

Walhalla OKs additional trail investment

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WALHALLA — Walhalla City Council is on the path to invest an additional \$25,000 for trails at Stumphouse Tunnel Park.

Phase II of the bike trails appropriation appeared under new business on the agenda for council's meeting Tuesday.

City administrator Brent Taylor said the first phase of trails is near completion.

"The Palmetto Conservation Foundation has been very successful in grants for Phase II," Taylor said. "At this time, they're estimating Phase II to be somewhere in the \$309,000 to \$325,000 range, to do an additional 6 more miles of bike trail, which gives us a total of 9 miles in the system."

Some investment from Walhalla is needed to secure the additional funding.

The foundation needs \$25,000 to complete "all the money that's raised for that project," Taylor said.

"So basically the city's going to be getting roughly almost \$300,000 worth of donations from the (foundation) and other sources for \$25,000 investment on the city's part," he said.

Phase II is also slated to be completed this year, Taylor said.

Mayor Danny Edwards asked if the city's investment could be split over two budget years.

"At this time, they just need a commitment for it, they don't need the check in hand, so you could divide the allocation up over this fiscal year and into next fiscal year," Taylor said.

Council members voted to allocate \$25,000 to the PCF over a two-year budget period.

"That's going to mean a lot to Walhalla in years to come," Edwards said.

Council members also approved a name for the mountain biking portion of Stumphouse Tunnel Park.

In a previous meeting, Councilman Tjay Bagwell told council that PCF officials had asked for a name to be decided on so that it could be used in marketing materials.

"Personally, I like Stumphouse Tunnel Park," Edwards said.

As discussion began, Council members said the park's name should include Walhalla.

"I like Stumphouse Mountain Park, but maybe we should put 'City of Walhalla Stumphouse Mountain Park,'" Councilman Robbie Burrell said. "I want Walhalla in it."

Councilman Dennis Owens agreed, but said he didn't want to lose the Stumphouse Tunnel name either.

"That's really going to be a icon name for us in the future, I'm sure," Owens said.

Oconee Chamber of Commerce board chair Darlene Greene said the PCF needed a name for the mountain biking park, not a new name for Stumphouse Tunnel Park itself.

"You're going to have the whole park, then you're going to have the mountain biking part within the park," she said. "Keep in mind, it needs to be really simple and short and sweet, because it's got to go on maps and signs and everything else."

The trail system that encompasses the mountain biking portion "will become a destination venue for mountain biking events," Greene said.

"We need to have a name just for that for promotional purposes," she said.

Council voted to approve "Stumphouse Mountain Bike Park."

"You bike, you hike, we like," Burrell said. "Put it on a bumper sticker."