



City of La Verkin

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**Confluence Park Executive Board and
Technical Advisory Committee Minutes
Wednesday, December 16, 2020, 3:00 p.m.
Zoom Meeting**

Present:

Board Members:

Richard Hirschi	La Verkin City
Cameron Rognan	Washington County HCP
Clark Fawcett	Hurricane City
Gary Chavez	Toquerville City

Advisory:

Steve Meisner	VRP
Gary Bezzant	UDWR

Others:

Ray Justice	La Verkin City Council
Kathleen Nielson	Washington County Grant Writer
Randee Sanders	Washington County
Lane Blackmore	Hurricane City resident
Karl Wilson	La Verkin City resident
Patricia Wise	La Verkin City resident
Christy Ballard	La Verkin City staff

I. Meeting Called to Order:

Mayor Richard Hirschi called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

II. Approve Minutes: September 16, 2020

The motion was made by Cameron Rognan to approve the September 16, 2020 minutes, second by Gary Chaves. Hirschi-yes, Rognan-yes, Fawcett-yes, Chaves-yes. Motion carried.

III. Business:

1. LeRay McAllister Grant update

Kathleen reported Steve Westlund is working on the staircase. He thinks they will be finished by the middle of January. This is funded by the RTP Grant received for the La Verkin trailhead.

Gary mentioned that several meetings ago he brought up the stability of the staircase. He noticed recently that it had all been torn out and wondered if they decided to do something different.

Kathleen explained the previous material was a “mock-up” for the sizing and placement and was never intended to be part of the actual staircase.

Cameron reported he was contacted by the LeRay McAllister grant and due to COVID 19 the State had to cut several things from the budget and unfortunately, much of that funding was cut. This means the Park will not be getting any rewards. They did say they were impressed with our application and want to continue to partner with the Park, but until things improve, they will not have any money.

Kathleen asked if the grant was able to reimburse the County for any of the work.

Randee Sanders said she has not seen a check from the LeRay McAllister grant.

Kathleen reported the restrooms and ramp have been installed. The signage bump-outs are in place, but the grading has not been completed. The staircase must get done first and then grading for the trail, the bump-out areas, and the pathway from the restroom can all be done.

The parking area has changed a little, but it looks great. The park area that La Verkin is putting in is going to look great too.

2. Status of the La Verkin Power Station Trailhead and staircase

Discussed with item 1.

3. Bridge plans and next steps

Kathleen reported there has been a lot of in-house work done on the bridge grant (meetings and filing for the permits).

Steve said the alteration permit is still collecting comments. Once that period is over a decision will be made. He thinks they will get a permit but there may be some changes necessary.

He has viewed the stream alteration permit and spoke with Melinda Bennion (Division of Wildlife) about it. If the piling could be removed from the River so the bridge would free span the River, the permitting process would be considerably easier. Army Corps of Engineers would not need to be involved and it could save the need of possibly fixing the pier or replacing the bridge if there were ever a flood.

He did mention this to Commissioner Victor Iverson who said he would look into the possibility of free spanning the River.

Because it is in the Virgin River and because we have endangered species, the Fish and Wildlife Services will need to comment on that. Removing the pier would make permitting much easier.

Cameron said he saw an email stating the biological assessment is insufficient as it is right now and wondered if spanning the River would help fix that.

Steve asked Cameron to forward the email to him and he will look into what the problems are and how they can be solved.

These are the only two permits that he is aware of.

Kathleen said she asked Rosenberg Engineering when they thought the bridge project could be completed and they thought the fall of 2021 was feasible.

4. Other park projects

Mayor Hirschi reported flood irrigating the fields has been worked out so the County should be able to begin watering in the spring.

Cameron thanked La Verkin City for allowing the flood irrigation. He met onsite with the contractor that will install the pressure control valve. The valve will be installed on Ash Creek Special Service Districts' property instead of the Park property and construction will begin within the next couple of weeks.

Patricia Wise said she thought the approval ordinance stated the pressure control valve would be on La Verkin City property. That may need to be amended to state Ash Creek SSD property.

Cameron responded that he was not sure about wording listing a specific location. Todd has met with La Verkin City and Ash Creek SSD who all determined this would be the most appropriate location. If the ordinance needs to be amended, let him know and the County will work with the City to make that change.

Patricia explained the reason for the valve being on the City property was so the City could control the irrigation pressure so the residents would not be affected.

Mayor Hirschi will check with Kevin and Derek regarding the ordinance.

Gary asked where the parking was for the SR 9 trailhead that is by the Dwellings and River Rock Coffee Shop.

Patricia explained the parking is on 300 South between the animal control shelter and River Rock Coffee Shop. There is an easement on the Dwellings property for people to access the trail.

Cameron said when the County agreed to let the Dwellings occupy some of their easement space on the property, the owner agreed to provide 2-4 parking spots for trail access.

Patricia mentioned the owner told her that spacing for the project changed and that made the public parking no longer available.

Cameron thought there was a written agreement regarding the exchange but would need to verify it.

Mayor Hirschi reported the City is in negotiations to possibly build another trail east of the animal shelter that will go from the parking lot into Confluence Park.

The easement on the Dwellings property will always need to be there because it is the only way to get equipment into that side of Confluence Park for trail maintenance.

Cameron reported Lane Blackmore contacted him several weeks ago regarding property he has acquired that he would like to include in a proposed property exchange. He showed a map of the property but was not sure of the details of the exchange. The parcel Mr. Blackmore acquired a large parcel of property along the lower Virgin River and the cliffside that he would like to exchange for more developable property on the Hurricane side. This item will be on the next Confluence Park agenda.

Gary Bezzant is with the UDWR. He will be attending the meeting until another biologist can get hired to replace Rhett Boswell who has left UDWR.

Lane Blackmore said the property exchange was first discussed a year ago. He has since purchased the property from Rocky Mountain Power and would like to re-visit the property exchange. Mr. Blackmore's property is a 17-acre parcel that goes from the base of the bridge, along the River to the current boundary of Confluence Park.

Mayor Hirschi would like to meet with Mr. Blackmore to review the map and possible exchange.

Gary Bezzant stated he would like to be involved in the meeting as well. In the past, there were some restraints associated with easements and holding easements. At that time there were different people in the state office and there was a lot of reticence to do it, based on the fact that there's not a lot of precedent for getting out of a conservation easement. They are supposed to be held in perpetuity for the Public Trust.

This will need to be talked through with the Salt Lake City staff and see if they are even willing to take it on.

Cameron mentioned Hurricane also needs to be involved in the discussion because the exchange involves part of their property.

Clark said this exchange would connect some of their properties with a road, which they would like to see.

IV. Public Concerns for Board Consideration:

No comments were made.

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 3:37 pm.

Minutes were taken by Christy Ballard.

January 20, 2021
Date Approved


Richard Hirschi, Chair