

SUMMARY MINUTES

BENTON COUNTY PARK BOARD

October 9, 2012, 6:30 p.m.
Benton County Justice Center
Kennewick, WA

Board Members Present

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

Benton County Employees

Cami McKenzie
Commissioner Beaver

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call

Chair Bert Lake 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 September 2012 were approved.

Chair Report

- Westgate Parking Lot - Chair Lake reported that Mark Finkbeiner and Rich Hillmer assisted with the Westgate parking lot expansion, along with some workers provided by the orchard. The project looked nice, however, was not as big as anticipated due to some unforeseen issues. Adam was writing a letter thanking the orchard owner for its help.

- Shooting Association (Rose Iris planting) - a work party was scheduled for October 15 at 12:00 to take out tumbleweeds and would later plant grass.
- Tree Planting for Marilyn Hyde - November 5 at 3:00 pm. - Still deciding the appropriate site to plant the trees.
- He met with Commissioners to discuss the issue brought forth by Paul Rittman and there were no new developments since he attended the Commissioner meeting.

Committee Reports

Brochure - the Board asked for an update on the brochure and the cost of placing the ad in the Tri-Cities Visitor Guide.

Joint Park Board Meeting - Donna Raines said there was some interest from other park boards about having access to Benton County Park Board email on the website. Bert Lake indicated he did not want to advertise his personal email on the website.

Candy Mountain Presentation

David Comstock, Friends of Badger Mountain (FOBM), presented the idea of establishing the Candy Mountain Preserve with the County as the owner of the new park and briefly discussed the following:

- The two primary landowners on Candy Mountain approached FOBM about selling their property to be preserved as a public park in the approximate amount of \$1,375,000;
- FOBM was asking the Park Board for support to pursue the purchase and have Benton County agree to receive and be the owner of the preserve;
- FOBM would seek approval from the Commissioners to agree to sponsor the grant process; FOBM would support the application process and complete the fundraising efforts for matching funds (approximately \$700,000). Mr. Comstock said they were optimistic with ranking in the State based upon previous applications.
- Public Access - will negotiate to purchase public trail access to this land
 - Short term access - connecting through the saddle
 - Long term access - thinking of a gateway park
- BLM Land - The Board suggested FOBM write a letter to BLM suggesting it was interested in its property

Bert expressed concern about asking Adam to write a grant due to his current schedule and responsibilities. Mr. Comstock indicated that FOBM would be completing the key work on the grant writing, but would need some assistance from Adam. The Board discussed the grant writing process and Donna Raines suggested talking to West Richland's grant writer; Hank Sauer suggested the more groups involved and supporting the process, the more likely the success.

Mr. Comstock said they would be asking for letters of support from all the entities. Additionally, he discussed the timeline for the grant application process (grant submittal in the spring of 2013; approval in 2014, and then then 1-2 years to complete the purchase).

He said he was hopeful to go back to his Board and say the Park Board supported the process.

MOTION: It was moved and seconded to approve the efforts of the Friends of Badger Mountain to pursue whatever means necessary for the purchase of the Candy Mountain property and to pursue the grant process.

Discussion

Diana Ruff asked about the 60-day deadline imposed by the landowners and Mr. Comstock said they had 60 days to respond to the offer. They would pay some money up front to secure the land to be able to purchase at a later date (a legal option agreement) and the landowners had agreed in concept to the purchase option.

Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Horse Heaven Vista White Paper

The Board received the White Paper on the Horse Heaven Vista and indicated it would review it and get back to Adam with any comments.

Adjournment

The guests and board members gave closing comments and the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.

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