

**Flathead County Weed/Parks/Recreation**

**MINUTES**

**Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**Meeting Date: October 3, 2016**

**Members of the Board in attendance:**

Jim Buechle, Mary Ruby, Pete Woll

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

Clyde Fisher, Elise Robocker

**Also in attendance:**

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

**Others Present:**

Jim Watson – Foys to Blacktail Trails

Charline Payne – Foys to Blacktail Trails and Flathead Combined Training Association

Edd Blackler – Bigfork Advisory Committee

Sharon Hopkins – Bigfork Advisory Committee

Kim Thomas – Flathead County Athletic Complex Advisory Committee

Franck Kalenga – Lantern Partners

Bob Tuman – staff

Haily Hoff – staff

**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 October 3, 2016. The meeting convened at 8:33AM, Vice-Chairman Woll presiding.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the September 12, 2016 of the Flathead County Weed, Parks & Recreation Board of Directors were distributed to the members of the Board.

**Mary Ruby moved to approve the September 12, 2016 Board minutes.**

**Jim Buechle seconded the motion.**

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

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Foys to Blacktail Trails Report**

Jim Watson requested Board's approval to update the Foy's Lake Community Forest Management Plan under the direction of Superintendent Jed Fisher. The 400K existing grant includes 14K for technical assistance, of which 7K is slated for the recreation portion of the plan and 7K for the forest management portion.

Of Herron Park's 440 acres, 280 are designated as Federal Community Forest. Mr. Watson provided background information and submitted the following documents: Foy's Lake Proposed Forest Inventory Sampling Methodology and Cost Estimate; Foy's Lake Community Forest Management Plan Revision Proposed Budget May 9, 2016; and Foy's Lake Stand Type Descriptions and Treatment Recommendations.

Alex Hogle, a former County employee who is familiar with the process, has been approached to assist with the Recreation planning portion. Superintendent Jed Fisher stated that good public outreach is the key, including several meetings and contact with nearby landowners. These meetings need good documentation with Board representation. Mr. Watson stressed the importance of adopting the plan to avoid embarrassment of the agencies. Superintendent Fisher made it clear that there is no way to assure the approval of the plan until fully vetted by the Board.

**Jim Buechle moved to approve that Foys to Blacktail Trails administer the US Forest Service Community Forest Program Grant, under the direction of Superintendent Jed Fisher, Flathead County Parks and Recreation Department, specifically to update the Foy's Lake Community Forest Management Plan.**

**Mary Ruby seconded the motion.**

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

### **County Athletic Complex Report**

#### **Request for Approval to Release Draft Business Plan to Commissioners**

Superintendent Jed Fisher stated that it is time to move forward with plans for a Flathead County Athletic Complex. Franck Kalenga of Lantern Partners did an amazing job in preparing the business plan. CTA has provided architectural services at a substantially reduced rate, charging 20K for a job that is typically over 100K. The conclusion is that it is imperative to plan ahead, which interprets to a larger facility than originally anticipated. The conservative estimate for this project is 14 million. Construction of this facility was supported by 68% of survey respondents.

Kim Thomas, Athletic Complex Advisory Committee Chair, spoke in support of the project, pointing out that the facility would provide for a lot of community needs, including those of children, adults and seniors, and Americans with disabilities. It will provide a venue for motivational speakers, concerts and a host of other community activities, such breast cancer awareness events, after school programs, pick-up games, and YMCA involvement. Partnering with the Health Department and Agency on Aging would open up a lot of opportunities.

Recreation Director Bob Tuman stated his support for the project. Mr. Tuman has 18 years of experience dealing with the constant and increasingly difficult task of scheduling gym space in the local schools. In some cases, 1<sup>st</sup> grade children are out as late as 8:30pm due to scheduling limitations. A large facility could generate revenue for traveling teams. Adults by definition would include kids who are 1-2 years out of high school and who are looking for recreation options. Population growth in the Valley brings in families who are used to better facilities that offer a variety of options for recreational activities. Let's plan for the future now – build a good one that takes in a variety of community needs.

The land that Davar Gardner has offered to donate is centrally located in the Valley and could encompass indoor soccer, flag football, basketball, and lacrosse. Activities such as hockey, swimming and roller skating are also options requiring funding participation from those groups. Lanny McDonald, a former professional ice hockey player and owner of the local Tamarack Brewing Alehouse & Grill, expressed an interest in participating. Over the years, a big difference that Mr. Gardner has seen is the willingness for parents to do anything and go anywhere to participate in kid's sports. You can see it happening at Kidsports.

Franck Kalenga stated that as both a business owner and a recent resident, he has enjoyed the incredible opportunity to look at the Valley from an outside perspective. Today's families put a premium on entertainment and sports. As an example, his neighbor travels to Missoula and spends a week there for lacrosse training – which takes 3 hours per day. This is in addition to 3 other children and their participation in sports. It takes a Commission geared toward tourism to host sporting events, and that takes a very unique infrastructure, which we have here in the Flathead Valley. A pertinent point is that payback may take until a 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> generation.

Private individuals cannot accomplish this project. The challenges are 1) costly in the front end; 2) to benefit from all of the possibilities it takes time – perhaps 2-3 years to get on a rotation; and 3) the 1<sup>st</sup> event will be pivotal and it will be important to set a positive impression. A concession facility could potentially be the biggest money maker. People traveling to the Valley will benefit from all ancillary services. Businesses benefitting from this exposure would include physicians, hotels, mechanics, rehabilitation, and therapy to name a few. Let's go for the long game. If we do something halfway the money will be wasted.

The goals are to make a healthier community at an affordable price, while providing revenue to local businesses.

**Jim Buechle moved that the Board endorse the project and send the current version of the business plan to the County Commissioners for their review and input.**

**Mary Ruby seconded the motion.**

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

### **Bigfork Advisory Report**

Edd Blackler received information from Larry Jochim, who is interested in funding significant improvements to the Bigfork dock and surrounding area. As discussed during the September Board meeting, this would be a large investment with longevity, and consideration must be given to ADA requirements, piers, lighting and groundwork. Mr. Jochim would like to see this happen by spring 2017. A meeting will be organized once Mr. Jochim returns from travel, to include Bigfork Advisory Committee; Commissioners; Road & Bridge; Bigfork Water & Sewer; Bill Myers; and the Board. There was discussion about the extent of improvements relative to ADA requirements.

Superintendent Jed Fisher reported that there is an interest from seniors to take a portion of Lake Hills Park, install parking, a new senior facility and library, for which the Parks Department may anticipate something in return. The area has been toured with the County Administrator (and our future Vice President!) Mike Pence, Agency on Aging Director Lisa Sheppard, and County Commissioner Pam Holmquist. Public meetings would take place and include residents adjacent to the park.

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

There was no one present from the Foys/Herron Advisory Committee.

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

There was no one present from the Kila/Smith Lake Advisory Committee. Superintendent Jed Fisher reported that a pavilion base of crushed asphalt is acceptable; however, a trail from the parking area to the 16' x 21' pavilion would be needed, compacted to ADA standard and kept open year-round. He will advise Committee member Cindy Ercoline.

### **Lakeside Advisory Report**

There was no one present from the Lakeside Advisory Committee. Feedback from the Kalispell Visitor and Convention Bureau regarding the Dragon Boat Festival was requested. The permit holder, Diane Medler, will be contacted. Separately, the slash pile from Ben Williams Park logging is ready to burn.

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

There are no members of the Middle Forks Parks Advisory Committee.

### **Gateway to Glacier Trails Report**

Mary Ruby invited the Board and staff to the grand opening of Gateway to Glacier Trail on Friday October 14, 2016 at the Glacier Distillery Patio in Coram. Supports for the pavilion have been installed.

### **Weed Department Report**

Assistant Superintendent Gordon Jewett reported that all fiscal-year work for Bonneville Power has been completed, with approximately 14K billed out. Areas along the highway are being cleaned up and ready for fall application. Round 2 of roadside mowing is complete out to McGregor Lake, with are 8 to10 sites that will need hydroseeding.

### **Other Business**

Revisions to the Advisory Committee Handbook will be accomplished once input is received from the County Attorney's office.

The Board requests that all submissions requiring a decision have detailed information submitted a week prior to the meeting. Decisions may be made at the following Board meeting.

### **Adjourn**

**Jim Buechle moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:12AM.**

**Mary Ruby 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 7, 2016** at 8:30 AM in the conference room at 311 FFA Drive, Kalispell, Montana.

### **Documents Submitted to the Board:**

Foy's Lake Proposed Forest Inventory Sampling Methodology and Cost Estimate

Foy's Lake Community Forest Management Plan Revision Proposed Budget May 9, 2016

Foy's Lake Stand Type Descriptions and Treatment Recommendations

Gateway to Glacier Trails Grand Opening Invitation