

**KANAWHA COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
COMMISSION MEETING  
February 15, 2023  
MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Kanawha County Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Wednesday, February 15, 2023, at Coonskin Park in the Oak Room. This is the monthly meeting of the Kanawha County Parks and Recreation Commission and President Tackett called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:**

Allen Tackett, Dave Pope, John Robertson, Steve Koepsel, Janet Drumheller, Karen Haddad, John Huddleston (phone), Andrew Jordon, Chris Hamilton, Pat Donahoe,

**ABSENT:** Stuart Smith,

**OTHERS**

Jeff Hutchinson, Director

Leslie Koepsel Megan Estep

Brad Maschari, Sarah Menefee, Eddie Amburgy

Jordan Herrick (phone)

Beth Campbell, Louis, Margret Zaleski

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Huddleston made a motion to approve the minutes from January and Commissioner Jordon seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Commissioner Drumheller reported that we have promoted Cliff Wheeler at Big Bend to Manager and Nathan Doak to full-time Assistant Manager. Also, we are working on hiring another part time police officer.

**LONG RANGE PLANNING**

Jeff reported that we are working on projects we have been working on and still looking for funding for working on the clubhouse. We are working on getting the main line irrigation to be installed for Coonskin's golf course.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Sarah reported that from July – December all facilities had a total income of \$1,113,455 with a gross profit of \$1,085,098. The total expenses were \$1,080,002 with a net income of \$5,095. Big Bend had a total income of \$233,697 with a gross profit of \$209,811. The total expenses were \$218,933 with a net loss of \$(9,122). July through January all facilities had a total income of \$1,269,725 with a gross profit of \$1,240,983. The total expenses were \$1,216,176 with a net income of \$24,806. Big Bend had a total income of \$242,585 with a gross profit of \$218,315. The total expenses were \$243,413 with a net loss of \$(25,098). The month of January had a total income of \$156,270 with a gross

profit of \$155,884. The total expenses were \$136,173 with a net income of \$19,710. Sarah reported that the proposal for the budget is ready for 2024 and she passed out an updated budget after talking with Commissioner Wheeler. This reflects the proposed increase that Commissioner Wheeler talked about for the yearly contribution from the County Commission to increase our yearly contribution by \$175,000. That will break us even with what we proposed for excess income and expenses that we encounter. This will take care of almost all our fixed expenses as well. Commissioner Haddad asked about utilities being up and Jeff answered that we had some water leaks here and at Big Bend and the water company has been notified and with the new bill it went down. We also reflected an increase in utilities in the new budget.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that the new budget would reflect a raise in our minimum wage for some of our part-time employees. Some of our hourly rates are \$8.75 per hour and we can't get employees for that rate. He said we must be comparable to the market and what he asked and what they are paying at Shawnee is \$12 per hour. In increasing our part-time cost and adjusting our full-time cost is where the additional budget increase comes from. Commissioner Wheeler said that utilities are going up as well as the increase in PEIA are all reflected in this budget. He said this takes care of all these issues and this is a good budget. Commissioner Wheeler said with this increase that we will be looking into capital improvements this fiscal year but this will take care of our fixed costs and making sure everyone gets good pay. Commissioner Donahoe made a motion to accept the finances and Commissioner Drumheller seconded the motion and all were in favor.

### **GOLF COMMITTEE**

Commissioner Pope reported that after the last meeting we had a four man subcommittee to go over all the bullet points that needs to be done to get this new course ready. He said that we have some stuff but need a lot of new stuff and this all needs to be ready a full month before we open. So when we open, we are ready and the WVGA can help us with stuff as well. Commissioner Pope discussed the naming of the course and most of the committee liked the name Short Course at Coonskin. He said that it was brought up that it would hard to logo for merchandise. He said that he turned the name into to a friend of his and two hours later they came back with a great logo. Commissioner Robertson said that he got the name to a technical school to come up with a logo and what we have now is adequate. He said the logo isn't as important as the naming. The recommendation of the subcommittee is naming the golf course The Short Course at Coonskin. He said most of these short courses are at resorts and have unique names but nobody here will know what those courses are just by the name and this name for Coonskin says it all. The Short Course at Coonskin. Sarah said she doesn't think that you can vote on it because it is not on the agenda. Commissioner Wheeler doesn't want to go against the recommendation of the committee, but he thinks The Short Course at Coonskin seems a little bland. Commissioner Pope doesn't think so and it tells you exactly who we are and where we are. He doesn't know of another name that won't cause confusion of what it is. Commissioner Wheeler would like to come up with a more creative name and Commissioner Jordon said the committee would be happy to take recommendations for a name, but we are running out of time.

Commissioner Roberson said that Coonskin has been a brand for many years and we don't have to recreate the brand and that everybody knows where and what Coonskin is. Jeff said from a merchandiser and logo standpoint that this is something new and we are going to sell merchandise and the logo has to be something that people want to buy. He said the name and logo will mean a lot and we have one chance to brand it.

Commissioner Jordon said that Commissioner Robertson reached out to Carver and they may have a suggestion. Jeff had a suggestion on the naming and he thought about the local area and what we have here in the valley and this is the place that was home of early settlers and Native Americans. The course sits on the Elk River and Jeff suggested the name Wapiti. Jeff said that it means white deer and is a cross between the Shawnee language and Creed language and is Indian heritage. He said it's a play on words from the Elk River and can even call it Wapiti at Coonskin. Commissioner Haddad doesn't think the general public is that educated and this could be misinterpreted. Commissioner Hamilton agreed with Commissioner Wheeler thinking that it was a little bland.

Commissioner Pope made a motion to set this aside until the next meeting and to contact Commissioner Wheeler, Jordon, Robertson, or himself on suggestions for a name and we will vote next month.

Commissioner Hamilton asked what if we put it out to the public. Commissioner Wheeler said that having a couple combinations of names and if we can't agree on that, then put it out to the public. He said that this is a public golf course that the public plays and the public has the right to have a decision on it as well. He said that The Short Course at Coonskin to him seems bland and we have something special, and worked hard to put out the best golf course that you can play in a short period of time. Commissioner Wheeler thinks the name should reflect on giving back to the community whether its historical, geographical, or some other type of creative name, other than Short Course. Commissioner Pope said that we are open to suggestions. Commissioner Hamilton said the basis for his suggestion for putting out for public comment is that something good may come from it, that we can use and might be a good way to brand it and make people aware, that what we are doing is something really special. He knows there is a down side but we just have to deal with that. Commissioner Pope said whatever we do with the name, it has to be done by the next meeting as we are running out of time. Commissioner Robertson said if we decide to put it out for public comment than we need to be clear that we are under no obligation that we go with that name, and may come up with something we don't like and we have the right to go with a different name. Commissioner Haddad's concern would be the timeline and we don't have the time for all this now.

Commissioner Wheeler said he is fine to do it right and come up with names and if we are going to talk about the Short Course at Coonskin it would be better off privatizing the name with sponsorship and seeing how much money we can get for the naming or we come up with something creative. Commissioner Pope said to bring all the suggestions to the next meeting and put it on the agenda to vote on the name. Jeff said to have all the names in by the finance committee meeting and that we have time to think and vote on the name at the commission meeting. President Tackett said lets in turn have our committee come up with three names, and we have our meeting on the second Wednesday in March, this board will choose between those three names. He said if you

have a favorite name then get with Commissioner Pope and come up with three choices for this board to come up with the name and continue on with the process.

Moving on, rounds of golf at Big Bend in January 2022 we had 11 rounds, this year we did 202 rounds. Commissioner Pope said that every month he finishes his report with golf, it is weather related and with better weather we get the players. Commissioner Pope asked if we are on pace to get the mowers and Jeff said they should be here by the middle of next month. He asked the status of the pump station. Jeff said they brought the gravel in to do the base of the concrete and they will prep that next week with the weather permitting. Then the concrete will be poured and then will start the ditch digging. The fencing we decided on a snake fence or Abraham Lincoln fence and Jeff has all that information. Its not a rod iron or chain link fence and will fit in with the park. The issue will be to get it high enough to keep people from walking on. We discussed personnel and using part time people to volunteer. Commissioner Pope said that we need a third full time employee on grounds because you need two or three to prep the course in the morning and the third doesn't have to be full time but full time would be better in case you need a backup. We will have a water filling station from WV American Water to fill water bottles and trash cans on every tee and benches. Commissioner Robertson also said they covered the way golfers will enter through the Clubhouse.

### **COONSKIN FOUNDATION**

No report

### **PUBLIC SAFTEY**

Chief Amburgy reported that we had someone camping near Riverside shelter. He said they cleaned up the camp and neatly took it to the police offices. He got a call from SCPD and found out the guy was homeless and didn't know he was doing anything wrong. The guy came back and they returned his stuff. Chief reported that we made our first arrest of the year and it was with a female and a domestic order and anytime with state law you have a domestic you have to make the arrest. He said we been having some vehicle issues we have been trying to work out and the sheriff's department gave us an Expedition as one of our vehicles is down and don't think it's going to make it.

### **DIRECTORS REPORT**

President Tackett told Commissioner's Pope, Jordon, and Robertson to come up with names and get the top three names, then submit them to the County Commission who paid for the course, to let them decide what the name of the golf course will be. Commissioner Pope said that was fair since they paid for it.

Jeff reported that on the FEAM front Fish and Wildlife moving on at Big Bend and we should get a report in two months instead of six months. It won't affect the timeline at Big Bend but will get everything pipelined and they can put it out to bid and start work at Coonskin. This will not affect the golf course. Jeff said that Kenny Newhouse is going to bring his stuff in to clean up the back nine and remove dead trees in the park. He is also going to fix the area where we need a power transmitting line ran and will take out those trees to run the line to the new pump house. Jeff stated that we probably work harder in

the wintertime than the summer because this is the time, we get things ready to go and make sure when the weather breaks everything is ready to go. We are working on equipment and other projects and everyone has been busy. Jeff said that we got the building set that Mr. Koepsel donated to us at the driving range and they are doing finishing work. We will do away with the port a john.

President Tackett asked who was responsible for the basketball and tennis courts at East Bank. Jeff said the school is responsible for the tennis courts and the basketball is ours. Commissioner Wheeler said he will talk to the school board to get the tennis courts able to be used. Commissioner Koepsel asked not to crush the disc golf baskets when they do the tree removal. Jeff said he discussed with the tree removal guys to take out the trees from the netting on the golf course to the start of the bridge. Then look at the bank, you see bricks and stuff and we want that bank to be shot rocked to clean that area up. Commissioner Wheeler asked to have a vote to remove the trees Jeff is talking about. Commissioner Pope made a motion to remove these trees and Commissioner Drumheller seconded the motion. All were in favor. Chief Amburgy said someone contacted him wanting to do a car show at Meadowood on Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>. They have insurance and they will not be able to go on the grass if the weather is bad and they were fine with that. He said this would be their first year so don't know what turn out they will have and admission is free.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

#### **LEGAL REPORT**

Jordan suggested that with the tree removal to make sure to get with whoever is involved to insure what they are taking and what they are not supposed to take. Present Tackett mentioned the update on the drug policy and Commissioner Drumheller motioned to table it until a later date to have time to study this further. Commissioner Pope seconded the motion. All were in favor. There are changes in the wording and we want to make sure we get it right.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mrs. Zaleski asked about the removal of the trees and Jeff said he came to cut a bunch and he had to pull out. Now he is coming back to finish what he started and clean up the debris and finished. Mrs. Zaleski asked about Mr. Donahoe's internal audit and what happened with that. Commissioner Donahoe said he came in with his assistant and looked at the books and looked at line items and did an audit procedure where they pulled random numbers and we were satisfied with what we pulled.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Pope made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Hamilton seconded the motion. All were in favor.

President Tackett called the meeting adjourned at 2:52 p.m.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, March 15, 2023, at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: Jeffrey K. Hutchinson, Director