

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

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

October 23, 2024, at noon

***Board Members Present:*** Don Hlavaty, Ed Basconi, Lisa Vezzosi, Caleb Krebs (zoom), Seth Hice, Mike Simerly and Melinda Maddock

***Board Members Absent:*** Ross Garland, Simon Maddock, Ed Jordan, Dave Nanney

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

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

An opening prayer was given by Mike Simerly and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Don Hlavaty.

***Approval of today’s agenda:*** A **motion to approve today’s meeting agenda** was made by Ed Basconi, seconded by Don Hlavaty and **unanimously approved.**

***Approval of last month’s meeting minutes*:** A **motion to approve the September 25, 2024, meeting minutes** was made by Don Hlavaty, seconded by Ed Basconi and **unanimously approved.**

***Public Comments:*** None.

***Next Board Meeting:***The next KCCB board meeting will be Wednesday, November 20, 2024, at noon in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room, 615 West Elk Avenue, Elizabethton, and available by Zoom. This will be the last meeting of the calendar year as there is no December meeting due to the holidays.

***Review of Affiliate Requirements:***Annual Confidentially Statements – complete

***KCCB Treasurer Report:***

* The September month-end balance was $15,188.62. September expenditures are $605.03 for the balance on purchase of 24 KCCB polo shirts & 48 pocket T-shirts from Pep Screen Printing, $21.94 on water supplies for events.
* September revenues are $313.50 - reimbursement of Keep America Beautiful dues submitted mistakenly paid directly to Keep America Beautiful in error.
* October beginning balance is $14897.09. Expenditures of $290.00 so far include the $40.00 participation fee for the Elizabethton Christmas parade and $250.00 for the Elizabethton High School Environmental AP class project.
* October revenues of $8759.49 received so far include a refund of the fraudulent $9.49 Tik Tok charge on KCCB debit card account credited by Northeast Credit Union, City of Elizabethton 2024-2025 fiscal year funding $3750.00 (first 2 quarter payments of $1875.00 each), and Carter County for 2024-2025 funding $5,000.00.
* Melinda and Simon Maddock worked at the Hurricane Relief Center on behalf of KCCB and posted 125 hours to their Microsoft Benevity charitable contribution fund. Additionally, Melinda Maddock requested to be named a supplier for Hurricane Helene relief for donations of water and cleaning supplies purchased and were distributed at the Elizabethton City and Parks & Recreation department relief center. **A motion to reimburse Melinda Maddock $444.83 for her supply purchases to be eligible for matching funding at Benevity** was made by Lisa Vezzosi and seconded by Mike Simerly,the motion was **unanimously approved.** We can also submit all disaster relief KCCB donations and cleanup projects to Keep America Beautiful and Keep Tennessee Beautiful under their new Disaster Recovery programs for additional credits/funding within their organizations. Lisa Vezzosi received a call from Jason Smith, Eastern Regional Director of Keep America Beautiful to check on our organization, ask about local damages and give an update of KAB relief programs to assist us in recovery. These funds could provide equipment (grabbers/bags/gloves) for cleanups, beautification supplies, etc. We could also offer assistance to a family or other non-profit group like the Elizabethton Compassion Center in Carter County to leverage additional project funding through reimbursement and/or matching funds by Microsoft and Keep American Beautiful disaster relief programs. Melinda Maddock suggested replacement of previously purchased trash bins that were damaged or destroyed in the flooding if city/county insurance does not replace. Ed Basconi stated he had also worked at the regional Hurricane Relief Center at Bristol Speedway loading/unloading trucks of supplies donated or provided by federal/state government agencies.
* Donations were also 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 into next year after we are given the approval from federal and state agencies, county and city government to conduct these events. We have been delayed by the need for environmental hazard and assessment approval for some clean up events and projects.
* Mike Simerly reported Carter County, and the city of Elizabethton have been given grants for riverbank clean up and restoration projects and they will let us know how KCCB can assist in their programs and events. Due to contamination of soil and water from septic/gas-oil tanks/household-commercial wastes, government agencies will be assessing and testing areas prior to cleanup efforts. Park recreation areas, school properties and other areas affected by floodwaters will need to be scrapped and soil replaced to eliminate contamination prior to restoration and beautification. Caleb Krebs (via Zoom) was at a Tennessee state joint agency meeting regarding Hurricane Helene recovery planning projects for clean ups, riverbank restoration and infrastructure construction. He will report back to us at the November board meeting on how we can participate.
* Don Hlavaty stated that approximately $5,000.00+ donation funding received so far by KCCB as Hurricane Recovery is in addition to the KCCB annual budget. This will allow for additional cleanup, beautification and supply projects. While areas are receiving assistance from FEMA and state/county resources, we should offer our assistance for projects to beautify and restore our environment.
* We are monitoring our Northeast Credit Union accounts due to the fraudulent $9.49 charge in September. Hopefully this was an isolated incident.

***Review of Previous Events:***

* Volunteer work due to Carter County flooding from Hurricane Helene. We donated the remaining coloring books and pencils to Parks & Recreation for use in county shelters to help entertain children. The Maddocks provided water, cleaning supplies and many volunteer hours at the Parks & Recreation Hurricane Relief collection center.
* Elizabethton High School was given funding of $250 (total project $500) for Compassion Rock Garden at Ivy Hall Nursing Home. Lisa Vezzosi delivered the check to the school and the matching funds from another organization may not be given due to the Hurricane Recovery needs but the school said they could make do with the KCCB funding.
* TDOT Milligan Hwy Cleanup – 9/28, cancelled due to flooding.
* Carter County Hazardous Waste Day 10/12 cancelled by the state due to flooding. It may be rescheduled to a spring date due to recovery projects.

***Proposed Events and Projects:***

* Keep Tennessee Beautiful No Trash November Cleanup is scheduled for November 16th at 10am. We will meet in the parking lot behind the Coffee Company and clean the Tweetsie Trail to Snap On trail head.
* The Elizabethton Christmas Parade is scheduled for December 14th at 6pm (route to be determined due to bridge/road closures by city next week).
* Lisa Vezzosi still needs to get card stock for 2025 calendars but will finish this task. She was delayed by resolving our Northeast Credit Union debit card issue.
* Lisa Vezzosi reviewed our stock of give-away items. We have 12 Carter County stickers and 10 KCCB small stickers. We need to order more stickers for use next year. We have 25 KTB spiral notebooks and we can contact Kyle Howard to get more give-a-ways. A **motion to order new stickers** was made by Lisa Vezzosi, seconded by Mike Simerly and **unanimously passed.**
* Chris Schuettler from Carter County Landfill requested a seed donation from KCCB for areas at the county landfill to combat soil erosion and help beautify the area. Lisa Vezzosi reminded us that we had given seeds to Roan Mountain for the Erik Anderson Park, but we are unsure if they were planted in summer or held for next spring due to the Doe Riverbank restoration project through town and at the park. If they were planted, the bed would have been destroyed by floodwaters this fall. Mike Simerly added that the Elizabethton/Carter County Library seed bank project had purchased a new display/storage case, and he suggested we donate additional seed packets for next year to them. We donated the remaining 2024 seed packets from the high school project at the end of the summer to the library. Ed Basconi commented that Johnson City had planted both spring/summer and fall seeds and the Cosmos were in full bloom now so we may want to purchase a variety of seeds for nearly year-round coverage. We will address the purchase of seeds for all these projects next spring.
* To assist Carter County citizens in Hurricane Helene Cleanup, the landfill is taking trash, brush and household waste at no charge. Storm damaged items are being accepted and sorted for proper disposal (appliances, tires, scrap wood, etc.) at no charge. Additionally, dumpsters were provided by the county for brush, household waste, etc. at locations throughout the county in flood damage areas.
* Ed Basconi suggested we replace the 3 dead trees along the Tweetsie Trail ourselves since trees are on sale at Evergreen Nursery. A **motion to approve the purchase of 3 trees and soil/fertilizer/mulch supplies** was made by Lisa Vezzosi, seconded by Melinda Maddock and **unanimously approved.** Don Hlavaty will provide the tax-free documentation/debit card for tree purchase by Ed Basconi.
* Lisa Vezzosi reminded everyone to log their hours on the KCCB website for both our trash pickup and all Hurricane Helene Recovery Relief projects as well. Lisa Vezzosi and/or Don Hlavaty will also log our hours and projects on the Keep America Beautiful and Keep Tennessee Beautiful websites for KCCB credit.
* We have enough cleanup supplies (trash bags/grabbers/gloves/vests) to loan to other people/groups doing cleanup events. Caleb Krebs stated that he also had supplies available through Stormwater Management that could be used as needed for events.
* Mike Simerly said damaged signs will be replaced or re-installed by the appropriate government agencies. Don Hlavaty suggested we limit our use of KCCB yard signs because they can become trash if not maintained – an unknown number of our signs were damaged/washed away in flooding. We can also contact Elizabethton Streets & Sanitation to make us more metal road signs if needed.
* Don Hlavaty suggested flower beds or vegetable gardens in school yards, but it was determined to be unsustainable because no one would maintain them. There are no city/county school’s property staff and lawn maintenance are done by contractors so no one will want to fund them either. The elementary school calendar is very popular, and we may want to do it again next year.
* Caleb Krebs has educational materials for homeowners and schools that we can utilize and post as a link on our website or print as informational brochures as needed. We can utilize these materials for KCCB projects and partner with other organizations. He will contact other organizations (AmeriCorps Vista, corporations, colleges/universities, US Forest Service, etc.) and forward to us his findings in the next meeting. Ed Basconi suggested a brochure or how-to on trimming or maintaining trees. Don Hlavaty suggested a brochure or how-to on “yard wilding”.

***Adjournment:***

* A **motion was made to adjourn the meeting** by Melinda Maddock, seconded by Don Hlavaty, and **unanimously approved.** The meeting was adjourned at 1:18pm.

Submitted by: Mary Ellen Hlavaty, Secretary