

**Keep Carter County Beautiful (KCCB) Board Meeting Minutes**

Chamber Conference Room, 615 W. Elk Avenue, Elizabethton & Zoom

February 28, 2024, at Noon

**Board Members Present:** Don Hlavaty, Ed Basconi, Lisa Vezzosi, Ed Jordan, Mike Simerly, Melinda Maddock

**Board Members Absent:** Simon Maddock, and Ross Garland

**Guests Present:** Mary Ellen Hlavaty & Susette Clark

**Call to Order:** Don Hlavaty opened the meeting at 12:02pm. A quorum was present.

**Opening Prayer:**  Ed Basconi

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Ed Jordan

**Approval of the Agenda:** A motion to approve the agenda was made by Ed Basconi, seconded by Ed Jordan, and approved. **Board unanimously approved the agenda**.

**Approval of the Meeting Minutes:** A **motion to approve the meeting minutes from January 15, 2023,** was made by Don Hlavaty, seconded by Lisa Vezzosi, and the **Board unanimously approved**.

**Public Comments**: Susette Clark stated that there is a lot of litter to clean up prior to our April event. She indicated a cleanup at Cat Island was done on February 26th. She is coordinating a cleanup on March 2nd at 10:00am at the Tweetsie Tunnel area. She mentioned that there are a lot of John Holsclaw campaign signs that were tossed over the 19E bridge in that area. She was asking the group for help with the cleanup. Don stated KCCB will provide grabbers and bags. Ed mentioned that the sign dumping should be relayed to the councilman. Due to the steep incline along the river, it will take people to repel to those areas, and we have not got those resources. Don mentioned that there was a lot of trash in the Watauga Lake area. Susette mentioned that the Mill Race also had dumping and litter. Don asked Mike Simerly if the trash collected along the Tweetsie extension could be placed in the city dumpster and Mike responded yes. Mike also said city workers had been cleaning up areas within the city limits. It was mentioned that Will Miller helps clean up areas along the river, and Mike said the river shores are city responsibility, not the county.

**Next Board Meeting:**

* The **next Board meeting will be Wednesday, March 27, 2024**, at noon in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room, 615 West Elk Avenue, Elizabethton, and available by Zoom.

**KCCB Treasurer Report:**

* The January balance is $16,023.28. Deposits included $1875.00 from the 2nd quarter city funding, and $125.00 from Benevity. Expenses included $271.19 for the domain fees that was reimbursed to Don.
* Don stated that Keep America Beautiful allots $10,000 each year for affiliates in good standing, and Keep Tennessee Beautiful allots $5,000 for affiliates. Don will work on requests for funding to get items. The Keep TN Beautiful and Keep America Beautiful have not come through on free items but have items for sale on their websites. Ed Jordan stated that they have given a lot of free items in the past and he doesn’t understand why they are not sending items now. Don suggested Ed try contacting them on our behalf since he has gotten no response.
* Don stated that he had contacted TDOT for more bags, and when he got there, he was given 1 roll of bags rather than a box or two. TDOT stated that any other items, like vests, were to be used for a specific event and returned back to them.
* Don applied for a KTnB grant allocation that included 50 vests, 50 grabbers, and bags. We have not heard from them yet.
* Don went on the KTnB website for merchandise and purchased 20 tee shirts, 20 bags, and 20 grocery bags for a cost of $215.36. **A motion was made by Lisa Vezzosi and seconded by Mike Simerly to reimburse Don $215.36 for these items. The Board unanimously approved.**
* Lisa mentioned that we need to order prior to our summer events starting. We could use more KCCB pens, small stickers, pencils, etc. She stated that children’s items could include the printing of the activity booklets, and we could use something else small like a key chain. Ed Jordan said we should get the recycled tire keychains, but Lisa stated they are no longer on the website to order. Ed Jordan stated again that we should be able to get items free.
* Lisa mentioned she found a grant application for the county to purchase a county recycling truck. However, it was a government grant that reimbursed expense of the purchase from 10%- 50% of the cost. The grant is based on low population and economic need. This came from a complaint received that the Carter County Recycling Center at Roan Mountain had not been getting pickups because the only truck was in the repair shop. Don contacted Mayor Woodby and Chris Schuettler. The response from Chris was that truck was fixed promptly and a pickup truck was going to Roan Mountain today.

**Discussion on Past Events:**

* The Watauga Lake clean up event was a success with 16 participants who collected 87 bags of trash removed, 14 tires, 2 TVs, and a stove.

**Discussion on Elizabethton/Carter County School Projects:**

* Melinda Maddock reported the McCormick School project is underway. The artwork is completed, and we are waiting on parental consent so the artwork can be published. Once received, Melinda will get the templates to Don to post on the website. Don reported that an update was placed on our website announcing the project and the $500 donation to the project.
* Ed Basconi reported that the Elizabethton High School Recycling Grant project check of $850.00 was made and they are currently pricing out the bins for purchase. Ed reported that Jessica Hayes was also including a group of special ed students to the project.
* Ed discussed the seed packet project for this year. They are currently finishing up the packet designs for printing. Ed stated that he requested they complete by the end of March, so we can distribute out. Ed has the seeds and envelopes purchased already. They made 450 packets last year and we bought 1,000 envelopes this year and more seed. Lisa indicated that the labels would be printed free by Don’s HP printer contract using the allotment of color cartridges on hand.
* Lisa suggested we create signage at the flower plots with our logo. Ed Basconi said we should recognize Parks & Recreation, the school class, and possibly the type of flower(s) planted there.
* Don stated that Tennessee Tree Day is March 16th. A variety of saplings are available at Sycamore Shoals Park.
* Ed Basconi reported that conversations with Milligan University have fallen apart to create a wildflower plot on their campus. The current president is retiring soon, and we will try to get one with new replacement.

**Discussion of KCCB signage and Wayfinding Project:**

* Don has contacted Shannon Burchett at Carter County Road Commission for permission to post a KCCB sign on Taylor Road and Tiger Creek Road. They are on hold until permission is granted.
* The sign created for the Buffalo Creek Trout Trash Trap is being stored with Elizabethton Parks & Recreation. Elizabethton Parks & Recreation will install once we determine a date, and we will include Overmountain Trout Unlimited and KCCB for a photo of installation. Lisa also indicated KCCB would pay for the concrete at installation, rather than them paying for that expense.
* Rick Elliott contacted Don to report he coordinated an event on May 2nd to re-install the Buffalo Creek Trout Trash Trap into the river. No one knows who removed it last fall.

**Proposed 2024 Events & Projects:**

* Melinda mentioned a cleanup event coordinated by the Overmountain Trout Unlimited will occur on March 9th to clean up the Watauga River.
* The Milligan Adopt-A-Highway Spring Clean Up is scheduled for March 9th at 10:00am
* Tennessee Tree Day is March 16th.
* The Great American Clean Up on the Tweetsie Trail scheduled for May 18th at 9:00am. We will meet at Lions Field.
* Don has contacted Hannon Landscaping to order trees. There were 5 dead Red Buds from last year that are tagged for replacement. There are 3 on the Mill Street lot and 2 along Elk Avenue. It was suggested that we price out the mulch and weed killer maintenance contract with Hannon at the same time. The Roan Mountain arborist wanted to plant trees at Eric Anderson Park for their tree library. Tom Niziol wanted to create a pollinator garden, as well. We should plan to plant 5 trees at Roan Mountain. We could also allot some trees at Dixon Park
* The wildflower plots planting will occur in May. It was determined that we should wait for the new Elizabethton Parks & Recreation director to coordinate any planting since we need permission. Don & Lisa met with Dave Nanny who is interim director, and he is supportive of our plots and all our summer partnership activities.
* Lisa coordinated with Northeast Community Credit Union to feature KCCB on their Member Spotlight at each of their 4 branches. We can include the seed packets giveaway again since it was such a great success last year. We are scheduled for April, May, and July. There is no schedule for the main branch in Elizabethton due to their construction.

**New Business:**

* Ed Basconi mentioned a new series of lectures in Kingsport which are Grain & Seed seminars. It started March 14th, and he has more information if interested.
* Ed Basconi suggested we contact the Tennessee Extension Office in Elizabethton to suggest we partner with them to create a lecture series and/or community information. Susette Clark indicated she would contact them.
* It was suggested we expand our seed giveaway to the Elizabethton Public Library. They had another group that provided seeds last year, as well.
* Don indicated that we need more board members to join us. He said we need to recruit younger people. With the departure of Mike Mains, we will ask the newly appointed Elizabethton Parks & Recreation Director once they are announced. It was also suggested we ask Will Miller from Carter County Stormwater. It may depend on the new director if he can join us. Susette Clark was asked but declined at this time due to upcoming surgery.

**Adjournment:**

A **motion was made to adjourn the meeting** by Ed Basconi, seconded by Ed Jordan, and the **Board approved**. The meeting was adjourned at 1:36pm.

Submitted by Secretary, Lisa Vezzosi.