

**Flathead County Weed/Parks/Recreation**  
**MINUTES**  
**Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
**Meeting Date: March 7, 2022**

**Members of the Board in attendance:**

Pete Woll, James Buechle, Bonnie Streeter

**Members of the Board not in attendance:**

Clyde Fisher, Lori Moran, Commissioner Brad Abell

**Also in attendance:**

Chris Maestas, Director; Amanda Davey, Recreation Program Coordinator; Gordon Jewett, Assistant Supervisor; Haily Hoff, Clerk

**Others Present:**

Gabe Dillon, Jennifer Rogge, David Fetveit, Lance Fahrney

**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 March 7, 2022. The meeting convened at 8:30 AM, Vice President Moran presiding.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes for the February 7, 2022, meeting of the Flathead County Weed, Parks & Recreation Board of Directors were distributed to the members of the Board.

**Jim Buechle moved to approve the February 7, 2022 Board minutes.**

**Bonnie Streeter seconded the motion.**

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

**Public Comment**

Gabe Dillon with Foys to Blacktail Trails is following up on the request to do some outreach in Herron Park which has been directed to the Flathead County Attorney's office for review. Mr. Dillon also mentioned a request for a trail maintenance MOU between Foys to Blacktail Trails and the Flathead County Parks Department. The spring weather continues to shift conditions from ice to mud. Last year signage and a small barricade was posted closing the notch trail but users pushed them aside multiple times. Mr. Dillon suggested that it might be worthwhile to post signage again this year. Discussion followed regarding off leash dogs at Herron Park. Enforcement will be increased.

**Volunteer Park Community Events**

Chris Maestas stated that the Flathead County Attorney is firmly against allowing vendors on county parkland. As a Department Head, Mr. Maestas relies heavily on the legal opinions of the Risk Management Team as well as input from the County Attorney's Office. Using park property for non-park, commercial purposes could run Parks into trouble with 7-16-2323, MCA, which requires land leased for non-park purposes to be first unusable as park property. If there is a commercial entity, they are using park space, thereby removing it from public use. This statute certainly prevents utilizing any space for commercial activities (like booths or buildings) and likely prevents the existence of non-park endeavors on Park property in general (such as launching boats, etc).

Further, allowing one group to pursue a private commercial interest on Park property would likely be problematic. Certainly, many private businesses would love to set up operations or utilize any given county beach in the summer.

Jim Buechle suggested that we reach out to the City of Kalispell to better understand their bidding process relative to event vendors. David Fetveit stated that this would be tied to a specific event and is a community event with a committee in place that would be responsible for vetting selected vendors. Placing vendors offsite is possible but could potentially cause a safety concern for people crossing the highway. Pete Woll asked Chris to contact Bruce Ennis and Maggie Davis regarding their initial vision for Volunteer Park. It was suggested that vendors set a suggested donation to their wares to redefine the sale if that would change the perspective from the County Attorney.

Jennifer Rogge read aloud the following:

**Lakeside is a pass-through town, Flathead folks may stop there briefly on their way to Missoula or to ski Blacktail, but none stay for long except the residents. We are challenged with minimal to no community gathering spaces with Hwy 93 running right through our town center. We long for opportunities to connect as a community, especially after the past two years. There are only a small handful of events that happen in Lakeside each year, and our summers are generally overrun by tourists. We have had a music event in the past on a piece of private land behind Sliters, but the landowners pulled the plug and sold the performance stage to snow line. Many of the locals looked forward to each of those music events. It was an opportunity to see old friends and new friends and just enjoy life together under the trees for an evening. That is all we are looking for and all we are asking, an opportunity to experience a sense of togetherness and community.**

### **Parks & Recreation Department Report**

Maintenance work continues on vehicles and equipment. Snow was plowed as necessary as well as cross-country ski trail grooming. A meeting was held with Nathan Mayer about the upcoming season for Bigfork Youth Baseball. Irrigation work is scheduled to take place at Volunteer Park to correct drainage issues. Three seasonal workers returned today. Youth basketball has concluded and adult basketball is ongoing. Youth volleyball and youth t-ball registrations are underway for the spring season. Minor construction upgrades are taking place at the Conrad Complex facility for ADA compliance. Two seasonal positions will be posted this month. Last year, we had help through a temporary service agency to help with weekend bathroom and garbage detail in busy lake access parks.

### **Weed Department Report**

Vehicle and equipment maintenance work continues as scheduled. Gordie is working on locking in pricing for herbicide purchasing. Substantial increases in 2,4-D products are expected. A three-month seasonal position will be posted this month.

### **Other Business**

There was no other business.

### **Matters of the Board**

Jim Buechle voiced his concerns about the requirements in place for Flathead County to utilize volunteers. It seems that agencies on State and Federal levels operate with more relaxed rules. Chris Maestas stated that the County's Human Resource Department, Attorney's Office and Risk Management Team are working on solutions to ease the current process. The County Attorney's office is currently backlogged due to staffing shortages.

- Bylaws

The Flathead County Commissioners have changed some language in the resolution that runs the Flathead County Weed/Parks Board. Bylaws were updated to be congruent with the updated resolution and to add a sixth non-voting member from the Flathead County Commission to the Weed/Parks Board. Copies of the bylaws were distributed to the Board last month. Discussion followed regarding potential positive and negative effects of adding a non-voting member to the Weed/Parks Board. Jim Buechle feels that it is unnecessary with as functional as this board is and has been over the years but acknowledged that it is a countywide trend. It was agreed that any further discussion should be tabled until next month's meeting to allow the absent members an opportunity to speak.

- Election of Board Officers

**Jim Buechle moved to keep the current slate of officers. Pete Woll, President and Lori Moran, Vice President.**

**Bonnie Streeter seconded the motion.**

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

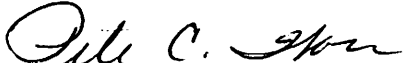
**Adjourn**

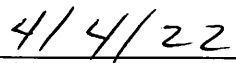
**Jim Buechle moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:31 AM.**

**Bonnie Streeter seconded the motion.**

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

Approved:

  
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Pete Woll, Board President

  
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Date