

Flathead County Weed/Parks/Recreation

MINUTES

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Meeting Date: December 5, 2016

Members of the Board in attendance:

Clyde Fisher, Jim Buechle, Mary Ruby, Pete Woll

Members of the Board not in attendance:

Elise Robocker

Also in attendance:

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

Others Present:

Caitlin Overland – Flathead County Attorney

Kelly O'Brien – Foys to Blacktail Trails Attorney

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 December 5, 2016. The meeting convened at 8:37AM, Chairman Fisher presiding.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the November 14, 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 November 14, 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

Proposed Easement from Herron Park to Blacktail Mountain

This item was moved up on the agenda to accommodate participation of the attorneys involved. Attorney Caitlin Overland reported that the final action to establish connecting trails from Herron Park to Blacktail Mountain involves the cooperation of 4 parties – Weyerhaeuser (formerly Plum Creek) and three private landowners. The Flathead County Commission has approved a letter of understanding between Foys to Blacktail Trails (FTBT), who is leading the effort, and Flathead County. Negotiations with both Weyerhaeuser and the private landowners are positive. Attorney Overland expressed her confidence in the commitment of FTBT to provide funding for trail maintenance.

The trail location is established with minor variations as needed for the private landowners. Attorney Kelly O'Brien stated that FTBT expects to bear the cost of maintenance, has paid for the survey, and is working on grants to help with construction. Once the fundraising effort is finalized the group's effort will shift to maintenance fundraising with the intention of a perpetual resource. O'Brien stressed that a Memorandum of Understanding between all parties is needed so everyone has a clearly defined list of responsibilities.

Superintendent Jed Fisher stated that it is important to have continuity in funding and involvement of all user groups. A long-term goal would be to work on a bond issue.

Mary Ruby moved to support the efforts of Foys to Blacktail Trails in establishing trail easement agreements with landowners in order to connect Herron Park to Blacktail Mountain.

Pete Woll seconded the motion.

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

County Athletic Complex Report

An electronic copy and hard copies of the Flathead County Athletic Complex Business Plan was submitted to the Commissioner's office on October 26th, and an email sent on October 28th requesting a meeting to review the plan and answer any questions. If there is no request forthcoming by December 19th, the matter will be placed on the Commissioners' agenda.

Superintendent Jed Fisher and Advisory Board member Kim Thomas met with potential donors for the project. A year-end donation would help kick-start the momentum for additional donations.

Weed Department Report

On September 15th, letters were sent to 8 agencies requesting assistance in the form of money or intellectual contributions for preparation of a new Weed Management Plan: Bonneville Power Administration; Department of Natural Resources and Conservation; Flathead Conservation District; Glacier National Park; Montana Department of Transportation; Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks; United States Forest Service; and United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Flathead Conservation District is the only agency that responded and has offered to help facilitate this effort. A follow-up agency letter will be prepared for the Board Chair's signature.

Big Sky Park Surplus and Sale – Steven Knoll

A tour of Big Sky Park occurred several years ago and more recently last month. This 1 acre park is located on Big Sky Blvd off of Two Mile Drive and has uneven terrain, a small creek and a swampy bottom.

Jim Buechle moved to request County Attorney review of the potential surplus and sale of Big Sky Park. Mary Ruby seconded the motion.

Discussion ensued regarding the location and topography of the park, making development unlikely. It would be in the best interests of the County to surplus and sell this park.

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

Bigfork Advisory Report

Edd Blackler submitted a report from the Bigfork Park Advisory Board, attached to these minutes, which included a request for the Board to recommend approval of the proposal to improve Bigfork public dock.

Mary Ruby moved to disregard the request to recommend approval of the proposal to improve Bigfork public dock, as it was not within the purview of this Board.

Jim Buechle seconded the motion.

Discussion ensued that this was a matter to be handled by the Road Department and the Commissioners.

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

Foys to Blacktail Trails Report

Proposed easement from Herron Park to Blacktail Mountain – This item was moved up on the agenda to accommodate participation of the attorney's involved.

There was no one present from Foys to Blacktail Trails group.

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.

Lakeside Advisory Report

There was no one present from the Lakeside Advisory Committee.

Middle Forks Parks Advisory Report

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

Gateway to Glacier Trails Report

Mary Ruby shared photos of the pavilion construction located on the west end of Hungry Horse Park. Steel used for construction is from the old steel bridge.

Other Business

There was continuing discussion regarding the importance of developing a comprehensive Weed Management Plan. This effort relies heavily on the participation of all affected agencies.

Adjourn

Jim Buechle moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:34AM.

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, February 6, 2017** at 8:30 AM in the conference room at 311 FFA Drive, Kalispell, Montana.

Documents Submitted to the Board:

Easement template for trail from Herron Park to Blacktail Mountain

Report from the Bigfork Park Advisory Board (not dated)