

Flathead County Weed/Parks/Recreation

MINUTES

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Meeting Date: October 5, 2015

Members of the Board in attendance:

Clyde Fisher, Elise Robocker, Ray Sanders, Pete Woll

Members of the Board not in attendance:

Jim Buechle

Also in attendance:

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

Others Present:

Walter Kuhn, Irv Heitz, Heather Sullivan, Edd Blackler, Linda Tutvedt, Richard Upton, Randy Sundberg, Grete Miller

Call to Order

A meeting of the Board of Directors for Flathead County Weed, Parks & Recreation was held in the conference room at 311 FFA Drive, Kalispell, Montana on October 5, 2015. The meeting convened at 8:30 AM, Chairman Sanders presiding.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the September 14, 2015 meeting of the Flathead County Weed, Parks & Recreation Board of Directors were distributed to the members of the Board.

Clyde Fisher moved to approve the September 14, 2015 Board minutes.

Pete Woll seconded the motion.

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

Public Comment

Irv Heitz and Heather Sullivan introduced themselves as part of the North Fork community. Mr. Heitz stated his concerns about a potential lease of the Polebridge park land and requested more information. Superintendent Fisher explained that no lease proposal is currently in place and Will Hammerquist has since recanted his interest in this endeavor. Mr. Hammerquist stopped into the Parks office in June to inquire about the possibility of leasing the parkland in Polebridge. Lease agreements have been executed historically at Herron Park and Wapiti Acres for grazing livestock. In an effort to be proactive, the seasonal office staff pulled an expired lease agreement from the Herron Park file and sent it to the County Attorney's office to review should we need to draft a similar agreement for the Polebridge parkland. No agreement was needed because of Mr. Hammerquist's decision to withdraw. Mr. Fisher mentioned that there were notes in the Polebridge park file recommending to surplus this land. It is the intent of the Flathead County Parks Department to improve parkland for public use. Sale of any County park must be vetted publically. An appraisal and survey must take place within six months of a public auction on the front steps of the courthouse. The bidding can begin at 90% of the appraised value. An inventory of the County parkland would be the first step in making recommendations to the board on the possibility of surplus. Recommendations would then go to the Flathead County Commission for their approval. It is a lengthy public process. Superintendent Fisher expressed his gratitude for the North Fork community's interest in having the discussion.

Randy Sundberg was in attendance regarding a possible proposed sale of parkland in Many Lakes. Superintendent Fisher briefed the board on a \$41K offer on a 3 acre lot in Many Lakes that came in from Ted Dykstra's office. This offer did not follow the appropriate process and will not be accepted. Mr. Sundberg likes the idea of surveying undevelopable parks. Abandoned parkland should be improved or returned to the tax rolls for other income. Jed mentioned that there is no money in this year's budget for surveying and appraisals. It is very expensive and will have to be budgeted for in July if the board would like to see that action.

Bigfork Advisory Report

Walter Kuhn stated that there is no new information on the public dock. There have been complaints of all the knapweed along the bay and they would like to see it treated. George Darrow has passed away and the Bigfork Center for Performing Arts bought a memorial tree that they would like to place in Sliter Park. Superintendent Fisher said that a memorial policy needs to be implemented. Anything to benefit the public will likely be accepted. Walter mentioned that this particular tree is out of the ground and must be planted within the next couple of weeks in order to survive. He will reach out to Pacific Power & Light. Mr. Fisher instructed that a draft of the policy be emailed to the board for approval.

Edd Blackler reported that the user groups at Carlyle Johnson would like to leave their 6" field markers in place to aid in paint marking. Mr. Blackler also updated the board on a preliminary proposal from Mike Close with Bigfork Baseball. This group would like to co-manage Carlyle Johnson, Potoczny and Aero Lane Parks. The proposal recommended that Flathead County staff continue mowing, watering and repairing fences and other permanent amenities. The volunteers would carry their own insurance and utilize hand tools to maintain the infields. It was requested that Flathead County Parks & Recreation purchase nine breakaway bases per year until all of the old bases have been replaced. This group would also like to see the storage shed replaced at Potoczny. They have requested another direct meeting. Mr. Fisher instructed Gordon Jewett to set up meeting with them for further discussion.

Mr. Blackler relayed from the Lake Hills community that they would like to see a more adequate parking area in their neighborhood park. Superintended Fisher stated that there is no money in this year's operating budget to acquiesce this request and the Road & Bridge Department is in the same situation. He mentioned that the board could move to add this as a capital improvement project in the future. Chairman Sanders, Mr. Woll and Mrs. Robocker all agreed that it would be difficult to make that area a priority at this time.

Foys to Blacktail Trails Report

Grete Miller reported that Montana Conservation Corps crews spent two weeks working on the boundary trail. An additional 1.2 miles of new trail is now connected to the rest of the system. A new version of the map is under revision and will be available to the public for purchase. Public Lands Day was a success and they were able to overhaul the tool shed and make trail improvements. FTBT is hopeful that they and Flathead County will be able to utilize volunteers in 2016 without the need for the Montana Conservation Corps. Mr. Fisher inquired about the status of the Plum Creek and Stolze Lumber easement. Mrs. Miller stated that they are reaching out to five private landowners on this and are in good graces with Plum Creek but nothing has been signed yet.

Mrs. Miller mentioned that a rider was thrown recently and the medics were unable to access the park. The development of a safety plan was discussed. Gordon Jewett stated that there are multiple locks on the gates at Herron and instead of chaining them, some users end up locking them all out. Dispatch can always reach Mr. Jewett for emergencies but EMS personnel should have map copies in their service vehicles.

Foys to Blacktail Trails group is currently drafting language and design for an interpretive sign. Mr. Fisher and Mr. Jewett will assess a weed management strategy for the area. Mrs. Robocker suggested posting pictures of the most common weeds at the trail head so users can identify them.

Foys/Herron Advisory Report

Linda Tutvedt commented that park looks wonderful. The stadium jumps will be removed for the season on Monday, October 12th.

Kila/Smith Lake Advisory Report

There was no one present from Kila/Smith Lake Advisory Committee.

Lakeside Advisory Report

There was no one present from Lakeside Advisory Committee. Superintendent Fisher reported that the Dragonboat event went generally well with the exception of the influx of dogs in Volunteer Park. The group was maxed out for participation and they would like to use the same area in 2016. It was reported that the business owners in the area weren't utilized to their expectations. There are six dead trees in Volunteer Park and Bruce Ennis has agreed to handle their removal and replacement of sod. Mr. Jewett reported that the pine and fir beetles are decimating the tree population in Lakeside. A forester has been through to assess the damage. All of the damage is from bugs and there is no root rot. Pheromone strips have been applied to the healthy trees to avoid further loss. Approximately one hundred dead trees will need to be removed in Ben Williams Park.

Middle Forks Parks Advisory Report

There was no one present from Middle Forks Advisory Committee.

Gateway to Glacier Trails

There was no one present from Gateway to Glacier Trails. Superintendent Fisher stated that construction will begin in the spring of 2016 if possible.

County Gymnasium Report

Kim Thomas sent a press release regarding the upcoming committee meeting at the Earl Bennett Building. Glacier Bank has expressed their interest in becoming a corporate sponsor. Justin Sliter has been recommended to develop a business plan. The Kalispell City Council remains supportive. Several locations are still a possibility but the Flathead County Fairgrounds and the WalMart building appear unlikely.

Weed Department Report

Michele Haarr and Caitlyn Overland have updated the Flathead County Weed Management Plan

Elise Robocker moved to forward the amended management plan as read

Pete Woll seconded the motion.

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

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjourn

Clyde Fisher moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 AM.

Pete Woll 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, November 2, 2015 at 8:30AM in the conference room at 311 FFA Drive, Kalispell, Montana.

Documents Submitted to the Board:

Sliter Park Agreement

Flathead County Weed Management Plan