



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, October 20, 2021, 3:00 p.m.

Present:

Board Members:

Richard Hirschi	La Verkin City
Randee Sanders	Washington County HCP
Kaden DeMille	Hurricane City
Gary Chaves	Toquerville City
Kathleen Nielson	RCDR

Advisory:

Steve Meisner	VRP
Dennis Kay	VRLPA
Jessica Kinross	UDWR

Others:

Richard Cutts	Hurricane City resident
Rex Sorenson	Hurricane City resident
Patricia Wise	La Verkin resident

I. Meeting Called to Order:

Mayor Richard Hirschi called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

II. Approve Minutes: July 21, 2021, and August 18, 2021

The motion was made by Gary Chaves to approve the July 21, 2021, and August 18, 2021, meeting minutes, second by Kathleen Nielson. Hirschi-yes, Chaves-yes, Nielson-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Business:

1. Status report on Power Plant Park

Kathleen reported the lava rock has been installed.

Mayor Hirschi reported La Verkin City is going to install curb along the trail to keep the rock off the trail. They will also be planting grass.

Patricia Wise passed out pictures of what has been completed at the Power Plant Park so far. She reported the lava rock is about 90% complete. There are a few larger boulders left to install at the entrance of the staircase and at the playground area.

Mayor Hirschi reported Ash Creek SSD donated the lava rock.

Kathleen mentioned La Verkin should be able to use the rock toward its grant for the city park. The County grant is complete, so they are done with that work. She did notice the gap at the top of the staircase that is a potential safety concern. If La Verkin could install a boulder there, that would be helpful.

Kaden DeMille arrived at 3:07p.m.

Mayor Hirschi asked if the petroglyphs need to be protected to avoid vandalism.

Kathleen replied she thinks people can discover them on their own and be excited to do so.

2. Status of the Virgin River bridge project.

Kathleen reported the project has been delayed a couple of weeks, but they will be going out to bid by November.

Randee was asked by Cameron to report the deadline for the project is May 18th. Due to shortages the construction of the bridge will be later than anticipated and may be more expensive than anticipated.

Kathleen reported she received a call from the State Historical Society who saw the power station during a lunch meeting and were so excited about the building that they volunteered to put together the certificate of historic preservation acknowledgment and certificate for the power station. Those certificates have been completed and they are finishing up with some drawings that will be on the sign.

It will be a plaque that will be posted either on the building or a stand in front of the building. This designation does not prohibit the County from doing anything to the building. It will actually help the County get money for preservation of the building.

The Mayor brought up the concern from the last meeting over Ash Creek SSD installing a sewer line and water line to the power plant for a restroom and to water trees in that area.

There will only be one restroom in the area at the new trailhead, but water is necessary to plant & water trees.

Kathleen mentioned not having an issue with a pit toilet. A restroom at that location was part of the original plan and was a reason for the easement.

Mayor Hirschi suggested the conversation continue when Ash Creek SSD is available. Regarding this and the penstock.

Dennis said Virgin River Land Preservation still believes they own the penstock. Mike with Ash Creek SSD did send him some paperwork which he forwarded on.

Kathleen reported she spoke with Bill who told her VRLP found another bill of sale from Mr. Woods that indicated a prior date than Ash Creek SSD's bill of sale. These two parties need to work this situation out.

She told the Historical Preservation Society to leave the penstock out of the certification.

3. Priorities for fall/winter restoration projects

Randee reported AmeriCorp volunteers were in Confluence Park removing tamarisk.

The County is also in the process of receiving a tree grant, like the one received in 2020. She is confident the Park will get the grant. This grant would be a match for the LeRay McAllister grant. They will be focusing on native species such as cottonwood trees and willows.

Mike Schif has been working with the County Noxious Weed Manager to see if an element of that could go toward treating the invasives in the Park.

Mayor Hirschi asked if the fields are still being rented to Mr. Gubler and Mr. Lofthouse.

Randee replied she thought they were but did not have much information regarding that agreement.

Mayor Hirschi mentioned the farmers did plant the fields and were allowed to flood irrigate but ran into some issues this year.

4. Other projects

Randee said Cameron asked her to bring up the landslide occurring in La Verkin. He is concerned about that and wondered if there are any plans to fix the situation.

Mayor Hirschi said La Verkin has their engineers working on it.

Kathleen asked Steve if there was a way to resurrect the pond.

Steve replied he wasn't going to say there was no way. Would he rather there is no pond, yes, but he is willing to talk about it.

There would need to be things in place to make it work, like the pond literally drained dry a couple of times every year.

Mayor Hirschi asked Kaden if Hurricane had determined anything regarding the concrete foundation on the Hurricane side of the Park.

Kaden said Hurricane was prepared to remove it, he just wants assurance from the Board they are okay to remove it.

Cameron was going to contact the County Commissioners and then let him know.

Richard Cutts pointed out it is a safety hazard and that the Executive Board should just vote on it.

Kathleen stated while she feels it is an appropriate issue for the Board to vote on, the structure is on County-owned land, and they should be part of the decision.

Randee will remind Cameron to check with the County Commissioners.

Jessica reported she spoke with the State Architect, and they did not see anything on the building regarding historical information.

Ash Creek SSD is supposed to get DWR a written plan and map for the road and sewer alignment. According to the conservation deed any improvement or structure projects need to be submitted in writing to the grantee within 30 days. She is going to request this item be on the next agenda just to make sure the Board/County is following the proper procedures and will provide copies of the Deed of Conservation Easement to the Board.

Jessica was also notified that the County received money for additional paved trails. Those plans will need to be submitted to DWR.

Randee reported John Bramall reported getting funds for a trail system close to 600 North in Hurricane. He would be a good contact for that.

Patricia Wise explained the concept for a trail has been around for many years but in the last 4 years Zion Regional Collaborative (ZRC) took the helm on developing a multi-use trail from Springdale to Hurricane. It moved into the environmental assessment process for the trail from Springdale to the north end of Ash Creek SSD's property at the entrance to Confluence Park. It does not go into the Park. There is currently a proposal out for Ash Creek SSD to provide sewer to the town of Virgin. If that happens a sewer line would be installed from the Ash Creek SSD property directly north of Confluence Park to Virgin with a trail on that alignment.

If the sewer line doesn't happen, the trail will be in the UDOT right-of-way along SR9.

The project was awarded 10.8 million dollars for the 12-foot-wide paved path that will come down off the La Verkin twist to the footsteps of Confluence Park.

In the meantime, Hurricane City and the County entered a grant process for the 600 North trail improvements. This will improve the trail up to the city park on 200 West. It will leave a gap in Hurricane from that park to the north entrance of Confluence Park.

They hope, at some point, the trail will continue through Confluence Park, over the footbridge, wind its way up the Hurricane side, and either go on city streets or curve around if an easement is possible. The dream is for this multi-use regional trail to connect the communities in Washington County with a miles-long trail.

The money for the trail that has been awarded stops at Ash Creek SSD property on the north end of Confluence Park.

Any requirements from the Board or TAC that would affect that trail going through Confluence Park would be helpful at this point, so they don't spend time wondering.

The County is the convener of funds, so they are handling the contracts. The ZRC is still involved in "getting all of the pieces put together" by working with UDOT, BLM, SITLA, the town of Virgin, Rockville, Ash Creek SSD, Springdale, Hurricane, and La Verkin City.

Richard Cutts said he has read all the founding documents and wants the Board to be aware of how the Executive Board was structured. The Red Cliffs Desert Reserve is the manager of Confluence Park but the authority rests with representatives of the three cities. That would make Cameron one voting

member, but he serves at your convenience, not the other way around. This Board should be deciding how they want to manage the Park.

Kathleen stated Cameron serves as the voice of the Commission and the County owns the land. The money to make all the improvements in Confluence Park comes from the County. She wants to make sure the Virgin River Land Preservation Association (VRLPA), who got the funding for the Park, is aware and in support of the penstock and other projects within Confluence Park.

Dennis reported Confluence Park is still discussed in the VRLPA meetings. He asked, concerning the paved trail, if the conservation easement would allow a paved trail in the Park.

Jessica said it doesn't, that is why she was asking for a plan to review it against the easement.

Patricia Wise said the ZRC is aware of that regulation and is planning to come to the Confluence Park Board to find out if this trail could get an exception. If the Board would like an update on the trail, she could arrange to have Emily Friedman with the ZRC and Leslie Fonger from the County give that report.

Rex Sorensen asked why the trail needs to be paved. There are roads on the La Verkin side from the trailhead to the river and well-developed trails on the south side of the river that people bike on all the time.

Patricia Wise explained the multi-regional trail is active transportation. Under that title, it is recreational but it's also a means of commuting. With the entrance of e-bikes, a paved path is necessary.

If someone traveling on a road bike on that regional path gets to Confluence Park and there is a stop with gravel or dirt it would be very difficult for that person to bike safely up to Zion.

That is going to be a huge draw.

The Greater Zion Development office is tasked to spread tourism throughout the County and bicycling/hiking is a huge part of that. They want those people to safely go back and forth.

Steve asked Patricia to put him on the list for the environmental assessment for this trail. He mentioned it is much easier to plan if he knows what's coming.

This type of thing has been done in St. George and Washington so it's doable, it just needs to meet the requirements.

The Virgin Spinedace was determined to be not warranted for listing as endangered by the Fish and Wildlife Service. That is a great thing because had it been listed it would have created a large area of critical habitat.

We want to be protective of that status and make sure we don't do anything that could cause additional problems. Then we would have an endangered species up every stream in the County.

Richard Cutts said he thought the trail was going to go along the Virgin River.

Patricia explained 2 years ago a study was done to determine if a multi-regional trail was feasible given the terrain. The Engineers came up with four different alignments that went out for public comment. When it was all said and done, the only way a regional trail could happen was along the UDOT right of way. That was the consensus and that is where the ZRC started. They were able to get more money to do an environmental assessment for the trail along SR9 with help from UDOT, Dixie Metropolitan Organization, La Verkin City, and Zion Forever.

The recording stopped.

The minutes were done by Christy Ballard

1-19-22
Date Approved

Patricia Wain
Chair