

MINUTES

**GRAHAM CREEK NATURE PRESERVE ADVISORY BOARD
GRAHAM CREEK INTERPRETIVE CENTER
23030 WOLF CREEK DRIVE
FOLEY, ALABAMA 36530
CONFERENCE ROOM
FEBRUARY 28, 2019
5:30 P.M.**

MEETING

Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairman Zana Price called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Members present: Tim Closson, Phillip Hinesley, Gregg Knight, and Homer Singleton. Absent: Tommy Patterson, and Chad Watkins. Others present: Leslie Gahagan, and Recording Secretary, Brenda Shambo.

MINUTES

Approve Minutes of June 7, 2018

Phillip Hinesley made a motion to approve the June 7, 2018 minutes and Homer Singleton seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously.

Miles McGonigal Memorial Garden:

As you all know Jackie's nine month old son Miles passed away, this was very unexpected, he had some respiratory issues but then his heart failed. This has been tragic for our small department, it's been a long month and Jackie will be coming back to work next week. One of the last things we were working on was a Butterfly Garden with a climbing wall so the kids would have a place to play as they get older. I talked with Jackie and her husband Seth and the entire family was in agreement to name the garden the Miles McGonigal Memorial Garden. I talked with the Friends of the Preserve I didn't want the donations going through the City of Foley so they agreed to handle the donations and so far we have about \$4,000. Chad Watkins was so nice to donate his time for the design of the Garden and Modern Signs is going to donate signage. We have planned volunteer build days for February 15th and 16th, Riviera Utilities and several other groups will be out to get the project started. The City of Foley is going to sponsor the climbing rock which should be here in April, it will cost about \$5,000. As you enter the Garden I wanted it to be whimsical, colorful, painted rocks and tires, totem poles, bird houses, and the climbing rock, it will be open but have a small picked fence to enclose the area. Chad suggested it have an Arbor and we place the sign which will read "Miles Play Garden", I have attached pictures for the Board to review. Homer made a motion to accept the concept of the Miles Play Garden and Phillip seconded the motion, the vote passed unanimously. Donations are still being accepted.

2019 Calendar of Events (Attached Listing):

This is an overview of public events that are coming out here. We are hosting the City of Foley's Family Fun Day that will be a big event for us.

Jackie has asked to not do the educational programs, so she will be doing more environmental and field work. I will be hiring some part time kids to help with the camps, and have already talked to several that are interested. Then we have the Easter Egg Hunt, Disc Golf Tournament, 3D Archery, Bow Hunters, Riviera Utilities Fun Run, then the State Sheriff's Convention for Family Fun Night, they have 300 to 400 people. This is only the public events calendar, we are filling up. The Citizens have found the Park!

Capital Projects 2020-2022:

- a) Completion of ADA Trail to Parking Area & Arbor – 2019 - \$10,000
- b) Fencing Along Wolf Bay Drive – 2020 - \$20,000
- c) Pavilion at Archery Park/Outdoor Classroom – 2020 - \$25,000
- d) Restoration of Stan Mahoney Drive & Wolf Creek – 2020 - \$20,000
- e) Phase 2 Memorial Tree Train – 2020-2021 – Based on Grant - \$250,000
(Grant from RTP for \$200,000)
- f) Rocked Parking Lot and Western Entrance Improvements on Philomene Holmes Blvd. – 2021 - \$50,000
- g) Turtle Range conversion to ADA surface – 2021- \$75,000
- h) Restroom Facilities off South side of Park – 2022 - \$150,000

Phillip made a motion that the Graham Creek Nature Preserve Advisory Board recommends that Mayor and Council approve the Capital Projects listed for 2020 through 2022, Homer seconded the motion, the vote passed unanimously.

Publications & Marketing 2019

- a. New Trail Maps
- b. New Rack Cards with GCNP & Wolf Creek Park
- c. Memorial Tree Brochure
- d. Tree Trail Guide
- e. Alabama Living, Treasured Forest, Social Media

Soterra Project:

They are a Timber Company that does Long Leaf Pine plantings and they cut timber, but their parent company in Europe requires them to have carbon footprint offsets, in America we don't have this. They were told they needed to have 30 acres planted, well they couldn't find anyone in the coastal area that has 30 acres to plant long leaf pines and just leave alone. We have 10 acres on the disc golf field that will be perfect. Leslie showed the board a video she had taken of them out there planting the long leaf pines. They planted the 10 acres in an hour and planted approximately 30,000 trees, they left 12 foot centers so that our mowers can still maintain this area because now we can't burn for several years.

Revenue from Fall Events and 2018 Rentals:

I wanted to give you an overview, we try to make enough revenue to offset some of our expenses out here. Last year's rentals for the Interpretative Center and Pavilion was \$6,814, and we had another 40 to 50 events that we didn't charge, such as school functions and this doesn't include Wolf Bay that meets out here every month, these were larger events. This was a good number, I meet my budget. For 2019 I want to really track the revenue coming in for our two main events which are the Haunted Forest/Wicked Walk and the Creek Crawl. The Haunted Forest and Wicked Walk made right at \$4,000, we were sold out every night and had to turn some people away due to not having enough time to make another trip. The Creek Crawl numbers were down a little but we made \$6,615. The interns built and refurbished some of our obstacles which are used all the time.

We received a call from George Barber's people that they may be interested in selling a 330 acre tract of land, this just came up yesterday, so more information to come.

The Olympic Competitors from China were here visiting at the Sports Academy in Fairhope, they heard about the Archery Tournaments at Graham Creek, they shuttled a bus to come visit us. They didn't speak any English but were amazed at the bug eating plants and what all we did out here.

Last weekend at the tournament we had 1900 Shooters and the spectator attendance doubled, all the parking was completely filled up. We got people in, the traffic never backed up, it all ran smoothly, even with this number of people. The food trucks did well, the Archery vendors said they had never sold so much product at a tournament before.

The Director for the 3D Archery Tournaments said we set the bar on archery tournaments and no one else even comes close. We are their favorite place to shoot and he asked if we would think about adding another tournament and I said not at this time. We also have the college archery tournaments with 600 to 700 archers, which has doubled in the last couple of years.

VISITOR COMMENTS

There were no visitor comments.

Phillip Hinesley made a motion to adjourn and Homer Singleton seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously. Hearing no further comments the meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Brenda W. Shambo/Recording Secretary