

Minutes of the Meeting: October 3, 2024

Board members present: Brian Wetcher, JoAnn York-Gilmore, Tabb Stringer, Nathan Schwarck, Kit Gerwels

Staff present: Bob Vaux, Jamie Burroughs, Steve Phillips, Darby Jordan

Guests present: Asa Deane

Meeting held in person and via Zoom and called to order at 6:01PM

Minutes: September minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comments:

None

ACFL Ebike Impact Study Presentation:

Asa and Steve presented their findings from the year long study of various spots in the forest lands, testing and monitoring to see if there was additional wear and tear on the trails due to increased bike and ebike use. At the conclusion of the study, it was determined that there was no noticeable difference between the bike trail wear and the control trail (hiker only) wear. The Board recommended that the current policy of class 1 (pedal assist) ebikes be classified as bicycles on the allowed trails and class 2 & 3 (throttle) ebikes be classified as motor vehicles and only allowed during the open season on motor bike trails. This follows the guidelines of other local municipalities as well as state and federal guidelines. There will be a section in the updated Forest Plan to reflect this policy.

Friends of the Forest Update-Wetlands Monitoring Update:

Katie was in attendance and reported their benefit gala held last Saturday at Whisteria Gardens. It was a huge success with about \$95,000 being raised to support the Friends' programing. November 2nd will be the official opening of the Forest Discovery Center storefront on Commercial Ave. This showcases exhibits, history of the forest lands, ecology and stewardship. Also, on the 2nd of November there will be the joint Friends and City work party, the location to be determined.

Staff Reports:

Bob reported that Jamie's summer work is complete and now for the projects that have been on hold during the busy summer season. Activity will be starting at Whistle Lake dam with the survey work being started on Oct 18th, looking at the science and how to probe the dam. The DOE will be the ones to decide how to proceed on this project.

The Forest Plan Update work continues.

The grant for the Heart Lake Master plan scored at #8 and staff is pleased with that placement. The next step is the approval from the legislature for funding. Jonn will be at the January meeting to discuss this topic. If the funding is approved through the state, it will need a match of funds from the City. Staff is waiting on a bid to have the hardware and climbing spikes removed from an old growth tree. This was an act of vandalism, and the police are aware.

The permit to demo the Whistle Lake pit toilet has been approved and staff will begin that project soon.

Parks Commission Report:

JoAnn reported on the Parks Board meeting, sharing that the most up to date information is in the packet. There will be a meeting on November 14th to discuss pickleball with players and neighbors invited to come and share.

Other Business:

None

Adjourn at 7:05pm

Respectfully Submitted by Darby Jordan