



Oconee County Parks & Recreation

Lisa Davol, Director

Board of Commissioners

John Daniell, Chairman
Mark Thomas, Post 1
Chuck Horton, Post 2
Amrey Harden, Post 3
Mark Saxon, Post 4

Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – November 15, 2022

Members Present: Richard Ashmore, Leslie Hunsinger, Amanda McCoy Ledford, Dan Moore, Wesley Scott, Jason Hewell, Craig Moses, and Giles Moree

Members Absent: Kimberly Thomas

Staff: Lisa Davol, Whitney Sperlik

Guest: Jeanne Barsanti (OPF, Heritage Park); Robin Stevens (COTA); Ivette Bledsoe (Trails), Sherri Dondo, David Barnhart, Terry Gattiker (Tennis); Eric Gattiker (OPF); Mike Luffler, Tom McEnaney (Pickleball); Dan Magee (LAS PARK)

BOC: Chairman Daniell

Press: None

Minutes:

1. Call to Order – The Recreation Committee convened the regular meeting at Oconee Veterans Park. Leslie Hunsinger called the meeting to order.
2. Approve the agenda. Richard Ashmore made a motion to approve the agenda. Giles Moree seconded the motion to approve the agenda. Motion approved unanimously.
3. Approve September 20 Meeting Minutes. Wesley Scott made a motion to approve the minutes and Dan Moore seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.
4. NEGRS Sara Kaminski – Oconee County Master Trails Map - Preliminary Plan
Kaminski presented the Oconee County Master Trails draft map for the committee to review. As Kaminski stated, the county requested the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission to develop the map. Davol stated Parks and Recreation is seeking committee input on the map, to include any revision and/or priority trail connections. The committee discussed the various connection points, trails near current residential/commercial areas, potential loops and connected the schools and parks along Highway 53. Moses asked about connecting the loop through Watkinsville and costs for water trails. Chairman Daniell responded that the city of Watkinsville has a trail master plan; therefore, it was not included in the county overlay. Kaminski stated that she did not have the water trail costs but could garner that information. Kaminski did say that the right-of-way can be challenging in some areas. McCoy questioned if there needed to be a committee vote on the trail priorities. Davol answered that it is not required; however, the Board of Commissioners want their input on the county trail concept.



Oconee County Parks & Recreation

Lisa Davol, Director

Board of Commissioners

John Daniell, Chairman
Mark Thomas, Post 1
Chuck Horton, Post 2
Amrey Harden, Post 3
Mark Saxon, Post 4

Two motions were made regarding the trail concept map:

1. Richard Ashmore made a motion to prioritize the main line, 3.3 miles from OCHS to OVP to NOHS. Giles Moree seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
 2. Dan Moree made a motion that the second priority be the northern connectivity towards Malcolm Bridge Road to Mars Hill. Giles Moree seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
5. Updated Park Concept Maps - Davol presented the county park concept maps displayed to include new property, current park improvements, etc.:

OVP - SPLOST 2021

- 2004 Master Plan projects to complete; not enough funding SPLOST 2015 - Timeline 2025
 - Additional tennis courts and infrastructure (parking, lights, restrooms)
 - Large pavilion (by playground)
- Connection to Parkside for additional ingress/egress

HCM

- Once OVP tennis court project complete, conversion of HCM tennis courts to pickleball courts (minimum of 12 pickleball courts possible by converting tennis courts)
- *Parking lot improvements - reorient/realign (2004 Master Plan)*

BSC

- *Parking lot improvements - paved and realignment*

HP

- *No immediate changes to current plan*

MOR - Middle Oconee River Water Reclamation Facility - Concept Plan - 32 park acres

- Primarily passive park
- Potential - Public parking, picnic area, hiking/Riverwalk trails, boat launch

LAS - Land Application System - Concept Plan - 220 park acres –

Amenities included are based on current existing needs, as well as User Group and Community feedback staff have received:

- Multi-use fields, gyms, trails
- 13 full size and 1-1/2 size multi-use grass fields
- 1 artificial turf stadium fields with track and seating
- 2 indoor gymnasiums, 4 full-size basketball courts in each
- Pavilions, outlying restrooms, playground, trails (asphalt pedestrian trails, bike dirt trail, sidewalks), existing pond
- Other: Dog park, park grounds maintenance facility
- Infrastructure – parking, field lights, etc.
- Field Services Building (Fleet, Public Works, Water Resources)
- *Future Fire Training Center*



Oconee County Parks & Recreation

Lisa Davol, Director

Board of Commissioners

John Daniell, Chairman
Mark Thomas, Post 1
Chuck Horton, Post 2
Amrey Harden, Post 3
Mark Saxon, Post 4

LAS Phase I

- 7-8 full size multi-purpose fields
- 1 Indoor gymnasium
- Park Grounds Maintenance shop
- Infrastructure

Moree questioned why the OVP back entrance was restricted and whether the county would pave it. Davol explained the cost estimate to pave almost 10 years ago was over \$2M and the county has approval to provide entrance/exit through the Parkside development.

McCoy inquired about the addition of tennis courts at OVP. Davol stated this is in part due to the loss of courts at HCM that will occur once converted into pickleball courts.

Moses asked about putting in a field in the back of OVP across from the dog park. Davol explained the additional requirements for infrastructure, gravel road improvements, additional traffic and park mitigation areas may not be cost effective.

Hewell asked if there was demand for 8 outdoor pickleball courts. Davol stated it is a growing sport.

Ashmore stated that more indoor gymnasium space was needed for basketball and volleyball. Davol stated what we use OVP, HCM and 7 school gyms during basketball season; adding that we pay to utilize the school gyms. Scott stated that OCLL had to turn kids away due to lack of field space.

Giles asked about artificial turf vs grass for the LAS multi-use fields. Magee replied that cost can be between \$500,000 to \$1M depending on number of fields. Davol said they typically have a ten-year lifespan. Davol noted that there are pros and cons with both artificial and natural turf fields.

McCoy requested an additional 2 miles of horse trails be added to Heritage Park and for horse trails to be considered at the LAS site.

Ashmore made a motion for the LAS priorities be the gymnasium and multi-use fields, and that horse trails be considered. Scott seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Davol provided the plan finalization process for both the Trail Master Plan and Park Concept Maps:

1. BOC Plan Review
2. RAC - Recreation Advisory Committee Feedback
3. Public Input
4. BOC Adoption

Priorities

1. OVP Tennis Court expansion - SPLOST 2021 Priority
2. HCM tennis court conversion to PB after OVP TN buildout
3. LAS site development - Phase I



Oconee County Parks & Recreation

Lisa Davol, Director

Board of Commissioners

John Daniell, Chairman
Mark Thomas, Post 1
Chuck Horton, Post 2
Amrey Harden, Post 3
Mark Saxon, Post 4

6. Other business if needed.

- Moore provided an update on the Oconee Parks Foundation including their participation in the Trick or Treat Trail. Moore requested others to share OPF on the social media.
- Davol asked Chairman Daniell if he had anything he would like to add. Daniell stated the park and trail concept plans were based on citizen and user input received by park staff and the Board of Commissioners. Daniel said the BOC will be asking the public for further input, adding there will be a Town Hall tomorrow night and the BOC plans to facilitate smaller public input groups.
- Ashmore commented on the new swings near the trail behind the Senior Center. Davol stated they were a Boy Scout project utilizing the wood from the pergola that was removed for the Senior Center expansion.
- Moses questioned if the LAS park would have a playground and Davol showed the playground location on the LAS map.

7. Public comments.

- Magee reinforced his recommendation for artificial turf fields at the LAS, and stated more parking was also needed.
- Barsanti said she was excited to see the new conceptual plans, suggested multi-use trails at the LAS and mentioned the progress of the Oconee Parks Foundation.
- Stevens thanked the group for their support of moving on the additional tennis courts that were in the 2004 master plan.
- Barnhart expressed gratitude for the OCPRD team for all they do, thanked RAC for the additional tennis courts to be built and shared concern on the parking at BSC.
- Dondo said the tennis division continues to grow, appreciated the additional courts and inquired about the timeline. Davol responded the tennis project is planned for 2025.
- Gattiker thanked the group for their continued support of tennis and COTA and stated that they hoped to offer state tournaments again.
- Luffler was thankful for the plan to convert HCM court to pickleball and stated there is issues with skateboarding on the current courts.
- McEnaney said there is a lack of pickleball courts and expressed a desire to host pickleball tournaments with 15 courts needed to do so. McEnaney requested the pickleball group have input in the pickleball courts development and Davol stated that a unified pickleball group in Oconee is needed as there is not consensus throughout the pickleball input received.
- Gattiker, President of the Oconee Parks Foundation, thanked the group for the discussion and appreciated the opportunity to hear the needs of the community so the OPF board can hopefully assist in these efforts.

8. Motion to adjourn made by Richard Ashmore. Seconded by Wesley Scott. Motion approved unanimously.

Next RAC Meeting scheduled for January 17 at 5 pm at OVP

3500A HOG MOUNTAIN ROAD • WATKINSVILLE, GEORGIA 30677

PHONE: 706.769.3965 • FAX: 706.769.3967

ldavol@oconee.ga.us

www.oconeecounty.com