

**Flathead County Weed/Parks/Recreation**

**MINUTES**

**Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**Meeting Date: April 6, 2015**

**Members of the Board in attendance:**

Clyde Fisher, Ray Sanders, Elise Robocker, Pete Woll

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

Jim Buechle

**Also in attendance:**

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

**Others Present:**

Edd Blackler – Bigfork Advisory

Cindy Ercoline – Kila/Smith Lake Advisory

Cliff Kipp – Foys to Blacktail Trails

Walter Kuhn – Bigfork Advisory

David Link – Kila/Smith Lake Advisory

Mary Ruby – Middlefork Advisory

**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 April 6, 2015. The meeting convened at 8:32AM, Chairman Sanders presiding.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the March 2, 2014 meeting of the Flathead County Weed, Parks & Recreation Board of Directors were distributed to the members of the Board.

**Elise Robocker made a motion to approve the March 2, 2015 Board minutes.**

**Clyde Fisher seconded the motion.**

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

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Bigfork Advisory Report**

Walter Kuhn contacted Jackola Engineering who prepared a revised parking schematic for Carlyle Johnson Park at no charge. The schematic has traffic flow going in one direction and provides an additional 12 spaces for a total of 86 standard spaces and 1 ADA space. Assistant Superintendent Gordon Jewett will review the schematic and get a cost estimate for completion.

Edd Blackler will contact both Bigfork Bandits and Bigfork Baseball to prompt them to complete the permit process for field use. He stated that the request for construction of several parking spaces at Lake Hills is still on the table.

**Clyde Fisher moved to deny use of Carlyle Johnson, Aero Lane and Potoczny Parks for sports programs to user groups who have not completed the appropriate paperwork and submitted the fees.**

**Pete Woll seconded the motion.**

Discussion ensued regarding the concern of denying kids the use of the parks verses the importance of enforcing consistent policies and procedures for park rentals.

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

Assistant Superintendent Jewett stated that work has commenced in preparation for field use.

### **Foys/Herron Advisory Report**

Cliff Kipp was at Herron Park yesterday (Easter Sunday) and the parking lot was full @ 3pm; however, once up on the trails, he saw 6 people over a 2-hour period indicating the trail system disperses people well.

Information regarding trail etiquette will be incorporated into packets for an upcoming bicycle race as well as future events.

### **Foys to Blacktail Trails Report**

Cliff Kipp reported that the conversation regarding an easement through the Plum Creek land adjacent to Herron Park is going well. The goal is to have the framework in place by June. Superintendent Jed Fisher stated that the County is not likely to take on the responsibility of an easement. There is a meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup> at Tom Esch's office to discuss the matter. Fisher will attend and encouraged Board members to attend.

There are several good local candidates who have applied for the May to August intern job, some from the Recreational program at Flathead Valley Community College. Cliff Kipp and Gordon Jewett will meet to discuss job assignments.

### **Kila/Smith Lake Advisory Report**

Cindy Ercoline reported that 10K has been collected toward gazebo construction. Superintendent Jed Fisher said the plan needs to be reviewed by Planning & Zoning in the event there are any water table concerns as well as by our insurance representative Pat McCarthy and his staff. The selected vendor will be paid by the Kila/Smith Lake group and needs to comply with County insurance requirements.

### **Middle Forks Parks Advisory Report**

Mary Ruby reported that fundraising efforts continue and are going well. Upcoming fundraisers include Paddle & Pedal for Paths at Meadow Lakes and Pints for Paths at Heavens Peak. The group is hopeful to break ground on the donor wall soon and possibly move dirt for trail construction in the fall.

### **Lakeside Advisory Report**

There was no one present from the Lakeside Advisory Committee. Assistant Superintendent Gordon Jewett stated that a State forester has identified approximately 100 trees that will need to be removed.

A recent email from Jennifer Drew indicated that Plum Creek Foundation donated \$1,500 toward the resurfacing of the tennis courts.

#### **- Dragon Boat Race at Volunteer Park**

Superintendent Fisher reviewed an email from Bruce Ennis who had several questions regarding rental of Volunteer Park for the upcoming Dragon Boat Race September 9-14, 2015. There will be no boats or trailers in the parking lot and the permit holder will be responsible for any damages. The next step is for the Kalispell Convention and Visitors Bureau to obtain a Conditional Use Permit from County Planning and Zoning. Their request will be heard April 7<sup>th</sup> and Board member Elise Robocker plans to attend the meeting.

### **County Gymnasium Report**

Recreation Supervisor Bob Tuman reported that the first gymnasium meeting will be held this Wednesday from 5:30 – 7pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor conference room of the Earl Bennett Building. Invitees include several Rotary Club members, community leaders and local business owners. The first order of business will be to begin fundraising. The County has committed 1.3 million over the next 4 years, and there is 300K in Department funds, leaving approximately 1 million to fundraise. The facility cost estimate is 3.2 million, which will be modeled after The Hub in Spokane. The goal is to have the programs pay for themselves and not service the debt.

It is becoming more difficult to rely on local school gymnasiums for time to operate the County recreational programs, which are in competition with all other team sports. In addition, lease negotiations with Conrad Memorial Cemetery Board for use of the Conrad Complex have been lingering without any definitive answers. A suggested 10K increase was suggested by a Cemetery Board member in addition to reducing the total leased acreage by removing fields 6 and 7.

There was discussion regarding potential locations: the property north of the County Fairgrounds, property owned by Davar Gardner on Hwy 93 South, Hillcrest Park and the old Walmart building on Hwy 2. The benefits of the Walmart building are good location, huge parking area, and outside Kalispell city limits. The negatives are the 4.2 million asking price as well as the substantial and expensive structural concerns, including the need to raise the roof height and the sloughing in the southeast corner of the property.

### **Weed Department Report**

There is discussion about hiring someone to work on grant submission in order to take advantage of the Noxious Weed Trust Fund dollars. The Department has received many grant awards in the past, but there is no time for current staff to submit requests, and, if awarded, to monitor and complete reports. A past grant award involved communication with over 350 landowners. Grant funds would contribute toward mapping, tracking soil information and sensitive crops. Flathead County contributes 200K per year and we want to be able to participate in this program.

Two vendors were awarded the chemical bid, which has been substantially reduced to use existing inventory, with the goal to empty the chem shed by fall and complete improvements. Anticipated contract work will be 150-160K.

Long time staff member Don Roe will be retiring at the end of May. A new employee will be hired by May 1<sup>st</sup> in order to spend the month training with Mr. Roe.

Compliance Officer Steve Robinson met with representatives of Mission Mountain Railroad sub-line to review weeds along the railway right-of-way, which included safety hazards where the weeds are as tall as a vehicle.

### **Other Business**

There will be an upcoming meeting to continue discussion regarding aquatic control of noxious weeds and will include Planning and Zoning, County Attorney, contractor Lane Ross, and landowners. We would like to get input from all involved parties prior to determining policy as it relates to use of County property to launch aquatic weed control equipment.

### **Adjourn**

**Clyde Fisher moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:57AM.**

**Elise Robocker 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, May 4, 2015** at 8:30AM in the conference room at 311 FFA Drive, Kalispell, Montana.

**Documents Submitted to the Board:**

Jackola Engineers parking schematic for Carlyle Johnson Park