

MINUTES

DOE MOUNTAIN RECREATION AUTHORITY BOARD
August 4, 2015

The meeting of the Doe Mountain Recreation Authority (DMRA) was held on Tuesday, August 4, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. at the First Tennessee Development District office, Johnson City, Tennessee.

Board Members Present

Mike Farmer
Richard Strang
Gabby Lynch
Frank Arnold
John Gregory
Jerry Grindstaff
Anne Marshall (proxy for Brock Hill)
Terry Maughon
Lawrence Keeble
Larry Potter
Ray Stout

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Farmer at 1:03 p.m.

J. Gregory motioned to approve the June 2nd minutes. R. Stout seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment Period

No public addresses were made.

Old Business

RTP Grant Update: M. Farmer presented in Bob Richards' absence. The DMRA's contract with the State of Tennessee has been executed, as well as the "Architecture & Engineering" contract with Brushy Fork Environmental Consulting, Inc. The first step will be constructing the parking area at Morefield Branch (Gentry) entrance with a completion date (estimated) in December 2015. The second step will be trail work/repair. The third step will be designing and constructing the bathroom at the Harbin Hill visitor center. It is hoped that all work will be completed within one year. M. Farmer asked the Board to begin thinking about "branding" of the Doe Mountain Recreation Area – e.g., feedback needed from the Board in terms of what we want the DMRA to "look like:" colors, signage, fencing, etc. should follow a shared theme. R. Strang asked about the bathroom and whether it would be sewer or septic – a new septic field and tank(s) will be installed. J. Gregory also asked about what environmental surveys needed to be done prior to the bathroom construction, e.g., Indiana bat surveys, due to the fact that the RTP funding is federal in source.

Financial Report

Frank Arnold presented. The DMRA cash balance as of June 30, 2015 was \$72,078.62. A. Marshall made a motion to approve the financial report. R. Strang seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. G. Lynch noted that the DMRA needs to pay \$14,000 per year total for the required annual audit and State Claims Commission fee.

Discussion Items

Individual Committee Reports

- a. Marketing and Outreach – L. Potter reported that Coca-Cola has offered the DMRA \$3,000/year plus drink sales revenue for three years if a Coke vending machine and water cooler are placed inside the visitor center. R. Stout motioned that F. Arnold handle contract with Coca-Cola for the vending machine arrangement to be put into place at the visitor center. J. Grindstaff seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. L. Keeble reported that a Tomahawk writer has shown interest in publishing a “history of Doe Mountain” article.
- b. Roads and Trails – M. Farmer presented. There have been website complaints from users about inadequate trail maps and trail signage. The Committee conducted a review of the trail system and has developed a new trail map that has yet to be presented to the Board. The connector trail from the mountain down into town has been postponed due to the fact that an adjacent property has been identified that may be a better location. F. Arnold noted that several trail volunteers are deserving of extra recognition, *e.g.*, a Tomahawk newspaper article and photograph would be nice. R. Strang asked about hosting a luncheon in Mountain City in their honor. M. Farmer reported that the DMRA has been selected to compete for an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant, for which a pre-proposal was prepared by the First TN Development District on behalf of the DMRA. The grant budget is \$312,500 and includes fire tower work, OHV, pedestrian, and bicycle trail maintenance and construction, and the purchase of a 5-acre inholding on the mountain from the Mountain Trail Riders Association (MTRA). The MTRA will in turn donate the proceeds from the 5-acre sale back to the DMRA.
- c. Hunting/Shooting Sports – No report. Discussion ensued about “three-gun” shooting competitions that are huge draws for both local and out-of-town participants.
- d. Natural Resources – No report.
- e. Master Planning – No report.
- f. Administration – M. Farmer reported that the State Sunset Committee extended the DMRA for a period of two more years. Criticism levied by the Committee during the hearing (attended by M. Farmer and G. Lynch) involved the DMRA not having enough money in the bank to fund an operating reserve.
- g. Adventure Tourism/Business Development – No formal report. L. Keeble noted some local push-back about allowing OHVs in town and is exploring a truncated compromise route that would limit the traffic. A larger legislative act/law will be required if more state and federal highway access comes into play.

Other Business

J. Gregory noted that the Tennessee OHV Advisory Committee is getting close to final appointment. This may help the DMRA in terms of potential funding down the road. M. Farmer will have a seat on the advisory board that will guide the statewide OHV program and policies.

The Board Chairman then summoned a closed Executive Session for DMRA Board members and *pro bono* attorney Mona Alderson. L. Keeble motioned that Ms. Alderson prepare on the DMRA's behalf an opposition statement that opposes Plaintiffs' efforts to force Johnson County to construct and maintain a road and utilities from the Harbin Hill Road visitor center entrance to the defunct Charter Ridge development. L. Potter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The next Board meeting will take place on Tuesday, October 6, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. at the Doe Mountain Visitor Center in Mountain City, Tennessee.

Adjournment

L. Keeble motioned to adjourn at 2:35 pm. M. Farmer seconded the motion.

Respectfully Submitted By:



Gabrielle K. Lynch, Secretary