City of La Verkin
435 North Main St., La Verkin Utah, 84745
(435) 635-2581 Fax (435) 635-2104
www.laverkin.org

Confluence Park Executive Board and
Technical Advisory Committee Minutes
Wednesday, July 15, 2020, 3:00 p.m.
La Verkin City Council Chambers, 111 S Main Street

Present:

Board Members:

Richard Hirschi	La Verkin City
Gary Chaves	Toquerville City
Cameron Rognan	Washington County HCP

Advisory:

Rhett Boswell	UDWR
Steve Meismer	VRP
Dennis Kay	VRLPA

Others:

Todd Edwards	Washington County Engineer
Patricia Wise	La Verkin City Council
Richard Cutts	Hurricane resident
Christy Ballard	La Verkin City staff

I. Meeting Called to Order:

Mayor Richard Hirschi called the meeting to order at 3:03 pm at the La Verkin City Council Chambers at 111 South Main Street, La Verkin, Utah.

II. Approve Minutes: February 19, 2020, and May 20, 2020

The motion was made by Cameron Rognan to approve the February 19, 2020, and May 20, 2020 minutes, second by Gary Chaves. Chaves-yes, Rognan-yes, Hirschi-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Business:

1. Status report of current grant-funded projects
    a. Bathrooms installed, progress on staircase, signage

Cameron reported the restrooms are in place and ready to go.
There have been a few issues with the staircase. They are trying to secure a solid foundation at the base. We may have to ask for an extension on the grant because of this issue.
They have been working on a map for the trailhead.

Patricia Wise reported on the progress of the La Verkin side of the new trailhead park. She met with the County on-site to make sure the project is well coordinated.
Everything was shifted to the south from the main driveway, so the pathway location has changed slightly.
The City is currently working on the parking lot.

Gary mentioned a concern with the size of the metal support on the staircase.

Cameron said he felt it was too thin as well, but the staircase has not been installed yet so hopefully additional support will be added.

b. LeRay McAllister grant-more trees, seeding, other needs

Cameron reported this grant is in the process of getting closed out. There is a bit of money left so if there is something more that needs to be done as far as restoration goes, he would appreciate any ideas.
They are going to replace a few of the trees that have died and possibly seed the fields.

Rhett suggested purchasing herbicide.

2. Grant applications pending
    a. LeRay McAllister-reduced 2021 funding

Cameron reported the grant administrators notified him that their budgets had been cut due to COVID-19 and asked the County to revise their application. The County is going to still apply but will be asking for less money. They will focus on trees and non-native species removal.

b. Bridge-RTP & Utah Outdoor Recreation

Cameron reported we did receive the Utah Outdoor Recreation grant and are still waiting to hear back from the Recreational Trails Program grant.

Mayor Hirschi asked if the grants would cover the entire cost of the bridge.

Cameron explained that if we get the entire amount we asked for and with the required match for each grant, it should cover the cost of the bridge.

3. Agricultural restoration in the Park
    a. Progress on farming plan

Cameron reported the irrigation plan is something that is still being worked on.
The County sent out an RFP last month to see if anyone was interested in farming the fields. They did receive a couple of applications and Confluence Heritage Foundation was selected. It is a local group that manages a lot of other properties in the area and should be a good fit for what we want to do in the Park.
They are still in negotiations for a lease agreement and farming plan. They have discussed planting the small field by the parking lot with flowers and milkweed to benefit monarch butterflies and some of the pollinators.
The larger field would be the best place for harvesting crops.
If grazing were to occur, the west field on the other side of the Creek would be the best place for that.

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b. Status of flood irrigation & water shares

Cameron reported the County is still in talks with the Virgin River Land Preservation Association to purchase water shares. The County Commission and attorneys are reviewing the documents.
He is also working with La Verkin City to get an exception for flood irrigating to use those water shares in the Park.

Mayor Hirschi asked if turkeys were still causing a problem.

Rhett said DWR has trapped a lot of them.

4. Other park projects/concerns

a. Power plant-security cameras

Cameron said because of the vandalism reported at the last meeting the County has decided to purchase security cameras to place throughout the Park.

b. Geocache proposal

Richard Cutts thanked the Board on behalf of Rex Sorensen for allowing additional geocache locations. He has already received several positive comments.

He asked if the Board was going to do anything to clean up the trails on the Hurricane side of the Park.

Cameron replied that in the past Hurricane had a trails committee that would take care of the trails, but that committee is no longer functioning. They would love to continue work on the trails and have found that is most effective when there is community support. If Mr. Cutts or someone else would like to take the lead on improving those trails it would be very helpful.

Rhett said if Richard or Rex would like to lead a crew, he is getting a lot of dedicated hunter requests and cleaning trails would qualify as volunteer hours for that program.

Richard explained he does not know how to keep erosion off the trails and that is the major issue. Horseback riding has also torn up all the rocks.
The noxious plants that hang over the trails need to be trimmed as well.

Cameron said the Red Cliffs Desert Reserve has a trail steward program that works great. He has been trying to recruit people from the Hurricane/La Verkin area to start something similar in Confluence Park, specifically someone willing to be the main trail steward that could coordinate projects and train others on what needs to be done.

A camp host was discussed with the County Commissioners and it was determined, while it was needed, it would be better to wait until the Park has better facilities (water and electricity) for a camp host.

c. Status of Catori Center 5K run/walk through the Park

Cameron has not heard back from the requestor and no one could remember if someone from the Board was going to follow up with that.

Mayor Hirschi asked if the marker from the Greater Zion group had been placed yet.

Cameron reported they contacted him, and it should be placed shortly. It will be in the parking area by the kiosk.

IV. Public Concerns for Board Consideration:

Richard Cutts mentioned the weeds in the Park are a fire hazard and wondered if anything could be done.

Cameron replied the County has a weed supervisor who is in Confluence monthly, sometimes weekly. As the fields start to grow the County will be in the Park more often working on keeping the weeds down.

Richard asked if any progress had been made at the old dumpsite in Hurricane. The property owner above it has expressed a willingness to use his road equipment to help the area but no one from the Board has reached out to him.

Cameron said he will instruct Justin to work with that property owner to get that taken care of.

Richard Cutts asked if Virgin River Land Preservation Association could engage Rocky Mountain Power on behalf of the Board to purchase property for the Park.

Dennis reported that has been discussed at their board meetings but they have stayed out of it while a private entity was trying to purchase it.
The VRLPA is willing to get involved.

V. Board Member Concerns:

No comments were made.

VI. Adjourn

The motion was made by Cameron Rognan to adjourn, second by Gary Chaves. The motion carried unanimously at 3:34 pm

Minutes were taken by Christy Ballard.

September 16, 2020
Date Approved

Richard M. Hirschi
Richard Hirschi, Chair