

## City of Dunedin Hammock Advisory Committee (HAC)

Meeting Minutes – January 13, 2020

Dunedin Community Center Meeting Room, 1920 Pinehurst Rd, Dunedin, Florida

HAC Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mondays of January, March, May, July, September & November

**HAC Members present:** Susan Humphreys (Chair), Chris McLaughlin (Secretary), Patricia Jennings, Pam Hillestad & Donna Moore (Alternate).

**Excused absences:** Elizabeth Grant, Steve Fasnacht.

**Vacancies:** Victor Johantges (Member/Vice-Chair) resigned since the last meeting. Alternate position vacant since January 2019.

**City Staff:** Lanie Sheets (Parks and Recreation Superintendent) could not attend.

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm by Chair Humphreys with 14 people present.

Housekeeping Notes:

- A quorum was present in accordance with City Resolution 03-11, General Provisions, Section 1.

**Hammock Trail Races:** City Parks & Recreation staff Jorie Peterson (Special Events Coordinator) and Chris Hoban (Athletics Specialist) discussed the schedule of +/-5-foot races to be held in the Hammock in 2020. Dunedin High School will hold several meets (dates were not yet specified), Academie Da Vinci Run for Arts will race on February 22 at 9am and the Dunedin Highland Trail Run is being held on April 4.

- Ms. Hillestad noted that the February 22 race may conflict with approximately 20 volunteers surveying a predetermined grid for gopher tortoise burrows February 16-29. This activity is being put on by the Friends of the Hammock (FotH) with George Heinrich of Ecological Services. The suggestion was for FotH to pre-plan a grid that won't conflict with the race route.
- Ms. Jennings offered to put notices in kiosks a week prior to the races and the City staff said they were considering "real-estate-style" signs noticing the public which trails are closed during races. The Hammock would technically remain open during foot races.
- It was also noted that the two bridges over Cedar Creek are scheduled to be replaced in late January/February and this may affect the February 22 race route.

The absences of Ms. Grant & Mr. Fasnacht were excused by discussion. Chair Humphreys noted that Mr. Johantges resigned his Member position (the City's website confirms the new vacancy).

**Meeting Minutes:** The November 12, 2019 HAC Minutes were reviewed. **Motion #1** (Ms. Jennings): Approve the Minutes as submitted. Ms. Hillestad seconded. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

**Supervisor's Report** (Ms. Sheets): As Ms. Sheets was absent, no report was given.

**Stormwater Advisory Committee (SAC) Report** (Ms. Grant): As Ms. Grant was absent, no report was given. The most recent SAC meeting was held on January 7<sup>th</sup>. A notice of a Public Meeting to provide an overview of the 2020 Stormwater Master Plan was included in this month's utility bills. It will be held February 4 at 5:30pm-8pm at the Hale Activity Center, 330 Douglas Avenue.

**Committee on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Report** (Hans Hillestad): Mr. Hillestad resigned from the CEQ, therefore no report was given.

**Old Business:**

- Membership –Two vacant positions exist, and concern was shared about the ability to fill them with fresh faces since term limits for boards & committees have been imposed by the City.

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- 5 applications were provided by the City for review. Of these, 1 did not meet the residency requirement (required per Resolution 03-11, Section 3), 1 is married to a current HAC member (prohibited per Resolution 99-13), thus leaving 3 considered applicants.
- After discussion, **Motion #2** (Ms. Hillestad): The HAC recommends Robert Spangler to fill the vacant Member position. Chair Humphreys seconded. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.
- After discussion, the HAC recommended that the City contact Tiffany Nozicka on her willingness (as her application was submitted in 2018) to fill the vacant Alternate position.
- Officer Elections – After discussion, **Motion #3** (Secretary McLaughlin): Approve the slate for 2020/2021 HAC officers to be Chair Sue Humphreys, Vice-Chair Robert Spangler, and Secretary Chris McLaughlin. Ms. Jennings seconded. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.
- Management Plan Recommendations – Chair Humphreys distributed a document she authored to include with the HAC annual letter to the City Commission (see attached). The document summarized action items the HAC discussed and opined needed to be implemented per the 2013 Hammock Park Management Plan prepared by King Engineering. The annual letter will be presented at the March HAC meeting for review
- Meet or Walk the Hammock – Due to possible violations of the Sunshine Law and logistics in accommodating those with special needs, it was agreed that a meeting or a walk in the Hammock as a committee would not be feasible.
- Meeting Schedule – The cancelled September meeting caused a 3-month gap between HAC meetings. It was agreed the bimonthly schedule should continue, however.

### New Business:

- Motorized Bikes – The advent of bicycles and scooters powered by batteries has revealed this to be a safety issue for pedestrians and hikers. **Motion #4** (Ms. Hillestad): Motioned to advise the City to ban all motorized vehicles in the park, with certain exceptions for authorized vehicles and vehicles assisting those with special needs. Ms. Jennings seconded. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.
- Rock Garden – The large stones serving as a border for the rock garden near Andrews Memorial Chapel were painted by someone, presumably in a graffiti fashion. The Rock Garden was originally created to give visitors a drop-off location for small painted rocks that have been made popular in recent years. **Motion #5** (Chair Humphreys): Motioned to advise the City to remove or replace the border stones. Secretary McLaughlin seconded. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.
- Bat House – No bats have roosted in the bat house. The issue was tabled and removed from discussion.

**Motion #6** (Chair Humphreys): Motioned to adjourn at 7:40pm.

Next Meeting: **Monday, March 9, 2020** at 6:30pm Dunedin Community Center Meeting Room, 1920 Pinehurst Rd, Dunedin, Florida.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Chris McLaughlin.  
(*Management Plan Recommendation* letter attached)

**ATTACHMENT: *MANAGEMENT PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS***  
**(to be included in the HAC annual report to the City Commission)**

WHEREAS, we are six years into the ten-year Hammock Park Management Plan prepared by King Engineering Associates, Inc. in 2013; and,

WHEREAS, the Hammock Advisory Committee has completed an extensive review of the Resource Management Recommendations of the Hammock Park Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, The Hammock Advisory Committee has determined that the implementation of the Resource Management Recommendations have been primarily limited to invasive plant control and minor trail changes to date, and otherwise fallen short of recommendations; the Hammock Advisory Committee urges implementation of the following Management Recommendations as detailed in 5.0 and 6.0 of the Hammock Management Plan:

#### 5.1.1.1 Scrubby Flatwoods/Oak Scrub Restoration

Phase 1. Mechanized thinning to remove/reduce dense stands of saw palmetto and woody shrubs with appropriate disposal thereof.

Phase 2. Prescribed Burn. Develop Plan to initiate and implement prescribed burn working with relevant fire and forest management partners as necessary.

The Hammock Advisory Committee has also voiced concern as to whether the amount of dead fall and decaying wood in the Hammock after storms of 2018 and prior might need to be reduced to limit tinder if wildfire conditions should exist. A professional wildfire expert determination is recommended with immediate action to remove deadwood, dependent upon risk identified.

#### 5.1.1.3 Forested Wetland Restoration (East Hammock Wetland)

The King Management report of 2011 recommends the City continue the collection and monitoring of some key hydrological and vegetation data within this system to enable the evaluation of long-term trends related to the ecosystem health of the East Hammock wetland..."

To this end, the Hammock Advisory Committee recommends the City locate and develop a method of monitoring and evaluating trends of hydrologic influence by collecting hydrological data from existing piezometer/stage gage array on a minimum biweekly basis as recommended in Element 1-Hydric Hammock 6.1 of the Management Plan (to include PZ 5 & 8 on the West Hammock Wetland) perhaps including the use of data loggers. This is not the type of monitoring that can be done by volunteers. Determine a method of evaluating the information collected with partners if necessary, making annual report to the Advisory Committee.

Develop a plan to end erosion of Channels A and C with partners as necessary.

Initiate removal of any dead wood and debris interrupting flow in the creeks of the Hammock both East and West wetlands.

### 5.1.3 Exotic & Invasive and Nuisance Plant Species Control Methods

#### 6.1 Monitoring & Reporting

Develop Method for recording and evaluating data gathered to measure progress of invasive control and resurgence of native vegetation using fixed photo plots (which have already been established). Trained volunteers will collect photos on a quarterly basis and upload to City tracking Data Server. Professional evaluation of data gathered should be reported to the HAC annually and form the basis for invasive control for the year following data review.