

Shoal Creek Park Foundation Board Update

5-6-20 by email update in place of board meeting due to Coronavirus

The mission of SCP is to provide a diverse and sustainable retreat for Montevallo residents and visitors that promotes its natural surroundings, health, regional history, environmental education, arts and agriculture.

I hope this update finds everyone well and safe. I also hope you've been able to enjoy SCP during this strange time of isolation—while practicing social distancing.

In talking with the other SCPF officers and a few board members, we decided to handle the regular May quarterly meeting by this email update. Please feel free to call or email me with any other issues and/or concerns you may have about our efforts. We can have a called meeting, if action is needed. Our next regularly scheduled meeting is August 5th at 1:00 at Parnell Memorial Library.

1. General Board Issues and Financial Report

Approval of last meeting's minutes- please see attached and let me know of any changes. We'll approve at the August meeting.

Welcome to our **new board members!** They are: Bill Ennis, Nancy Simmer, Will Lumpkin, Michele Pawlik & Chris Stano. I'm also happy to say that Mary Ellen Heuton will continue to serve and we welcome Olivia Barone, the Sustainability Coordinator for the City.

As you know, we have a staggered board and add new people annually. So, always think of people that have a heart for the park and would like to serve on the board.

Susan's **treasurer's report:** Directors & Officers insurance has been paid for the year (\$857). Form 990 has been prepared by the accountant and filed. Current bank balance at 4-30-20 at Trustmark is: \$86,512.12. Regions balance at 4-30-20 is: \$1000 (remember, this was set up when we got the credit card and will use this account for donations). A PayPal account was set up to take donations on-line and the current balance is: \$19.63. I encourage all board members to try out the "DONATE" button!

We want to thank Bill Ennis, Shane Baugh and Leigh Allison for their work on creating three **donation boxes** for the park. These structures cost about \$1k apiece and Bill and Shane found or had donated the parts and Leigh welded them together. Cheryl is investigating a way for people to donate electronically, like a text number or venmo account. Susan and I will check the boxes regularly and will deposit the money into the Regions account. The first week we received \$8.00.

2. Updates on park

To say the park is being used is an understatement. I applaud the city for keeping the parks open, during the stay-at-home closures. This has been a well-needed outlet for people to be outside, get some exercise, while practicing social distancing.

The **tree labeling** along the Betty Loop has been installed and looks great!

TrailVisions work has been completed and we now have over **9.5 miles of trails** throughout the park. We had several marathoners use the park to run a 100 mile “virtual” event.

The county is in the process of building two you-are-here **kiosks** as you cross both bridges. The old Mahler pictures, like at the pavilion, have been donated and are ready to be installed.

We now have three **wildflower** and one **sunflower** beds throughout the park thanks to Nancy Simmer & Terry Arnold.

Nancy’s been very busy setting up a **birding committee** and establishing the bluebird and owl houses. Her report: Based on reports/comments nest boxes that contained nests included 1,7,8,10,11,13, 16,18, 19 and 24. Of these,several appeared to be dummy nests or were abandoned:7,8,18.

Successful nests that appeared to successfully fledge birds were 1,13,16.

Nests that had eggs laid but were attacked by a predator were 10,19, 24. Other nests were left empty and or had a wasp nest in them.

I will get back later this week to clean nest boxes (checking for activity first) and removing wasp nests and poison ivy. There may well be another nesting and fledging of baby birds so our work is not yet finished.

The majority of these nests were put up by a Boy Scout working on his Eagle Scout award and several others just appeared by anonymous volunteers in our community. This summer, or early Fall, we will remove some of the nest boxes and examine placement, and direction. I would like to explore the cost of mounting a few nest boxes on metal poles with a predator guard...(I will donate at least one so folks can see what they are, how they protect the birds in the nest box and that they prevent damaging trees. We will repair trees when we remove houses.

So many folks are visiting the park now and I am hoping Alabama Audubon will be able to come and do a birding program at SCP next fall if social distancing allows. I know William wants to have a 'build a birdhouse' event for children in the Fall. Another member of our team requested a simple bird ID walk through the park with an Audubon bird leader.....I feel this is an opportunity for Audubon to recruit new members as well.

This project is worthy of the time and effort that it requires and is appropriate for Shoal Creek Park and our Montevallo Community.

The park was designated as an **Audubon Birding Site** in Jan. More information to follow to let us know exactly what this means.

The City Council approved **pavilion rental rates**: \$150 deposit plus a.) half day- \$40 (city residents \$25) or b.) full day- \$80 (city residents \$50).

Cemetery committee- Philip Busby (chair), Marty & Carey. No update.

Signage- Mike has provided content for three signs: pollinators, old field succession & riparian. Looking for **volunteers** to work on this project. We have potential sources of funds through the recent donation from CFGF (Community Foundation of Greater B'ham, CAWACO or other grant funds. At the last board meeting someone suggested adding an audio component and/or a QR code.

At the last meeting, the board discussed the possibility of **controlled burns** on the property. No decision or conclusion was reached.

The **website**: shoalcreekparkfoundation.com is up and running. It can and has accepted donations. Thanks again to Kristen Gilbert and Cheryl Patten for their work on this. Terry Arnold created a website shoalcreekpark.com. I've contacted him to ask to a link to his website on ours and vice versa.

Inner tube/Kayak signage- No update. At last meeting: Action tabled for now, but maybe put up signage and then see how much usage before spending money for steps.

Estimate for wide steps for inner tube launch at northern-most point: \$8.3k. Three sets of steps off the bridge sides is \$12k.

3. Event Committee- Philip, Chris, Mary Ellen, Sue, A.V. representative Mike Jones. The committee, with the addition of Zac Andrews, a local runner, met a few times and planned a 10k and 1-mile fun run event for late April. The purpose of the run was to raise money and awareness for the park. Some of the issues worked on, some finalized, others not: the course, the board approved by email a \$600 budget, parking at AV and shuttles, t-shirts and give-aways/sales items, medals/prizes for winners etc. We delayed the run due to the pandemic. I plan to move forward with t-shirts and potential run give-aways that will be generic. We can sell these items at all times and not just at a run.

4. House Update- City Council has approved the plans from the architect and they are going out to bid. I do not have a bid date yet.

There has been some discussion about a small **welcome center** in the style of the pavilion and near the pavilion. We are not sure if the house might be able to be used for this. I appreciate feedback on this. The idea is to staff it with volunteers and sell maps, t-shirts etc.

2020 Board meeting schedule, all at Parnell Memorial Library at 1:00 on the first Wed. on the quarter:

Feb 5, May 6, & **Aug. 5, & Nov. 4th, 2020**