

MINUTES

**GRAHAM CREEK NATURE PRESERVE ADVISORY BOARD
GRAHAM CREEK INTERPRETIVE CENTER
23030 WOLF CREEK DRIVE
FOLEY, ALABAMA 36530
CONFERENCE ROOM
OCTOBER 6, 2016
5:30 P.M.**

MEETING

Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairman Zana Price called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. Members present: Homer Singleton, Tim Closson, Phillip Hinesley, and Chad Watkins. Absent: Greg Knight, who had to travel to Florida because of Hurricane Matthew; and Tommy Patterson, who was out of town. Others present: Vickey Southern, Leslie Gahagan, Katy Taylor, Brenda Shambo, and Donna Turbyfill.

APPOINTMENTS OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

After a brief discussion Mr. Hinesley made a motion to appoint Mrs. Zana Price as Chair and Mr. Patterson as Vice Chair. Mr. Closson seconded the motion and the vote passed unanimously.

MINUTES

Approve Minutes of March 31, 2016

Mr. Watkins made a motion to approve the March 31, 2016 minutes and Mr. Singleton seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Discuss Policies – There was a discussion regarding adding a half day rental for the Interpretive Center for Monday through Saturday. Saturday is a prime rental day but if you are an employee or board member you get a discount. The half day would be 8 a.m. until noon or noon until 4:00 p.m. There was a discussion regarding the rate. A full day for Saturday is \$400 and Saturday is a day that is highly active with events and would warrant a premium rate due to coming out on a non-working day. It was recommended the rate be \$250.

Mr. Hinesley made a motion in favor of a half day rental on Monday through Saturday at \$250 either from 8 a.m. until noon or noon until 4:00 p.m. and Mr. Watkins seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously.

Discuss New Events – Mrs. Gahagan reported the calendar for October has very few days open. The Center is open from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and due to the events running almost every day in October they don't have enough staff to

cover the front desk. Volunteers are needed so they reached out to the Friends of the Graham Creek Nature Preserve and regular volunteers to cover those days in October. They came up with a form and will get that to Vickey so that she can get that out. October 8th is Bird Fest and a staff member is setting up a booth in Fairhope and Foley Invitational will be held at GCNP, which brings in at least 500 racers from several counties, 18 schools with their parents. There are usually 1,000 people on the grounds either participating in the race or watchers.

Field Trips – Three field trips have been completed and school has only been in session eight weeks. There are two trips scheduled for next week and a couple scheduled for the end of the month.

Observe & Explore Days, Wednesday's and Saturday's 10:30 a.m. – This event began with four or five children and on Saturday they would get 15 – 20 children. On October 5th they had 64 children in attendance traveling as far as Spanish Fort for the activities. Their biggest play day of the year has been the Pumpkin Play Day, which will be October 15th. They purchased 100 last year and had five left over and will purchase 100 again this year. They are not sure how many children will show up because they don't sign up for these events. The only advertisements have been by word of mouth and via Facebook.

The Graham Creek Nature Preserve was selected as the best course in Baldwin County for Cross Country and will be hosting the Cross Country Championship race. Not only the high school age children participate but the middle school age children also participate. The County Championship race begins at 7:30 a.m. at the Center because there aren't enough parking spaces for the race and Observe & Explore events at the same time. Don Staley will assist with signage and parking.

After the race and the Observe and Explore finish at noon they have to prepare for the Corpse Crawl that has been advertised on Channel 15, and the schools. They anticipate that it will be a well attended event. It begins at 5:00 p.m. and they will need volunteers for the Center and the event.

The Haunted Forest is up next. Last year one weekend was rained out, and they had trailer issues. This year all the stories are based on seven different legends throughout the history of Alabama. The dolls in the swamp, the swamp grumpkin, the crossroads, there is a cornfield, 40 boy scouts will be attacked by the giant banana spiders, they will talk about the history of the funeral wake, put coins on the dead, and talk about burning the forest and how some people don't make it out and in conjunction with it they talk about prescribed burning and habitat management. The advertisements will run on this event.

On October 16th a bridal shower will be held at the Center, while the Girl Scouts are having a program at the pavilion. Mrs. Gahagan will have training for the Haunted Forest at the front of the Interpretive Center and the people who have volunteered will find out what they will be doing at that time.

On October 29th the Center will be the site of their first wedding (Smith Wedding) and they want to document the wedding. There is another wedding in November. There are two other weddings in the spring.

November slows down because they will have to take off some and they want to close the Nature Center completely when the City is closed. The week after Christmas they hope to close as well. They Sports Tourism Complex will be very busy at that time also.

Trail Trots – Ms. Jackie Trimble has started having guided tours for the snowbirds. Some have already volunteered.

Archery – Archery is scheduled for February 13 – 19, 2017. They will be visiting the first week in November to look at the ranges and the building. They are keeping the same trails and added two more.

Don Staley and David Thompson met with some of the restaurants and they have put the events on a calendar so the restaurants can be notified when the big events are to take place.

Mrs. Gahagan reported she obtained the Corp. of Engineers permit, which took her six months to get, and the crews should be here the first of November to finish the road but there will not be a creek crossing because it was not budgeted in the first round. Once the road is complete except for the creek crossing they will see when they can complete the crossing.

OLD BUSINESS

Next Meeting Date to be determined – After a brief discussion there was a consensus to hold the next meeting on Thursday, February 2, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

VISITOR COMMENTS

There were no visitor comments.

ADJOURN

Mr. Hinesley made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Singleton seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously. Hearing no further comments the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Brenda Shambo
Recording Secretary