

Flathead County Weed/Parks/Recreation

MINUTES

Board of Directors

Meeting Date: September 9, 2013

Members of the Board in attendance:

Elise Robocker, Ray Sanders, Pete Woll

Members of the Board not in attendance:

Jim Buechle, Clyde Fisher

Also in attendance:

Jed Fisher, Superintendent; Gordon Jewett, Assistant Superintendent; and Haily Hoff, Clerk

Others Present:

Edd Blackler – Bigfork Advisory
Alan Ruby – Middle Forks/Gateway to Glacier
Cliff Kipp – Foy's To Blacktail Trails
Stephen Harrop – Northland Hobbies
Richard Reed – RC
Edward Carbonari – RC
Jack Brechbill – RC
Dave Barnes – Bigfork RC Club

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors, Flathead County Weed, Parks & Recreation, was held in the conference room at 311 FFA Drive, Kalispell, Montana, on September 9, 2013. The meeting convened at 8:31AM, Chairman Sanders presiding.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the August 5, 2013 meeting of the Flathead County Weed, Parks & Recreation Board of Directors were distributed to the members of the Board.

Elise Robocker made a motion to approve the August, 2013 board minutes.

Pete Woll seconded the motion.

There being no discussion and all in favor ~ the motion was carried.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Remote Control Aircraft

Dana Klempel did not attend the meeting. Superintendent Fisher gave a brief overview of the complaints and concerns Mr. Klempel has offered regarding remote control aircraft activity at Carlyle Johnson Park. The RC Club that is using Carlyle Johnson is currently insured through the Academy of Model Aeronautics. It was made clear that any organized events must undergo the permit application and approval process. Happy Valley Park in Whitefish has been offered as an alternative site. Gordon Jewett stated that Mr. Klempel had complained to him about early morning noise, multiple flights per day and the safety of children and other park users. Mr. Jewett spoke with Mr. Klempel again on August 29th reminding him that this topic was on the agenda and invited him to the meeting.

Edward Carbonari indicated that he usually flies over his lunch break at 10:00 a.m. or 12:00 p.m. but he knows of some pilots that have used the park as early as 6:30 a.m. and as late 5:30 p.m. He informed the board that modern remote control helicopters are now electric and the blades are the noisiest component of the flight. He displayed his personal remote control helicopter to the board. It is the largest model available and weighs approximately 12 pounds. Mr. Carbonari mentioned that he has been flying in the park for years and has never received any negative feedback. People generally seem interested in watching and have approached him with questions. August 7th was the first time Edward had a negative response to the flight activity from Dana Klempel.

Rick Reed stated that a controlled access is imperative to fly and flight will not take place if there is a possibility of disrupting other park users. The larger remote control helicopters can travel 60-80 miles per hour and cost up to \$3,000.00. Repair parts, maintenance are very expensive. Technical improvements have significantly improved the stability and complexity of remote controlled aircraft. Pilots will not fly this type of aircraft without ideal conditions or considerable experience. They never fly over people and have left the park in the past to insure the well being of off leash dogs. Mr. Reed distributed copies of their insurance summary information and Aircraft Safety Code from Academy of Model Aeronautics. The Academy of Model Aeronautics is regulated by the FAA and all pilots must have visual control of their aircraft.

Mr. Carbonari stated that a lot of people fly in Carlyle Johnson Park. He uses it because it is conveniently located near his work and large enough for his flight lines. He will typically park and fly in the infields of the baseball fields and the central area of the soccer field.

Elise Robocker stated that she doesn't see a problem with this type of activity. Pete Woll pointed out the first to items listed on their safety code alleviated his concerns. Ed Blackler commented that we can't please everyone and communication is helpful when it comes to individual use. Gordon Jewett suggested sharing a copy of the park use calendar. Superintendent Fisher mentioned that donations for individual use are helpful to maintain these parks and reiterated that permits and reservations are required for group events.

Edward Carbonari informed the board that their activities are all about camaraderie, recreation, fun and sharing tips and information with one another. Gordon Jewett asked that a fair distance be kept from Mr. Klempel's residence. Mr. Carbonari indicated that he has reined in his flight lines since their conversation in August.

Pete Woll made a motion to send a letter to the Bigfork RC Club and copy the Flathead County Commissioners granting individual use of remote controlled aircraft in Carlyle Johnson Park.

Elise Robocker seconded the motion.

There being no discussion and all in favor ~ the motion was carried.

Wolf Creek Weed Concern

Superintendent Fisher reported that the Weed District's compliance staff made an assessment on the area and determined that the majority of the property belongs to one out of state landowner. He has been contacted and is willing to work together with the neighboring property owners to remedy the problem. Mr. Jewett stated that it would not be worth the time and effort to apply for a grant when these folks are willing and able to manage this problem on their own. The roadside in this area has been treated twice this year.

Bigfork Advisory Report

Ed Blackler expressed interest in Flathead County turning over the Pacific Power & Light lease for Sliter Park to the community of Bigfork. Mr. Blackler will speak with PP&L to determine the possibility of leasing to the Community For a Better Bigfork or another group. The people of Bigfork are in favor of controlling Sliter Park and would hate to see it become unavailable.

The property owner near the public access to Flathead Lake off Holt Drive has been getting aggressive with people using the easement. Dave Prunty of the Flathead County Road Department has asked this landowner to remove the signs that have been erected. The Flathead County Road Department is working with the Bigfork community to improve the access to this easement.

Foys/Herron Advisory Report

Cliff Kipp reported that the recent 24 hour bike race held at Herron Park was great. The same group will likely hold a similar event in the future. The event went smoothly and there was no impact to the park. Elise Robocker stated that some of the trails seemed smoother after the event due to the bicycle traffic. Gordon Jewett mentioned that Tia did a great job organizing the event and he received no complaints.

Gordon Jewett informed the board that Jim Watson came in to the office recently with news of a logging project taking place on the Chase property. Community viewing is encouraged. An easement through the park is needed to remove logs. Foy's to Blacktail Trails will be sending a letter requesting permission to the Flathead County Parks Department.

Foys to Blacktail Trails

Mr. Kipp will get the necessary information from the recent signage project to the office for the Recreational Trails Grant reimbursement. The kiosk design will be altered and a sod roof is a possibility.

The community forest project has expended all of their available funding to purchase the additional acreage in Herron Park. This includes Phase II, Phase III, Phase IV and Phase V. They will share the drafts as they are finalized. National Public Lands Day is September 28th. Volunteers will be available for projects. Mr. Kipp also reported that the fence has been taken down but still needs to be removed.

Kila Advisory Report

There was no one present from the Kila Advisory Committee. Ray Sanders mentioned that active mowing is taking place in the area.

Lakeside Advisory Report

There was no one present from the Lakeside Advisory Committee.

Middle Forks Advisory Committee

Alan Ruby reported the Gateway to Glacier Trail is progressing nicely. Leadership Flathead is sponsoring a seven mile and thirty mile trail ride on Saturday, September 21st. This will be the last fundraiser of the 2013 season and possibly the last fundraiser needed to complete the project. A similar project is underway from Missoula to Lolo for approximately \$4,000,000.00.

Superintendent Fisher reminded everyone that the trail is named "Gateway to Glacier Trail". There is a plan for a memorial gazebo along the Glacier to Gateway Trail with mention of Jim Dupont and local 4-H groups. An individual has been calling multiple county offices complaining about attaching Mr. Dupont's name to anything. She has made it clear that she does not care for him and has threatened to expose sensitive information about him if a memorial is established in his honor.

Mr. Ruby stated that it has been so nice working on this project. Everyone involved seems to agree on the major points and focus on the positive aspects of the job. Extending the trail from Highway 206 to Flathead Lake is a possibility for the future.

Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

Adjourn

Pete Woll made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:19 AM.

Elise Robocker seconded the motion.

There being no discussion and all in favor ~ the motion was carried.

The time and place of the next regular meeting is Monday, October 7, 2013 at 8:30 AM in the conference room at 311 FFA Drive, Kalispell, Montana.

Documents Submitted to the Board:

Academy of Model Aeronautics 2013 Insurance Summary

Academy of Model Aeronautics 2013 Park Pilot Membership Insurance Summary

Academy of Model Aeronautics National Model Aircraft Safety Code