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

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

January 22, 2025, at noon

***Board Members Present:*** Don Hlavaty, Ed Basconi, Ed Jordan, Caleb Krebs, Seth Hice, Mike Simerly and Melinda Maddock

***Board Members Absent:*** Ross Garland, Simon Maddock, Lisa Vezzosi, Dave Nanney

***Guests Present:*** Mary Ellen Hlavaty

***Call to Order:*** Don Hlavaty opened the meeting at 12:03 pm. A quorum was present.

An opening prayer was given by Mike Simerly and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ed Jordan.

***Approval of today’s agenda:*** A **motion to approve today’s meeting agenda** was made by Ed Jordan, seconded by Melinda Maddock and **unanimously approved.**

***Approval of last month’s meeting minutes*:** A **motion to approve the November 20, 2024, meeting minutes** was made by Don Hlavaty, seconded by Mike Simerly and **unanimously approved.**

***Public Comments:*** None.

***Next Board Meeting:***The next KCCB board meeting will be Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at noon in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room, 615 West Elk Avenue, Elizabethton, and available by Zoom.

***KCCB Treasurer Report – Don Hlavaty:***

* The November 2024 month-end balance was $24,813.57with revenues of $700.00 in donations for disaster relief and expenditures of $26.49 for purchase of card stock for 225 calendars.
* The December 2024 month-end balance was $25,487.08 with revenues of $900.00 in donations for disaster relief and no expenditures.
* The January 2025 month-end balance was $26,412.08 with revenues of $800.00 in donations for disaster relief and no expenditures.
* These donations of $2,400.00 were received by Melinda and Simon Maddock’s Microsoft fellow team members and other Microsoft employees via the Microsoft Benevity program to Hurricane Disaster Relief in KCCB’s name. These funds will be used for KCCB assistance in Hurricane Relief and clean-up projects as well as future additional beautification projects in this 2025 year after we are given the approval from federal and state agencies, county and city government to conduct these events. Events are delayed for environmental hazard assessment approval.
* Mike Simerly reported that Elizabethton Commissioners presented hurricane recovery plans at their January meeting for cleanup and restoration of Cat Island recreational area, Covered Bridge Park, Doe River and Watauga River. There is also a plan for roads and additional waterways/drainage areas. They are awaiting final approval of recovery funds from the state of Tennessee to be addressed in a special Legislation session January 27, 2025. The state has already spent $2 Billion on recovery assistance and it will be a long recovery period – at least two years. When the plans are finalized, we can determine how KCCB can help.
* Keep America Beautiful Presidents Circle status was achieved in December 2025 and KCCB is again eligible for $10,000 in approved reimbursement funds for projects to be spent before 6/30/2025 on KCCB specific projects. A separate KAB Hurricane Relief program will be offered and details to be discussed at the annual meeting in Washington, D.C. February 10-13, 2025. Don and Mary Hlavaty will be attending to represent KCCB.
* Don Hlavaty reported KCCB needs to renew their licenses, fees and updates on our website domains, Office IT software, and 501c3 non-profit participation costs soon. The domain renewal for keepcartercountybeautiful.com and keepcartercounty.org will cost $71.32 in February and other renewals are in April, so additional expenses will be reported and approved in the next meeting.

***Review of Previous Events – Don Hlavaty***

* The KCCB participation at the Elizabethton Christmas parade 12/14/2024 was canceled due to lack of available KCCB members to walk (sickness/travel).
* Volunteer work due to Carter County flooding from Hurricane Helene was canceled at the request of county/city government assessments. However, Don Hlavaty reminded everyone to log their hours on the KCCB website for any personal trash pickups or Hurricane Helene Recovery Relief projects as well. Lisa Vezzosi and/or Don Hlavaty will log hours/projects on the Keep America Beautiful and Keep Tennessee Beautiful website portals for KCCB credit and reimbursement recognition/credits.
* Pending a meeting with Lisa Vezzosi, Dave Nanney, Melinda Maddock and a possible designated person/volunteer to maintain our KCCB Facebook account, send any requests to Lisa Vezzosi for posting and she will forward them to Melinda to update each Monday morning. When we find a designed maintenance person, we will finalize a Facebook site cleanup, maintenance and expense plan.

***Keep America Beautiful 2025 National Conference – Don Hlavaty***

* Don & Mary Hlavaty will be attending the conference in Washington D.C. from 2/9-2/13/2025. Registration, hotel and travel expenses will be reimbursed by Keep Tennessee Beautiful. Don Hlavaty will pay for trip and submit expenses for reimbursement.

***Discussion of 2025 Proposed Events and Projects – Don Hlavaty***

* KCCB has canceled the last 3 Milligan Highway events due to weather events with TDOT permission, but we need to schedule at least 4 cleanups for 2025. Events will be announced at the February meeting.
* Ed Basconi discussed wildflower seed purchase options for 2025 projects. Last year the Elizabethton High School Environmental class made 700+ packets for KCCB events, and we purchased seeds by the pound for our pollinator garden locations. Roan Mt. Erik Anderson park received a package of seeds to plant on their own. This year, additional seed requests have been made by KCCB partners to be planted at the Carter County landfill, Roan Mt. Erik Anderson Park, Sycamore Shoals/Linear Trail and Carter County Library Seed Bank. Ed Basconi also suggested meeting again with Milligan College about planting a pollinator garden on campus or other school flower beds. One option from our supplier American Meadows is pre-packaged/labeled seeds costing $300.00 per 1000. Ed Basconi passed around copies of many seed package options available, and we could still purchase wildflower seeds by the pound for larger projects. The Elizabethton High School students could still participate in the project by adding a KCCB sticker to the back of these packages. He advised we chose only 1-2 seed options otherwise folks will want multiples, and our stock will diminish quickly at events. Lisa Vezzosi and Ed Basconi will create an updated planting locations and purchase plan and report back at the next meeting for Board and financial approval.
* The Tennessee Environmental Council’s 11th annual Tennessee Tree Day is March 15th. Reserved/purchase trees via their website **tectn.org/tennesseetreeday** and our local pick-up site is Wild Birds Unlimited in Johnson City. The local tree supplier is Evergreen Nursery in Johnson City. Don, Mary Hlavaty & Lisa Vezzosi have already volunteered with Wild Birds Unlimited to assist in the pickup, sorting and distribution at their store and can obtain some unclaimed trees as available. Caleb Krebs reported TDEC will plant trees along riverbeds for replacement of lost trees and to combat additional erosion.
* Ed Basconi also showed pictures of the completed “Compassion Rock Garden at Ivy Hall Nursing Home” by the Elizabethton High School Art class. The project of painted rocks and a display table (made by the Shop Class) and KCCB’s donation was greatly appreciated. Ed Basconi then discussed a new spring Elizabethton High School Art class project to paint paver stones and place them at the school. We passed several pictures with artwork ideas and the class is requesting $16.00 for purchase of the pavers. A **motion was made to approve the $16.00 donation** by Don Hlavaty, seconded by Melinda Maddock and **unanimously approved.**
* Discussion of signage for the pollinator gardens and installation of remaining County wayfinding signs is postponed until our meeting. The City of Elizabethton and Parks and Recreation also plans replacement signage and new city wayfinding signs, so we coordinate the installation with each city/county department as recovery areas are cleaned up.
* We discussed KCCB annual road indexing assignments for this spring. Melinda and Simon Maddock will take over the roads previously indexed by Ross Garland.
* Seth Hice discussed planned Carter County Parks & Recreation projects. Tom at Roan Mt. parks has again requested seeds for their community garden. The Trout trash trap that was destroyed in the flooding will be replaced by Trout’s Unlimited, but the new trap will be placed on Stoney Creek instead due to increased water flow/current along the Doe River.
* Caleb Krebs discussed a new Elizabethton Stormwater Management project to label drainage access points to the rivers (sewer/drain). New metal plates “No Dumping” will be placed, and he is looking for volunteers to help with the installation of hundreds of label plates. There is a map of the locations on the Stormwater Management website. He would provide a short training session and provide all supplies for the project. He would like to plan several spring/summer events to complete the project. There will also “sock” type trash traps installed at some drains. He has new literature on water projects and polluting on their website that can be referenced, and the public can inspect and report drainage problems or pollution concerns on the website. KCCB can also access this information or print flyers for distribution on our website and at events.
* Mike Simerly discussed a new project at the Compassion Center in Elizabethton. They have received funding from a Lutheran Church in North Carolina to provide a full-time field social worker and part-time, on-site social worker to help Carter County citizens access available hurricane relief funds and assistance in recovery.

***Adjournment:***

* A **motion was made to adjourn the meeting** by Mike Simerly, seconded by Don Hlavaty and **unanimously approved.** The meeting was adjourned at 1:33pm.

Submitted by: Mary Ellen Hlavaty, Secretary