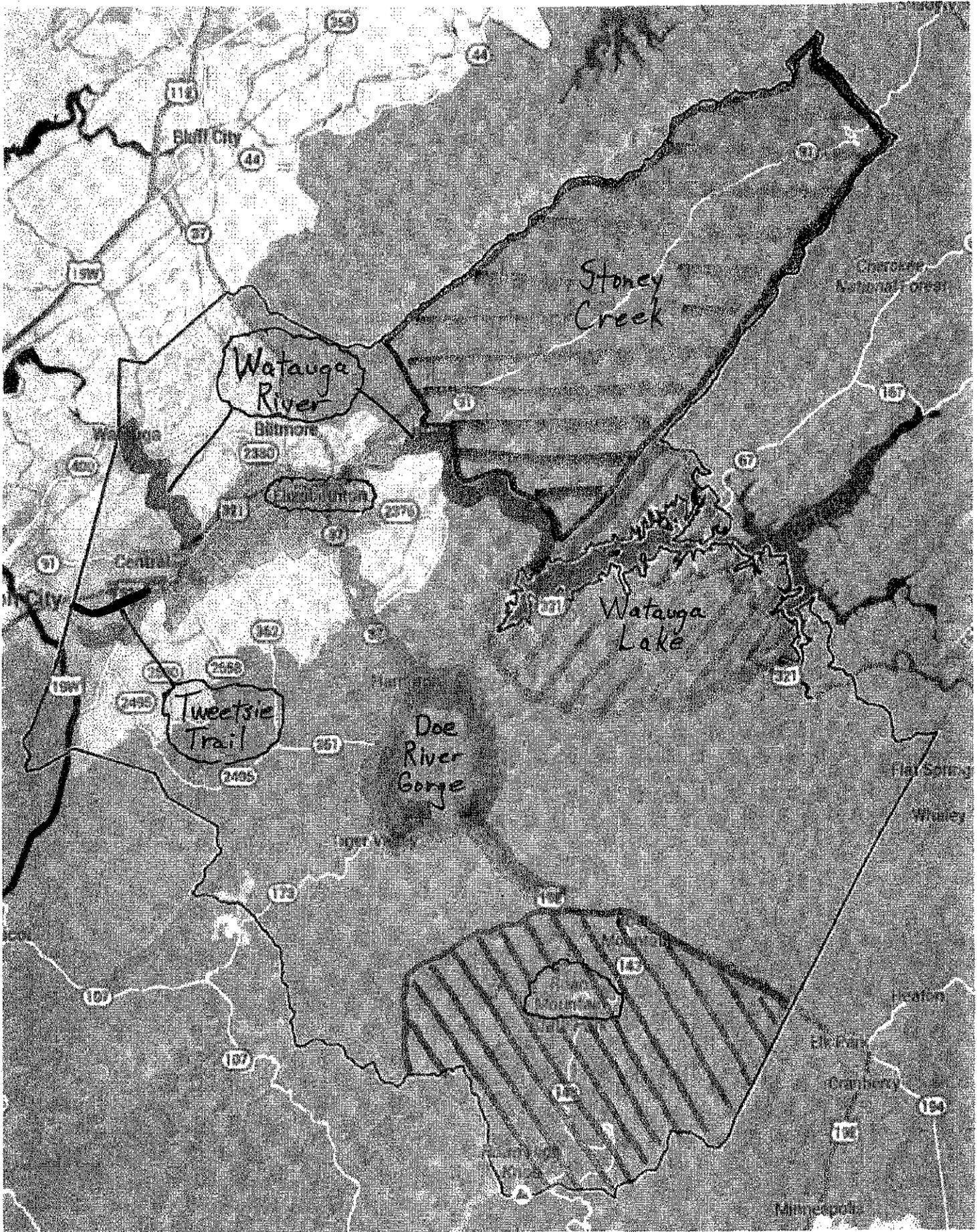
SECTION VI.

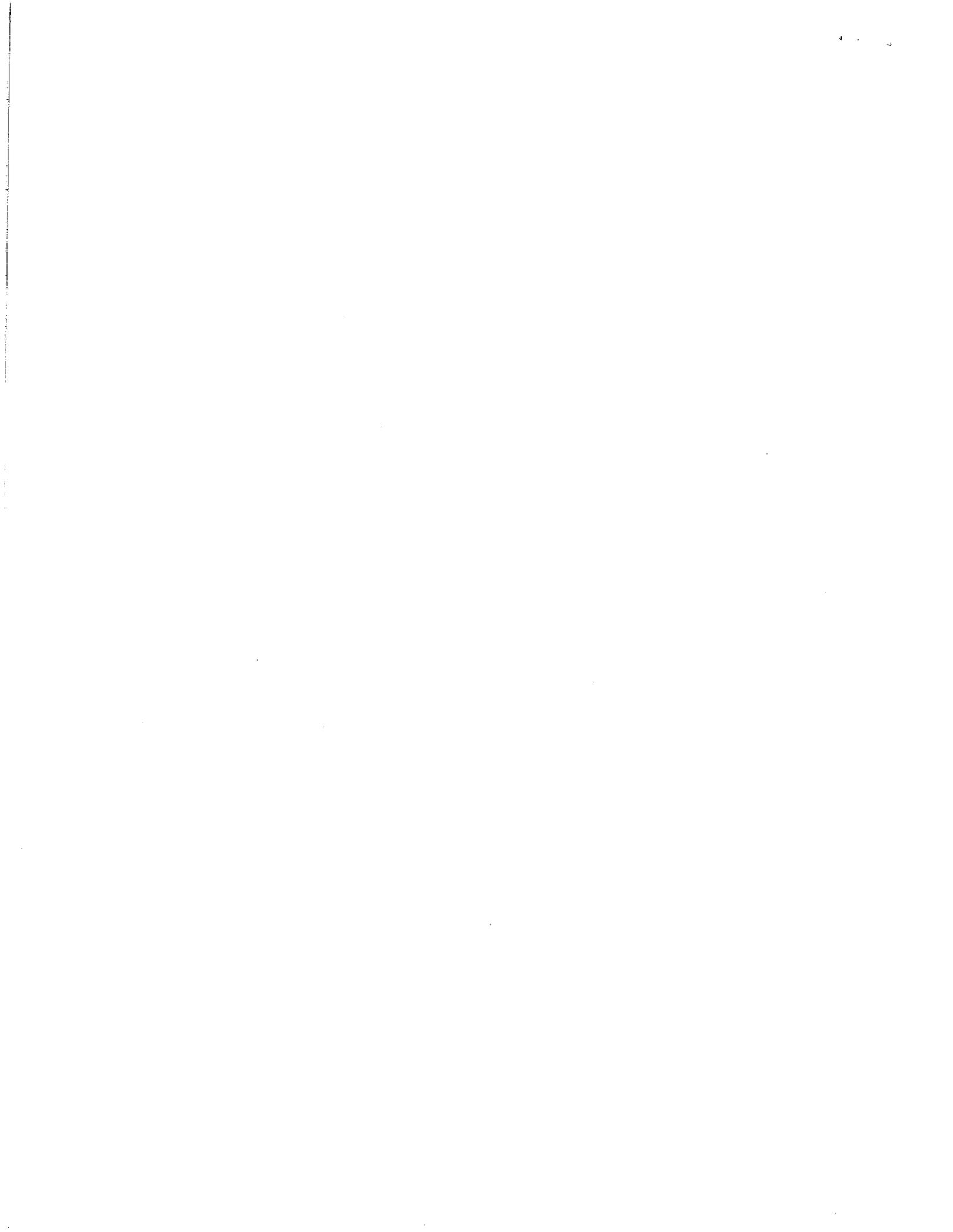
That the County Commission finds that the actions authorized by this resolution are for a public purpose and will promote the health, comfort and prosperity of the citizens of the county.

SECTION VII.

That this resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the public welfare requiring it.

ADOPTED this the Xth day of XXXX, 2015





TO: Carter County Parks and Recreation Board

September 30th, 2015

SUBJECT: September 2105 report on Roan Mountain Community Park

FROM: President, Roan Mountain Recreation Foundation (RMRF)

1. Park Status/Update

- a. Mowing and Trash removal proceeding normally. We expect that one or two more mowings will be required this season.
- b. All mowers currently working. All with new blades
- c. 249 hours of citizen's time and 1960 hours of Carter County Work Annex Crews have been provided so far this calendar year.
- d. State of Tennessee Annual Report filed on September 22nd

2. Fiscal Year Financial Summary

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| a. Beginning Balance Nov 1 st 2014: | \$2,500 |
| b. Park and Rec Contribution: | \$3,200 |
| c. Community Donations: | \$1,846 |
| d. Operating Expenses: | (\$5,715) |
| e. Ending Balance September 30 th 2015: | \$1,832 |

3. O&M Balance as of Sep 30th: \$1,832

| | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| State Fees/Admin: * | \$63 |
| Utilities:* | \$196 |
| Fuel: | \$168 |
| Parts/Equip Mnt: | \$135 |
| Bathroom Misc Supplies:* | \$143 |
| General Repair/Upkeep: | \$145 |
| FFA Farmers Market:* | \$182 |
| Ballfields/Skate/Frisbee: | \$350 |
| Pavilion Fund: * | \$450 |

*Funds are raised through local contributions

4. Issues requiring Park and Recreation Board attention:

- a. None

Sincerely,

Erik Anderson

President, Roan Mountain Recreation Foundation

The RMRF currently has 4 pieces of equipment that volunteers or the Carter County Work Annex crews use to mow the approximately 27 acre park. Mowing is needed approx. every two weeks with more frequent mowings in the late spring. A prison work crew typically can mow the upper park and middle park in one day with this amount of equipment and can mow Frisbee Golf on a subsequent day. Each mowing typically takes approx. 15 gallons of gasoline and 2.5 gallons of Diesel.

Past experience has shown that the ideal equipment mixture for prison work crews is three or four mowing machines:

- a. A Tractor with a 5 ft King Kutter Finish Mower to handle the bigger and thicker part of the fields
- b. A 60" trail mower pull behind to assist with large areas that do not have too thick grass
- c. One functioning John Deere size regular 48" lawn mower to accomplish finish mowing around buildings etc

Current Equipment

1. 1986 International Harvester Model 244 (GIFT FROM ROAN MOUNTAIN CITIZENS CLUB) with Mitsubishi K3D engine (**2117 Hours**) in GOOD SHAPE using a King Kutter rear mower purchased in **Jul 2010** (Parks and Rec Board) (End of Year Money)
2. Craftsman Mower (**16 Years old ~ 1800 hours**) without mowing deck used to pull a 60" Swisher trail mower (purchased **Oct 2008** by RMRF).
3. John Deere LA130 (Gift from Citizen) in **2009 (700+ hours)**
4. John Deere D160 (Purchased by Parks and Rec) **March 2011 (494 Hours)** (End of Year Money)

There is an increasing likelihood that one or more of the John Deere's or the Craftsman will fail (Typically transmission failures) and cost of repair will exceed prudent repair expense.

OPTIONS:

1. Parks and Rec provide funds to RMRF for end of year purchase (approx. \$2500-\$2800) and RMRF scrap the LA-130
2. Parks and Rec provide funds to RMRF for eventual purchase (approx. \$2500-\$2800) and RMRF purchase a new mower upon failure.
3. Parks and Rec set aside a contingency fund for each year of between \$2500 and \$3000 to accommodate unforeseen expenses (Mower Replacement, big tree storm damage removal etc)

RMRF Recommendation: Option 3