

Flathead County Weed/Parks/Recreation

MINUTES

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Meeting Date: February 5, 2018

Members of the Board in attendance:

Clyde Fisher, Jim Buechle, Elise Robocker, Mary Ruby, Pete Woll

Members of the Board not in attendance:

All members were present.

Also in attendance:

Jed Fisher, Superintendent; Gordon Jewett, Assistant Superintendent; Michele Haarr, Clerk

Others Present:

Amanda Davey – Flathead County Parks & Recreation

Linda Tutvedt – Foys/Herron Advisory Committee & Flathead Combined Training Association

Orrin Webber – Foys/Herron Advisory Committee

Gabriel Dillon – Foys to Blacktail Trails

Randy Sundberg – Many Lakes HOA

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 February 5, 2018. The meeting convened at 8:33AM, Chairman Fisher presiding.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes for the December 4, 2017 meeting of the Flathead County Weed, Parks & Recreation Board of Directors were distributed to the members of the Board.

Pete Woll moved to approve the December 4, 2017 Board minutes.

Jim Buechle seconded the motion.

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

Public Comment

Linda Tutvedt stated that there are several new members of Flathead Combined Training Association. The Foys/Herron Advisory Committee is working with Foys to Blacktail Trails to have an extended family trail constructed at Herron Park. There was initially a deadline of February 1st to comply with grant specifications, however there will be money available in 2020, will allow time to refine the details of the project. This trail will be multi-use and ADA compliant, with less of a grade and switchbacks than the Boundary Trail. Jed expressed a concern about having specialized trails that are dedicated to a single use, requiring enforcement hours that are not in the budget. Linda believes trail use will be self-enforcing.

Fuel Reduction in Many Lakes Parks – Randy Sundberg

Randy Sundberg requested an update regarding fuel reduction efforts in Many Lakes. He has been in touch with Lincoln Chute, the Fire Service Area Manager for Flathead County, Montana Conservation Corps, and the Flathead County Road Department regarding this effort. The Road Department has a pit that needs thinning and might be used as a staging area for work in Many Lakes. He has scheduled a public meeting of the Flathead Fire Safe Council Committee meeting that will include the Forest Service and DNRC, and requested a

representative from Flathead County Parks & Recreation attend. Discussion will include a grant, emergency response and evacuation. The meeting will take place at Creston School on April 21st 10:30AM – noon.

Jed is very supportive of the effort and hopes to make money from logging operations. Randy said Lincoln has approximately 11K left in his budget from another job. Possible locations to begin would be Swimming Lake Park and Tamarack Park. Randy estimates that Tamarack was last logged sometime in the 1920's – 1940's with some trees over 80 years old. Several are beginning to lean over the road creating an evacuation concern.

This year's budget request will include 5K for appraisal and survey of 3 parks for potential surplus and sale with the goal of reducing the number of unmaintained parks and getting the properties back on the tax roll.

Recreation Department Report

◦ Request for Reinstatement of Dallas Casazza – Recreation Programs

This topic was moved up on the agenda. Dallas Casazza requested to be re-instated to the Flathead County Parks & Recreation programs, specifically basketball and flag football. He had an incident with a referee that cost him 5-7 years out and he wants back in to have fun and to stay in shape. He admitted to tackling the referee and said he knows he was wrong to do it. When queried if he had any other incidents he responded that that on a birthday he got into a “bit of a mishap, but I was being attacked”.

He is a lot older and this behavior should never happen again – he would like one more chance. He is working on control of all situations and is currently on supervised medication for a monthly shot of a drug that “mellows you out” and a “mood stabilizer”. In addition, he was participated at Pathways for a while. Dallas said he has played at The Wave in Whitefish and everything went okay.

Pete Woll moved that the matter be taken under advisement, after policy review and discussion with the County Attorney.

Jim Buechle seconded the motion.

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

The matter will be addressed at the next Board Meeting and Mr. Casazza will receive a response shortly thereafter.

Bigfork Advisory Report

There was no one present from Bigfork Advisory Committee.

Foys-Herron Advisory Report

This report was given under Public Comment. Orrin Webber remarked that the Department needs to “get through to the County Attorney so Volunteers can help out”. The process would include insurance, a letter of understanding and training. Linda Tutvedt encouraged staff to press insurance risk manager Pat McCarthy for a time commitment with as much notice as possible.

Foys to Blacktail Trails Report

Gabe Dillon said that members of the Flathead Area Mountain Bikers are available for volunteer work. They would like to perform more work than the 2 days that are already scheduled. Pat will be here the third week in March and Gordie will coordinate the training schedule with him. Advisory Committees will be notified. Linda Tutvedt requested a meeting to include Pat, County Attorneys, the local insurance representative, and interested Advisory Committee members. Jed will coordinate this.

Tree Removal / Replacement Work

Tree removal at a park in Whitefish has been delayed due to withdrawal of the estimate from the low bidder. The process may need to start over in order to tighten up specifications. The court case involving the trees has

been delayed a few more months and a motion has been made to dismiss the case with the assertion that the trees were dying prior to being girdled.

Whitefish Stage Switchback

◦ Letter of Support for Transportation Alternatives (TA) Grant

The steep and unmaintained switchback that leads from Whitefish Stage Road in Kalispell down to Lawrence Park is in need of maintenance. There are many tree roots breaking up the asphalt and it is not ADA compliant. Jed requested that an engineer be hired to properly assess the maintenance and repair needs. Once a cost estimate has been established a TA grant application can be submitted. The grant requires a 13% match from the County.

Jim Buechle moved to approve hiring an engineer to provide a report for maintenance/improvements on the Whitefish Stage switchback trail to Lawrence Park, located in Kalispell.

Pete Woll seconded the motion.

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

Trails Plan Update

Mary distributed minutes from the January 17th PATHS2/Trails Plan Update meeting. A public meeting will take place at the Fairgrounds on March 21st from 6:00PM – 8:00PM. The meeting will include stations for various user groups and presentation of the County website trail map. Everyone is welcome.

Recreation Department Report

◦ Umpire Pay Increase

The lead umpire who interacts with the Umpire Association indicated that umpires have not had a per game wage increase for at least 5 years. Current pay for umpires at Flathead County is at \$21/game, which is on the low side of the scale compared to other associations. He proposed that the wage be increased by \$2/game, making it \$23. The game rate for referees was recently increased to \$25. Team fees will be increased by \$10/team to offset the cost, which is within budget.

Jim Buechle moved to approve a pay increase for Recreation Department umpires from \$21 per game to \$25 per game, to be consistent with the rate paid to referees.

There was discussion that umpires are typically more stationary as opposed to the referee who is moving along with the players. Also, umpires are frequently the subject of heated commentary from the spectators/parents.

Elise Robocker amended the motion to reduce the increase \$23 per game, with an additional \$5 per game to be considered next year.

Pete Woll seconded the motion, with the request that the rate be reviewed in a year.

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

The Conrad Complex hosted the Blizzard Bowl on January 27, 2018 – the first since 2013. Many products were donated, which kept costs down, with proceeds going toward the rising costs of background checks for volunteer coaches. Ten teams played, with a net profit of \$1,549.91.

Current winter programs:

- Adult Men's Basketball is heading into their winter tournament. Gym space is at max capacity at 18 teams. Signups for spring league are open and filling up.
- Adult Woman's basketball is a few weeks into winter league with 8 teams.
- Wendy's Lil Hoopsters is in full swing, with programs for 1st & 2nd grade boys and girls and 3rd & 4th grade girls. There are 166 boys and girls enrolled in these programs which run at 2 gyms on Saturdays.
- **Request for Reinstatement of Dallas Casazza – Recreation Programs**

This item was moved up on the agenda.

Weed & Parks – Equipment/Man Hour Rates

This item was moved up on the agenda. Jed requested approval of the distributed equipment/man hour rate summary, which includes minimal to moderate increases. There was discussion regarding the sufficiency of the proposed rates and Jed assured the Board the proposed increases are reasonable.

Mary Ruby moved to approve the submitted Equipment/Man Hour Rates for 2018.

Elise Robocker seconded the motion.

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

Weed Department Report

Gordie reported that equipment and vehicle maintenance work is in progress. Kat Pine, the Weed Education/Compliance Officer resigned and Haily Hoff will be out on leave approximately the first of April.

Orrin Webber asked about weed control cooperative efforts between the City of Kalispell and the County, and distributed a 2009 photo of spotted knapweed on 5th Ave West in Kalispell. Not much has changed since then. Jed reported that the City of Columbia Falls has an agreement with the County and has taken an active interest in controlling weeds.

Board Officers – Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Clyde Fisher expressed an interest in stepping down from the position of Board Chair.

Mary Ruby nominated Pete Woll as Board President, effective the next Board Meeting.

Jim Buechle seconded the motion.

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

Jim Buechle nominated Mary Ruby as Vice-President, effective the next Board Meeting.

Pete Woll seconded the motion.

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

Other Business

Jed reported that there is a 5K line item in the budget request for the upcoming fiscal year to cover the cost of surveys and appraisals for three County parks to be considered for surplus. It was agreed to talk to Lincoln Chute regarding a tiered approach to prescriptives for fire prevention efforts.

Jed reported that the potential money donor for the gym space remains very interested in the project. In addition, County Administrator Mike Pence is onboard and has discussed opportunities with Jane Karas, President of Flathead Valley Community College. A gym location at the college would tie in with transportation and Kidsports across the highway.

Matters of the Board

There were no Matters of the Board.

Adjourn

Jim Buechle moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:22AM.

Mary Ruby 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, March 5, 2018** at 8:30 AM in the conference room at 311 FFA Drive, Kalispell, Montana.

Documents Submitted to the Board

PATHS2/Trial Plan Update Minutes January 17, 2018

Weed & Parks Departments Equipment/Man Hour Rate

Schematic of Extended Family Trail and attached email from Linda Tutvedt dated January 17, 2018.