

**Flathead County Weed/Parks/Recreation
MINUTES
Meeting of the Board of Directors
Meeting Date: May 2, 2022**

Members of the Board in attendance:

Pete Woll, Lori Moran, Clyde Fisher, James Buechle, Bonnie Streeter, Commissioner Brad Abell

Members of the Board not in attendance:

All Board members were in attendance.

Also in attendance:

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

Others Present:

Gabe Dillon, Linda Tutvedt

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 May 2, 2022. The meeting convened at 8:31 AM, President Woll presiding.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes for the April 4, 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 April 4, 2022 Board minutes with the correction that he was absent, not present.

Lori Moran seconded the motion.

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

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Parks & Recreation Department Report

Director Maestas reported that we are prepping for busy season and two seasonal employees have returned today. Three other seasonal positions remain vacant. One offer was made for the General Parks & Recreation Worker position but that individual declined for a higher paying offer. Staff has spent the previous month opening parkland. Express Employment may have identified a candidate for help with the Somers and Lakeside park service on Friday – Monday during the summer months. Volunteer Park drains are nearly finished and waiting for sod replacement. The gazebo at Ben Williams is almost completely rebuilt. A group in Kila/Smith Valley may be donating \$9,500 for a pavilion at Kila Park. Jim Buechle inquired about fire mitigation in Many Lakes Parks. Brief discussion followed regarding existing surplus issues. Mr. Buechle stated that he would like to overcome those hurdles and opined that those properties are not assets but liabilities.

Bonnie Streeter stated that she has two passions relative to service on this Board, leashed dogs (where requested) and volunteers. Bonnie would like to focus on each of those issues and asked about the status of a potential volunteer agreement. Chris Maestas spoke with the risk management committee (a

blended group of individuals from insurance, human resources, MaCo and County Attorneys) regarding volunteer agreements. They are reluctant to enter into formal agreements but there is a waiver to allow volunteer work less workman's compensation. Work is limited to hand tools and does not allow volunteers to operate mechanized equipment. Licensed and insured professionals are able to provide services if the Flathead County Parks staff is unable to perform the work. Gabe Dillon stated that the Foys to Blacktail Trails group uses Forest Service standards when clearing trail in the forest but in the the Bob Marshall Wilderness they have to use certified services for crosscuts. Gabe interprets Foys to Blacktail Trails as more of a contractor for Flathead County and their volunteers are covered under their insurance. Gordon Jewett patrolled Herron Park last Friday and 9 out 10 dogs were on leash. The one dog owner off leash was difficult to deal with. Brad Abell added that is why volunteers should not engage or attempt to enforce park rules. Bonnie Streeter would like to see more done and is concerned about law suits. Gabe mentioned that the Whitefish Legacy Partnership has launched an "Outside Kind" campaign for kindness awareness of all trail users and most local trail organizations have already adopted their messaging. Horse traffic and land status were also assessed this month at Herron Park. The south end is boggy but the culvert is working and the area was opened to horses on April 29th. Natural trails have been developed to the new crossing.

Basketball seasons are finishing up and t-ball is ongoing. Adult softball and volleyball will begin soon. Jim Buechle has been confronted regarding the field conditions at the Conrad Complex. The steep lips have been cut and leveled off of two of the inside four fields. Netting has been installed to address sunlight and visibility problems. Overhead lighting will be improved also. New teams continue to register. Brad Abell awarded Amanda Davey with a 5-year award certificate. Chris Maestas added that staffing the Recreation Department has been difficult and Amanda is amazing at what she does and continues to take on more than expected.

Weed Department Report

The chemical storage building upgrades have been completed and herbicide has been delivered. One seasonal employee was brought on early to help with completing the chemical storage upgrade. All of that work was done in house which saved a lot of money. Trucks are ready to roll and we are still waiting on CIP equipment replacements. Some capital projects may need to be delayed into next fiscal year if inventory shortages persist. All sprayers are calibrated and tractors are in good shape. Spraying operations begin today and mowing will begin the first week of June. Weed Compliance and Enforcement Officer, Noel Jinings, is back full time.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Matters of the Board

There were no matters of the Board.

Adjourn

Bonnie Streeter moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 AM.

Jim Buechle seconded the motion.

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

Approved:



Pete Woll, Board President

6/6/22

Date