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615-790-0041 # Fax: 615-790-1008 # E-mail: info@trpa.net

June 23, 2010

The Honorable Samuel David Duck
328 Ashbury Dr
Maryville, TN 37804

Dear Mr. Duck,

Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association, representing over 1,200 parks and recreation professionals and citizens and the hundreds of thousands of Tennesseans that use our public parks, has long been an advocate of strong public park and recreation opportunities for the citizens of Tennessee.

Among our concerns are:

- # State parks funding, maintenance and professional management
- # Municipal and County parks
- # Environmental and Resource Stewardship
- # Recreation access and opportunity for all Tennesseans
- # State and Federal dedicated grant funds
- # State shared taxes

Below please find a series of questions addressing these concerns. Please respond by email to these questions. We will post all candidate responses on our website for our members review. For inclusion in this website posting, please e-mail, responses by Monday July 19, 2010 to us at:

Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association
Candidate Questions
candi@trpa.net

Thank you for your time and interest in serving the citizens of Tennessee. If you have any questions, please contact me at 615-790-0041.

Sincerely,

Candi Rawlins CPRP, CAE, IOM
Executive Director

CC: George Brogdon, Public Policy Chair

Questions for Candidates for Governor

Candidates for Governor

1. Tennessee encompasses some of the most beautiful undisturbed natural resources left in the United States, yet ranks as the seventh-worst state in the nation for conservation efforts. What would you do to protect these areas for future generations?

If I may add, “by humans” to undisturbed, then lack of effort on the part of humans would have a direct correlation. I don't plan on making any changes to the system currently in place.

2. State Parks has an estimated \$100 million backlog in maintenance needs. How would you fund these repairs and ensure adequate maintenance money in future years?

State funding will not increase in the foreseeable future. You will be free to pursue private donations for these projects, but I would want to examine what strings are attached. One other possibility might be tasking some prisoners to these projects. Personally, I'd like to hear from you in this regard. I will say, I'm an advocate of chain gangs, and these sounds as though it may have some potential of providing busy work for those who owe a debt to our society as a result of their actions.

3. In 2007, Tennessee State Parks was nationally recognized by the National Parks and Recreation Association's Gold Medal Award as America's best state park system. What is your vision/long range plan for the future of Tennessee's State Parks?

I don't intend to try to fix something that I don't perceive as broken. If we are the best, why would we want to do something different, or more specifically, why would we want to do what someone who is behind us is doing?

4. Integral to the overall delivery of parks and recreation services across Tennessee are the local (city and county) parks and recreation departments. How will you support the need of Tennessee's cities and counties to provide diverse, close-to-home recreation opportunities for all their residents?

Cities and counties are free to make their own decisions. I want to interfere in local affairs as little as possible.

5. An integral part of the development of local parks and recreation facilities is a viable grant program. The state of Tennessee is fortunate to have such a program, Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF). In recent years, legislation has been introduced that would redirect such funding into the state general fund. What measures would you take to ensure that a strong parks and recreation structure continues in Tennessee? Assure that these revenues are not diverted from this program?

If I may, I'll answer the second question. I'm not going to play shell games with money. However, if by diverted you mean the budget won't be cut at all, I simply can't promise that. Tennessee has at least a 6% budget shortfall for 2011. It'll probably be worse with no sure improvement in sight. My priority will be continued solvency of the government without raising taxes.

6. Several talking points introduced in the campaign for Governor thus far have addressed making State government smaller and more efficient. What is your vision and how would you implement the changes? What is your decision process when determining what services are reduced, combined or eliminated?

I assume you are referring to programs other than parks and rec? I'm not trying to dodge this question. I just want to refer you to other QNA's I've filled out as well as presentations I made. I could spend a day talking about that question, because smaller government and individual liberty is a key focus in my campaign.

7. The Tennessee 2020: Vision for Parks, People and Landscapes, state recreation plan, identified the need of children to interact with nature as a necessary part of their healthy development. In addition, the Every Child Outdoors (ECO) Coalition was formed in 2008 to address these issues. How would you support and promote the benefits and resources to increase children's outdoor experiences?

I am not familiar with ECO. I went to their web site before answering this question. If this is a charitable organization rather than a government organization, I would be more prone to say this is a

good endeavor. Depending on what I learn over time, I might be persuaded to add a voice to support the project in advertising.

Hopefully, you can see a pattern. I'm opposed to government doing some of the very things I don't mind charity doing. The primary reason is, government has the force of law to collect by taxes, to force people to participate in programs in which they have no interest. Government should be as small as possible, in order to leave more resources available for people to contribute to the causes they are passionate about. Very few people are passionate about taxes.

The one thing along these lines I have proposed involves education. I want local sovereignty in education. If a community is largely a farming community, I could see them having farming classes, because it fits well with the personality and industry of the community. If a community chose that rather than some of the 'outcome-based' courses, I would defend the choice of the community. The key difference here is, I'm still leaving members of a community free to choose this path or find another that suits them better.

8. The obesity epidemic has an increasing negative economic impact of \$2.7 billion in Tennessee, a significant one that can result from failure to adequately fund Tennessee's parks and recreation infrastructure. Tennessee has the nation's 4th highest rate of adult obesity, 30.2%, and the incidence of obesity has risen steadily for the last ten years. What role do you see both state and local parks and recreation governments take part in the battle against obesity?

I am getting more concerned about the government's increasing interest in trying to legislate health than statistics about health. The reason is, legislation effects me. Someone else's health doesn't so long as the government doesn't try to take my money to pay for someone else's health, which it does. I also object to that. The truth is, if someone wants to exercise bad enough, he'll find a way and a place to do it.

This question is almost moot in the country side, where there's plentiful space in farm land and large yards for people to exercise out doors. Furthermore, yard work and gardening is good exercise. Thus, limited space is more of a problem in the city. Exercise isn't effective unless it one exercises almost daily. City dwellers won't drive to a state park on a daily basis. Furthermore, churches and other organizations often organize sports leagues and other activities. There doesn't have to be a government solution to every problem.

I also want to be clear, I'm not trying to suggest we should do away with parks and rec. I am just very concerned about the suggestion, government should do something about obesity in an era when over 15% of our pay check already goes to government mandated retirement and medical care, government taxes goods it deems undesirable at a higher rate than other goods, and is now trying to mandate we purchase health insurance. This is not the Constitutional role of government.

Let me know if this finds you well. It was a difficult questionnaire to fill out. The voters want taxes cut, and the reality of it is, every government program employs someone. Cutting government means cutting jobs. I like the out doors and parks, so that made this a doubly difficult questionnaire to fill out. That said, I hope you recognize I'm an honest speaker. No answers I gave were with malice. □□□□ Samuel David Duck □□