

Flathead County Weed/Parks/Recreation
MINUTES
Board of Directors
Meeting Date: January 9, 2012

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; and Michele Haarr, Clerk

Others Present:

Danielle Coffman – Foys to Blacktail Trails

Sean Conrad – City of Kalispell

Skip Gilmore – Bigfork Advisory Committee

Sharon Hopkins – Bigfork Advisory Committee

Tom Jentz – City of Kalispell

Tamara Tanberg – Lakeside Advisory Committee

Jennifer Drew – Lakeside 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 January 9, 2012. The meeting convened at 8:32AM, Chairman Sanders presiding.

Chairman Sanders introduced Pete Woll as a returning Board Member.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the December 5, 2011 meetings of the Flathead County Weed, Parks & Recreation Board of Directors were distributed to the members of the Board.

Clyde Fisher made a motion to approve the December 5, 2011 minutes.

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.

City of Kalispell Update on Growth Policy

Tom Jentz presented a map showing the City of Kalispell and land extending 3 miles out from City boundaries. The City is in the process of updating the overall development plan to address the next 20 years. This includes

transportation; water, sewer & storm water; and a parks plan. The current growth policy for 2020 has been in place for 12 – 13 years and is outdated. In addition, the Board was provided with a copy of correspondence from Tom Jentz and a pamphlet entitled “2011 City of Kalispell Growth Policy Update” – see **Attachment A-1 & A-2**.

The purpose of attendance at this meeting was to query the Board regarding issues, problems and/or concerns. They have met with Eagle Transit recently, in addition to rural fire departments; water & sewer departments; school boards; parks committees & city committees. Pete Woll suggested meeting with the Conservation District as well.

- **Annexation That Includes a County Park**

Superintendent Jed Fisher questioned the process and outcome when the City annexes an area that contains a County park. Mr. Jentz replied that the City has doubled its physical size over the last 10 years. People request annexation rather than the City initiating it. City Parks & Recreation Director Mike Baker is willing to take over a park(s) if the County is willing to donate it. When Mr. Fisher asked about the possibility of the County getting reimbursed for capital improvements Jentz indicated that was not an option. Jentz stated that State law bars the City from taking over public lands.

In the past, the City has allowed additional density for developers, who then develop the parks. The City has a Parks Maintenance District which allows creation of a small subdivision assessment to manage and maintain a park if it is not being properly maintained.

- **Noxious Weed Control Coordination**

Fisher indicated that the County is beginning to see noxious weeds within City limits and would like to see a City weed liaison person in order to streamline communication, follow up on complaints, and coordinate control efforts. This will allow the County to deal with concerns expeditiously and save taxpayer money. Jentz replied that noxious weed laws are weak and the City relies more on the fire code which indicates weeds cannot be over 8” after July 1st.

- **County Maintenance Facility on Main Street**

Fisher thanked the City for the cooperative effort on the 50/50 cost share for sidewalks at the Earl Bennett Building and Courthouse West. County staff have approached the City Planning Department recently regarding requirements for building a shop on County property located on Hwy 93 and 12th Street West property. The requirement that any building needs to have an office space/professional look seems excessive, given the existing surrounding area. Jentz responded that it is important to look toward the future and what we ultimately want to see as opposed to what exists. He further indicated that if the building was pushed back toward the alley, with some attractive landscaping treatment it would go a long way in the approval process.

- **County Resident Fees for City Services**

Fisher questioned why County residents pay more for City services than City residents. Jentz cited the City pool as an example where the City paid for the construction and residents throughout the County may use it. This was a split decision on the City Council.

- **Legal Concerns with Parks**

Superintendent Fisher questioned whether the City has experienced any legal concerns with its parks. Jentz indicated that the City usually has revisionary language or deed restrictions. Further, almost always people want parks first, and then trails.

Jentz summarized stating that it is early in the planning process and there is time for further consideration and written comment. In addition, public comment will be solicited. It is anticipated that the process will be complete in one year.

Cash-In-Lieu Discussion

Superintendent Jed Fisher reminded the Board that the Cash-In-Lieu portion of the budget discussion should take place at the next Board meeting. Mr. Fisher referenced a list of requests presented last year and indicated this list will be attached to these minutes – **see Attachment “B”**. All funds budgeted for the 2011/2012 fiscal year will be expended by the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Fisher asked advisory committee representatives to be ready to present requests and costs at the next meeting.

Fisher encouraged creative planning that allows non-profit groups to accomplish a portion of the work effort after which the property could be transferred to the County. This approach will get the most bang for the buck and save the taxpayers a substantial amount of money.

Bigfork Advisory Report

Skip Gilmore reported that a meeting was held last month and there was not much to report. The group will be meeting again next week and have been discussing proposed projects and cost for the upcoming fiscal year.

Sharon Hopkins reported that there is a developing concern over a 30' easement ownership at Eagle Cove. An adjacent landowner is attempting to block public access to an existing easement of record. Ms. Hopkins suggested that the County establish a presence at this location through signing and/or fencing. There was also a suggestion that the County turn the land over to Fish, Wildlife and Parks to be used as a parking area adjacent to a wildlife protection zone located there.

Superintendent Jed Fisher reported that former Senator Bob Keenan will make a 15K donation to the County Commissioners to be used at Sliter Park. The presentation will take place at 9AM on Tuesday, January 10, 2012. There was discussion regarding turning the lease or management of the lease over to a local business group. The location of the park across a bridge and at the end of the road, along with the proximity to the downtown businesses suggest that this would be a viable consideration.

Pete Woll reported that the power company plans to bring in an excavator to remediate contaminated soil immediate adjacent to the park.

Foys/Herron Advisory Report

There was no one present.

Foys to Blacktail Trails Report

Danielle Coffman reported that the group closed on Phase II of land acquisition for Herron Park, adding an additional 60 acres to the property. They are continuing to work on a new map which will better label trails.

Assistant Superintendent Gordon Jewett reported that boundary signs will be posted along the new boundary lines to clearly identify Herron Park and to avoid encroachment on neighboring properties.

Lakeside Advisory Report

Tamara Tanberg asked how much parks and trails overlap. Superintendent Jed Fisher replied that the County Planning & Zoning Department takes the initial lead on trails, however, if the trail is within ½ mile of a school the County maintains it. Mr. Fisher further stated that there is a nominal budget in the amount of 20K to cover all trail maintenance. This falls substantially short of the maintenance needs.

Ms. Tanberg expressed a concern with citizens traveling safely to the parks. Fisher suggested that the money for trails and trail maintenance be solicited from private sources. Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) funds cannot be accepted without guaranteed maintenance.

Middle Forks Advisory Committee

There was no one present.

Other Business

Superintendent Jed Fisher reported that the office staff will attend the annual Montana Weed Control Association's 55th Annual Conference in Great Falls leaving Tuesday January 10 and returning Thursday, January 12, 2012.

Assistant Superintendent Gordon Jewett reported that there were 2 dog versus dog issues and 2 people verses dog issues at Herron Park over the past week. Mr. Jewett endorsed the Board's decision to increase the fine and enforce the regulation.

Adjourn

Clyde Fisher made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:20AM.

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, February 6, 2012 at 8:30 AM in the conference room at 311 FFA Drive, Kalispell, Montana.

A WORK IN PROGRESS

Parks:

1. Kids Sports has been a highly successful community partnership.
2. Current parklands are adequate in the city, deferred maintenance and rehabilitation are issues.
3. Kalispell is losing quality park sites on the urban-rural fringe to other development as the city grows.
4. There continues to be strong interest for increased trail development in and adjacent to the city
5. Linear park and trail development along the Whitefish and Stillwater Rivers and Ashley Creek is extremely important.
6. A performing arts/community center has been a community topic.

Police:

Fire:

Schools:

Airport:

1. The Kalispell airport in its current configuration does not meet Federal airport standards and is not eligible for FAA funding or assistance.

Transportation:

1. The Kalispell transportation system is generally adequate for 9 months of the year but summer brings significant congestion.
2. Transit needs to be incorporated in all transportation planning.
3. A pedestrian connection is needed between Woodland Ave. and 7th Avenue East.
4. There is a strong desire to prohibit a vehicle connection between Woodland Ave. and 7th Avenue East.
5. Pedestrian access (sidewalk/trail systems) are lacking in many parts of the city.

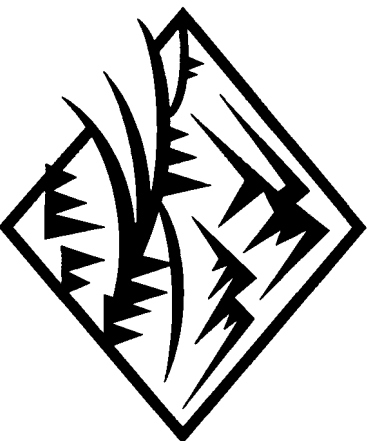
6. There is a need for a comprehensive city-wide sidewalk/trail plan and construction program.
7. One-way traffic on 3rd and 4th Ave. East is eroding the neighborhood and should be turned back to two-way traffic.
8. There is still too much through traffic in the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.
9. 15 of 47 signalized interseects are below level of service C. (11 are on US Highway 2, Idaho-LaSalle)

Major Street Projects:

There are 30 major street projects proposed in the transportation plan for the Kalispell area at a cost of \$108,000,000. (Current funding levels – 180 years to complete). Key projects are as follows:

• Alternate Highway 93 (3½ miles)	North half
• West Reserve Drive (2½ miles)	US 93 to LaSalle
• Whitefish Stage (6 miles)	Oregon north to Birch Grove
• West Evergreen Drive (1½ miles)	Whitefish Stage-Farm to Market
• Rose Crossing (4 miles)	Four corners to LaSalle
• Willow Glen (4 miles)	Woodland Drive to Willow Glen
• Conrad (½ mile)	US 93 west to Stillwater
• Four Mile Drive (1 mile)	Meridian to West Spring Creek
• Three Mile Drive (2 miles)	
• Two Mile Drive (2 miles)	
• Foy's Lake Road (1 mile)	Whalebone to Valley View Drive

Kalispell Planning Department
 201 First Avenue East
 Kalispell, MT 59901
 (406) 758-7940
www.kalispell.com/planning



2011
City of Kalispell
Growth Policy
Update

ISSUES
“A FIRST CUT”

ISSUES LIST
KALISPELL GROWTH POLICY UPDATE
(Developed from existing documents)
5-26-11

Intergovernmental Cooperation:

1. Need to improve cooperation and coordination between the city and county.
 - a. In land use planning
 - b. Coordinating the extension of public facilities (sewer, water, parks, streets)
 - c. Provision of public services
2. Need to improve relationships between Kalispell and the adjacent rural fire departments.

Land Planning Issues

1. Kalispell averaged 4%/year growth from 2000-2010. It is projected to grow at an average rate of 2%/yr from 20,000 in 2010; to 25,000 in 2020; to 30,000 in 2030.
2. There is a lack of consistency in development standards between the city and county at the urban/rural interface.

3. Low density rural development in the lands adjacent to the city has created difficulties for the orderly extension of public infrastructure and the logical growth of Kalispell.
4. Rural lands close to the City of Kalispell are an important part of the city's ability to expand in the future and likewise they are vulnerable to untimely county development that is not supported by urban services.
5. The highway corridor entrances to Kalispell, especially from the east, west and south are lacking in design treatment and in many cases detract from the overall community image.
6. There is a significant number of planned, platted, vacant lots in the city which will provide a significant inventory for future development and likewise impact the timing and viability of new developments in the city.

Neighborhoods:

1. Excessive through traffic in residential neighborhoods undermines pedestrian safety and neighborhood desirability.
2. Kalispell has a significant number of historical residences in the east and west side.

Housing:

1. Kalispell has an historic district which includes significant buildings and homes many of which are in need of protection and preservation.
2. An expanding service related job base and high housing prices have produced a relative shortage of housing for low and moderate income families, both owner occupied and rental.
3. Many newer subdivisions had planned neighborhoods that were targeting affordable housing ownership opportunities but economic conditions and a soft market have delayed or shuttered development.
4. A need for an affordable housing strategy to effectively provide for the needs of low and moderate income residents.
5. A need for a program for rehabilitating and preserving historically significant, deteriorating housing.

Downtown:

1. Lands north of the Kalispell Center mall are ready for re-development
2. Development of a convention center could serve to anchor the downtown and the center mall.
3. There is 250,000 sq. ft. of land in the downtown committed to surface parking that could be re-developed.
4. The railroad tracks continue to sever downtown Kalispell limiting development/re-development options.
5. The traditional downtown Kalispell central business district needs to be redefined.
6. The central business district lacks cohesiveness, identity and a strong cultural center.
7. Effort needs to be placed to create/maintain a prosperous central business district.
8. Many buildings in the downtown are in need of rehabilitation, code upgrades including fire sprinkling and re-use.

Economy:

1. High land costs and a proliferation of urban and expansive rural development are major impediments to the future of farming.
2. The traditional economic base of the Kalispell area (wood products, metal refining, railroad and agriculture) is changing.
3. Kalispell is a second tier retail trade center; a government center and a growing regional medical center.
4. The medical complex that has developed around and including the Kalispell Regional Hospital has become a regional medical center and it needs to be fostered and encouraged.
5. The city has limited developed sites available for industrial expansion.
6. Old School Station provides a technology site.
7. Land south of Lower Valley Road on Highway 93 South and the vacant Knife River (McElroy and Wilkins) gravel pit off of Whitefish Stage could serve as future industrial sites.
8. Recognize that we have 4 major commercial centers in Kalispell
 - Downtown Kalispell
 - Hwy 93 North and Reserve
 - Hwy 93 South to 4 Corners
 - US 2 West (Meridian-Ashley Square)

Sewer and water issues:

1. As development north of Kalispell proceeds there is a need for a major sewer interceptor to be constructed along the alternate highway 93 R/W to relieve pressure on existing lines in the city.

Environmental concerns:

1. Maintaining water quality in the planning area is critical and expensive.
2. Ashley Creek, and the Whitefish, Stillwater and Flathead Rivers are classified as impaired by DEQ.
3. We need to protect our floodplains, wetlands, and shallow aquifers.
4. Development of steep slopes should be limited and managed.

Board Meeting February 7, 2011

Attachment B

Flathead County Parks & Recreation

01-09-12 FCWP&R Board Meeting

Cash-In-Lieu Appropriations Requests Fiscal Year 2011- Staff

Priority	Estimate	Park	Item
1	\$2,000,000	gym	
2	\$1,800	6 including Herron	sign upgrades
3	\$10,000	Adams	dock
4	\$5,000	Beirney Creek	lakeside fence
5	\$2,000	Conrad Complex	well area improvements
6	\$2,000	Martin City	ball fields sewage smell
7	\$15,000	Foy's Lake	steps from bathroom to dock
8	\$2,500	Foy's Center	floors; counters/sinks
9	\$5,000	Max Edgar	road repair
10	\$8,000	Foy's Lake	push ins
11	\$20,000	Hillcrest	field repairs
12	\$5,000	Belton Stage	driveway work with Road Dept
13	\$2,000	Ben Willimas	move playground equipment
14	\$11,000	Bigfork	dock
15	\$1,500	Bigfork	trail improvements
16	\$15,000	Bitterroot Launch	cable mats
Sub-Total	\$2,105,800		
	5,000	Blue Grouse	mats for launch
	1,000	Camelot	gazebo
	3,000	Carlyle Johnson	fencing
		Carlyle Johnson	seal & stripe lot
		Conrad Complex	fence
		Conrad Complex	poles - Roundup for Safety
	5,000	Foy's Lake	beach improvements
	2,500	Foy's Lake	erosion control
		Green Acres	is bare
	4,000	Happy Valley	30 AC fencing, 3K - 5K
	2,000	Herron	light poles
	5,000	Hillcrest	bathrooms
	1,000	Lakeside & Bierney Creek	dock needs bumpers & cleats
	3,000	Hungry Horse Islands	barriers
		Kings Loop	fencing/signs
	\$10,000	Kokanne Bend	fence
	1,500	Leisure	fence off road to Burton's
	2,000	Martin City	bog at ballfield fill needed
		Max Edgar	grade & gravel - good base
		Max Edgar	launch improvements
		Max Edgar	needs are abundant
		Meadow Hills	old playground
	5,000	Mission View	irrigation
	\$20,000	North Haven	playground
		North Hilltop	playground & fall zone
	\$60,000	playgrounds	3-4 swing sets @ 15 - 20 each
	2,000	Potoczny	gates & fence
		Silver Shadows	playground
		Sunrise Terrace	okay
	2,500	Volunteer Park	dock planks & bumper cleats
Sub-	134,500		
TOTAL	2,240,300		
		Round Up For Safety	road access - work with Road Dept must buy material