

SUMMARY MINUTES

BENTON COUNTY PARK BOARD

March 12, 2013, 6:00 p.m.
Benton County Justice Center
Kennewick, WA

Board Members Present

Richard Nordness, Chair
Bert Lake, Vice-Chair
Michael Crowder - Secretary/Treasurer
Hank Sauer, Member
Donna Raines, Member
Diana Ruff, Member

Benton County Employees

Adam Fyall
Cami McKenzie
Commissioner Jim Beaver
Commissioner Shon Small

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call

Chair Richard Nordness called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call was taken.

Review & Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of February 2013 were approved.

Staff Report Update

In addition to his written report, Adam provided the following update:

- He said he sent a follow up email about Two Rivers Boat Launch and the meeting with the Corps of Engineers. He said their documents would be complete by the end of summer and they would provide a cost for engineering on the preferred alternative (Benton County's preferred alternative); it would be the point for the County to make a decision on whether to join them for the project or not.
- Bert Lake said the Board had previously stated if the County's portion went beyond \$300,000, they were not in favor (\$300,000 was the max); the Board agreed.

- Improvements to entrance to Rose Iris - he had a quote and was trying to get approval by the attorney but the attorney was not approving the quote from the vendor as a "sole source provider". He said there was concern about moving forward on this so late in the Spring or waiting until Fall; Adam said he would talk to the attorneys in the morning and would recommend either moving forward or waiting until Fall. There was a discussion regarding the frustration of getting contracts approved. Commissioner Beaver suggested inviting one of the Deputy PA's to a Park Board meeting to discuss the issue. Adam thought a more personal meeting might be a better approach with the Chair and a Commissioner.
- Adam presented the ad purchased in the Tri-City Visitor & Convention Bureau magazine that was distributed throughout the Tri-Cities and beyond.
- Shorelines Management Plan - Adam was working with the consultant on a survey and he asked the park board members to complete the survey; he said he would forward that on to park board members.

2013 Dept. Overview & Strategic Planning - Projects

The Board discussed possible projects for 2013 and Donna Raines suggested the Board try to complete some of the minor projects.

The following projects were discussed:

- Paving Canyon Road up to the high power facility
- Foot bridge improvements at Horn Rapids Park
- Nature trail in Dennis Rockwell's name at Two Rivers Park. Adam said it was previously suggested that donations made at Two Rivers be put toward that project. He said he would review the amount of money brought in to Two Rivers to see what was available.
- Horn Rapids Park - on-line registration
- Barker Ranch
- Hover Park
- Property survey for Horse Heaven Vista

The Board agreed that priority projects were as follows:

- Barker Ranch Agreement
- Seeding project - Rose Iris
- Parks Brochure
- Badger Mountain Management Plan

Adam said he would send an email out listing the small projects for the Board to review, along with revenues from Two Rivers Park.

Michael Crowder said he was approached about putting in signs indicating "one-way parking" on the back side of Badger Mountain (Dallas Road). Adam said the area did not have signs yet but he would work on that.

Barker Ranch Presentation

The Board presented a letter to Michael Crowder and Barker Ranch congratulating him on receiving the award for "Wildlife Farmer of the Year for 2012 in WA State".

Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility - Rate Structure Discussion

Mark Verwest presented a rate increase structure at the shooting facility for the Board's approval; there had not been an increase since 2003. The rate increases were as follows: daily use for non-members from \$5 to \$10; from \$40 to \$50 for single adult and spousal from \$60 to \$75 for general membership; still no charge for 17 and under. Mr. Verwest said the reason for the increase had to do with the State enforcing sales tax on non-profit gun clubs. He said the facility used to be exempt and had a non-active status due to revenue. However, they were now being required to pay back taxes; he said they could appeal the decision or surrender to the State. If they lost the appeal, the amount owed would be \$214,000 for seven years' back taxes and penalty fees. They agreed to surrender so they only had to pay four years plus interest for a total of \$84,000. He said they had an emergency fund of \$30,000 and operating account of \$100,000. Additionally, they looked at other use charges throughout the state and they were still less than other gun clubs. He said it was not just a tax issue, but an operating expense issue because they hadn't been able to keep up with the expenses.

Diana Ruff asked if they had looked at ways to cut expenses and overhead before they decided to double the cost of daily use for non-members. She said she was not comfortable with doubling the fee to the general public. Mr. Verwest said they had cut back on providing a hard copy of the newsletter which helped. He said the office supplies budget increased due to mailing renewals (increase in amount of members); the liability insurance increased; and the cost of targets was mainly for daily use people since they supplied them with the targets and target stands.

Michael Crowder said he also had concerns about the cost doubling; he wanted low fees but also a state of the art facility. He said he now fully supported the increase, but he definitely took his time making the decision.

Bert Lake said he also had concerns but was now in favor based upon the information provided. He said he was concerned if they didn't get the rate increase it would negatively impact the operations and maintenance.

Mr. Crowder said he also asked Mr. Verwest to laminate a poster outlining the reasons for the rate increase so the public could see that.

MOTION: It was moved and seconded to approve the rate increase for the Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

The guests and board members gave closing comments.

Commissioner Beaver presented Hank Sauer with a certificate of appreciation from the Board of Commissioners. Hank thanked everyone and said it had been an honor and privilege to serve on the Benton County Park Board.

Former Commissioner Claude Oliver said that Hank had always represented the County and the community well and thanked him for his years of service.

With no further business to report, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

The next regular meeting will be the second Tuesday in April at the Benton County Justice Center.