

**Flathead County Weed/Parks/Recreation**

**MINUTES**

**Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**Meeting Date: November 5, 2018**

**Members of the Board in attendance:**

Jim Buechle, Clyde Fisher, Elise Robocker, Mary Ruby, Pete Woll

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

All members of the Board were present

**Also in attendance:**

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

**Others Present:**

Derek Ford – Bigfork

Alex Olson – Bigfork

Rachel Ezell – Flathead County Planning & Zoning Department

Gabe Dillon – Foys to Blacktail Trails

Clifford Kipp – Foys Herron Advisory Committee

**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 November 5, 2018. The meeting convened at 8:30AM, President Woll presiding.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes for the October 16, 2018 meeting of the Flathead County Weed, Parks & Recreation Board of Directors were distributed to the members of the Board.

**Jim Buechle moved to approve the October 16, 2018 Board minutes.**

**Clyde Fisher seconded the motion.**

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

**Public Comment**

Rachel Ezell acknowledged the completion of the Trails Plan Update which includes the contributions of many people who donated many hours to the project. She invited questions and offered to provide any information requested. This Plan, including the Trail Maintenance Agreement is currently being reviewed by the County Attorney and it is on the Planning Board agenda for next week. Rachel encouraged a vote of support from the Weed/Parks Board. She emphasized that this document is policy only, and is non-regulatory. It sets in place a framework for action if the County wishes to move forward, but does not create any commitment. If the County does not build a trail for 20 years it is okay.

The current draft updated the language and references for trail maintenance and trail funding. Rachel again offered to answer any questions.

President Woll stated that he is the hold-up for getting this item on the agenda for a decision. He recently completed a review of the draft update and will soon review the existing Trails Plan. He has had questions from the Commissioners and can't answer their questions until he completes a review of the documents.

### **Many Lakes Parks – Potential Surplus/Sale**

General discussion took place on October 16<sup>th</sup> between the Board, Jed, and Commissioner Holmquist, about the interest to sell or to retain parks in Many Lakes, the pros and cons, and the general condition of the parks. This is the second time the Board has toured the Many Lakes parks.

Jed has long had a strong desire to surplus and sell parks that are not being used by the public. It is currently a seller's market and funds from any sale could be used to maintain parks that are being used by the public. Many Lakes parks stand out for potential sale because they create a liability for the County relative to deferred maintenance. Trees are dead and dying and these parks lack restrooms.

The process to surplus and sell requires an appraisal and a survey which cost several thousand dollars; then the bidding must begin at 90% of appraised value. It would be a waste of money to proceed given the current policy of the Commissioners to retain waterfront parkland. In addition, many landowners have a perception that adjacent parkland improves their own land value therefore they have no interest in seeing parkland sold.

**Mary Ruby moved to withdraw pursuit of surplus and sale of Many Lakes Parks.**

**Jim Buechle seconded the motion.**

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

Top priority liability and ADA concerns will be evaluated for use of budgeted money.

### **Parks and Recreation Department Report**

Seasonal shut-down is in process and remaining staff will be laid off for the season at the end of the month. The Conrad Complex will be closed this week after final games are complete. It was noted that both the Dragon Boat and Pond Hockey events will not be continued by the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, in large part due to weather concerns. Some groups would like to see the County pick them up.

There are approximately 50 to 65 garbage cans in park service. Over the past two years the number of cans have been reduced by about 50%.

In December, there will be a Business of Outdoor Recreation conference in Whitefish. Jed indicated that several staff will be attending, as well Commissioner Holmquist and Mary Ruby. Jed encouraged the Board to consider attending.

### **Kalispell Elementary Gym Equipment Proposal**

Jed reviewed the request from the Superintendent of Kalispell Public Schools, Mark Flatau, for donation of funds for gym equipment. The district has 250-300K needs over and above the amount of their bond.

Items needed are:

39K – gym divider curtains

83K- practice basketball hoops for 3 gyms

18.5K – scoreboards for 3 gyms

**140.5K – Total Cost**

Timing of a donation would be most effective while buildings are under construction or being remodeled because the cost savings would be significant. The school district has been good to the Department in allowing use of the gyms for County recreation programs and a monetary contribution would go a long way in continuing to secure gym time. A nominal donation could be enjoyed now, with potentially more funds available after the details of an MOU are completed.

**Elise Robocker moved to donate 20K to Kalispell Elementary Public Schools for gym equipment.**

**Mary Ruby seconded the motion.**

**Discussion was had about a budget amendment being necessary, and the hope that the total amount going forward would not be limited to 20K.**

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

**Weed Department Report**

The weed crew is done spraying for the season, with the exception of spraying the Owen Sowerwine area, weather permitting. This area is inundated with thistles.

The Department will take possession of the new tractor this week.

**Other Business**

There was no other business.

**Matters of the Board**

Mary Ruby submitted an article about the Crystal Cedar Trails Project, located north of Columbia Falls. It is sincerely hoped that the Trails Plan Update will move forward. There will be a PATHS2 / Trail Plan Update meeting on November 21<sup>st</sup>.

President Woll will review the Foys to Blacktail Trails MOU prior to placing this item on the agenda.

**Adjourn**

**Jim Buechle moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:07AM.**

**Clyde Fisher seconded the motion.**

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


The time and place of the next meeting is **Monday, December 3, 2018** at 08:30 AM in the conference room at 311 FFA Drive, Kalispell, Montana.

**Documents Submitted to the Board**

Information regarding the Crystal Cedar Project located north of Columbia Falls.

Approved:

  
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Pete Woll, Board President

  
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Date