

Flathead County Weed/Parks/Recreation
MINUTES
Board of Directors
Meeting Date: October 3, 2011

Members of the Board in attendance:

Jim Watson, Elise Robocker, Jim Buechle, Clyde Fisher, Ray Sanders

Members of the Board not in attendance:

No board members were absent.

Also in attendance:

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

Others Present:

Evan Carter – Flathead County Weed Department

Skip Gilmore – Bigfork Advisory Committee

Cliff Kipp – Foys to Blacktail Trails

John Ulrich – Lakeside Parks Advisory Committee

Andy Young – Bigfork Advisory Committee

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 October 3, 2011. The meeting convened at 8:33 AM, Chairman Sanders presiding.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the September 19, 2011 meetings of the Flathead County Weed, Parks & Recreation Board of Directors were distributed to the members of the Board. Jim Watson reviewed corrections under CTEP Administrative Policies, GPS Mapping Update, Foys to Blacktail Trails, and Park Fees for Non-Profit Users.

Jim Buechle made a motion to approve the September 19, 2011 minutes with revisions as indicated by Jim Watson.

Elise Robocker seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion ~ and all in favor, the minutes were approved.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

GPS Mapping Update

Evan Carter of the Flathead County Weed District reported that there are a few minor changes to the spray report that need to be completed; however, overall the weed spray reports and mapping are working well. Superintendent Fisher noted that the recent modifications were accomplished without additional cost. The Weed Department's mapping results may be viewed by the public on the County's GIS website.

Assistant Superintendent Gordon Jewett gave accolades to Even Carter for spearheading this project and resolving the concerns. Elise Robocker commented that it will be good for County residents to go online to see what the County has accomplished.

Permit for Foys Lake Access Improvements

Superintendent Jed Fisher continued discussion from the last Board meeting regarding the site plans for Foys Lake access improvements. Alison at Planning and Zoning has not had the time to address the subject, but will begin work on a site plan for both Foys and Kila during the next two weeks.

Jim Watson commented that the State Parks Department has been working on their access over the last several weeks, including consolidation of ownership and ground hardening.

Assistant Superintendent Gordon Jewett reported that the State has posted requirements regarding no glass containers and suggested the County consider following suit.

Update on Church Slough & Discussion of Court Ruling

Superintendent Fisher shared information regarding a recent meeting he attended between MACo State Attorney Greg Bonilla, County attorneys, and members of the County Commission. Mr. Bonilla recommended a different course of action than Flathead County wishes to pursue. All indications are that the County will release MACo from representation and locate another attorney to continue to fight the lawsuit with what they believe is a very strong position. There is a huge concern about precedents and other public access. Fisher commented that the Daily Interlake newspaper did a good job on an editorial that ran on the Sunday, October 2, 2011.

Daily spot checks at Church Slough continue to indicate 1 – 3 users, usually 2 at any given time. Ray Sanders reported that he has also done spot checks and there are usually 1 or 2 vehicles, maximum. Fisher reported that he reviewed Carver's sales flyers, noting that they do not promote public access as an amenity.

Bigfork Advisory Report

Skip Gilmore reported that the Carlyle Johnson soccer program is going well, with no inherent concerns. School buses are using the Martel Construction parking lot and the main road has been clear. There have been no complaints. Mr. Gilmore stated that the Committee will meet later this month.

Foys/Herron Advisory Report

Andy Young reported that there was not much to report. Activity at both Herron Park and Foys Lake Access went smoothly over the summer and has continued into September due to favorable weather.

Mr. Young thanked Superintendent Fisher for following up on the site plan for Foys Lake access improvements and Fisher commented that these improvements are approved cash-in-lieu expenses, which will be accomplished next spring.

Elise Robocker questioned the flooding of Birch Creek, which causes boggy areas. Jim Watson commented that a larger culvert and fill gravel might resolve the situation. Assistant Superintendent Gordon Jewett will check to be sure the culvert is clear of debris.

Mr. Fisher requested that Young relay to Pat Young of Flathead Combined Training Association concerns regarding permits. There was recent activity including camping and stalls that did not have the required

documentation or approval. Permits and agreements need to be submitted for all events and include complete information.

Foys to Blacktail Trails Report

Cliff Kipp reported the following, relative to Herron Park:

- 1) RTP Reimbursement – Does the Weed Department have all information needed to submit to the Recreational Trails Program for a reimbursement? Superintendent Jed Fisher responded that he has not heard of any concern and that the process takes a while.
- 2) Weed Mapping – Knapweed has been mapped along the trails with GPS coordinates and pin flags on the ground. This is the beginning of an ongoing effort as there are a lot more weeds to be mapped, including Houndstongue and others.
- 3) Trail Map Update & Reprint – The very popular trail maps have been flying out of the displays and will be updated with a few new trails and the 60-acre addition due to occur this month. They will be reviewed with this Board prior to publication next spring.
- 4) Land Purchase, 60 Acres – The green light is on for a land purchase of 60 acres to add to Herron Park.
- 5) Volunteer Work at Herron – The accumulated volunteer hours at Herron Park will be totaled and shared with the Board. There is a cycling event at the park on October 16th.
- 6) Theft – There have been a lot of break-ins. FTBT can help out with signing in their kiosk.
- 7) Dog Feces – Dog feces have been left in bags throughout the park. The suggestion is to put a few 50-gallon barrels at strategic locations. FTBT can help out with the clean up and emptying trash.
- 8) Water Source At Parking Lot – This has been previously suggested and would be appreciated by park users.
- 9) Trail Counters – New trail counters are being installed.
- 10) Winter Trail Grooming – Grooming of ski trails will occur again this year. Jim Watson suggested contacting Plum Creek now so that a permit to enter their land is in place when the snow falls.
- 11) Dog Infractions – Kipp requested a tally of dog infractions, either on a season-to-season or month-to-month basis. Assistant Superintendent Gordon Jewett commented that incidents of dogs off-leash have dramatically reduced in large part due to enforcement visibility.

Kipp thanked the Board for a great partnership.

Lakeside Advisory Report

John Ulrich reported that Lakeside has been hit by a number of thefts with the main item being GPS units. Resurfacing is complete at the Ben Williams tennis courts and looks fabulous. Jim Watson questioned the amount of use. Mr. Ulrich did not have statistics but indicated that it is frequently used by the public, schools, and the United States Tennis Association's Quick Start program.

Assistant Superintendent Gordon Jewett reported that there is a drainage concern at Volunteer Park. Upon investigation, it was determined that this occurs after heavy rainfall when the water is carried on the top of the ground due to the thick clay soil underneath.

Superintendent Fisher reported that there was a recent letter to the editor criticizing the County for its lack of proper maintenance at Volunteer Park. A few non-functioning sprinklers have been adjusted and the 3rd application of fertilizer has been completed. Warranty issues with lights have been resolved. In addition, during the course of construction, some older mature trees were disturbed and are now dead or dying. One tree has been replaced. Fisher commented that the concerns were not reported to the Department, and further stated that ongoing maintenance occurs at all parks.

Jim Watson questioned the use at Somers Beach access with the paving and curbing. Some bottleneaking occurred; however, overall it is working as best as can be expected. Stripping is being considered.

Middle Forks Advisory Committee

There was no one present. Assistant Superintendent Gordon Jewett reported that a requested "Rules" sign has been posted. A name sign will be posted soon.

Other Business

Trail at West Reserve Drive, Kalispell – Superintendent Fisher reported that he has been in contact with Harvey Sterner, a representative of a subdivision homeowners' group along West Reserve Drive in Kalispell. Mr. Sterner is spearheading an ongoing effort to build a trail along a 30' strip of land on the north side of Reserve, off Hwy 93. Mr. Fisher reminded the Board that the project had momentum until one homeowner voiced disagreement. Mr. Sterner has since involved an attorney and has continued to work on the project.

DNRC likes the trail plan because it fits in with their overall concept. It is anticipated that the Montana Department of Transportation will build the trail if the Homeowners' Association donates the property. This trail is in the Trails Plan and rated as a very high safety concern.

Aquatic Invaders - Superintendent Fisher stated that he will contact Sarah Holden, a former employee of the Department of Agriculture, to discuss a contract for aquatic weed removal.

CTEP Update – Superintendent Fisher reported that a legal review of the CTEP plan resulted in a few modifications, which will be presented to the Commissioners for approval.

Adjourn

Jim Buechle made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 AM.

Clyde Fisher 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 7th, 2011 at 8:30 AM in the conference room at 311 FFA Drive, Kalispell, Montana.