

Park Board Regular meeting January 21st, 2015 @ Cusick Community Center

Park Board members present: Vice chairman Dave Gruver, members Ken Timmreck, Mark Bender and Don Comins.

Pend Oreille County staff present: Director Mike Lithgow, Parks Manager Todd McLaughlin and admin assist Terri Ann Hedtke.

Guests: Pend Oreille River Tourism Alliance (PORTA) director Susan Harris, Bob Gish and Jim Hudkins of the Northeast Chapter of the Backcountry Horseman of Washington.

Acting chair Dave Gruver called the meeting to order at 2:02pm.

Mark Bender motioned to approve the minutes of the December meeting, Don Comins seconded, motion carried.

In the absence of Treasurer, Jeanetta Taylor, admin assist Terri Ann Hedtke provided month end and year end reports of expenditures and revenue. Also it was noted \$137,156.00 has been received from the logging of Rustlers Gulch (Section 16) property.

Todd McLaughlin, newly appointed Parks Manager, was introduced. It was noted that Don Comins and Greg Jakeman had been instrumental in drafting the job description for this newly created position and that it is expected the roles and responsibilities will be refined over time. As it was an interagency transfer, Don Comins suggested that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would be appropriate. PORTA director Susan Harris mentioned her past working relationship with Todd on the Water Trail project and noted he was "a delight to work with and very professional." Director Lithgow provided a brief biography, highlighting Todd's education and experience, including grant writing, noting Todd will need some "field trips" to familiarize him with all the properties under the Parks jurisdiction. Todd spoke to riparian restoration and referenced the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan and the many and varied projects identified therein. He will be looking for direction from the Parks Board.

Bob Gish mentioned the Backcountry Horseman have been fairly successful garnering grants and would be willing to partner with the County. The Backcountry Horseman, historically, have been outstanding volunteers with trail maintenance. Some signage, highlighting appreciation for their ongoing efforts, would be appropriate.

The next agenda item addressed danger trees at Pend Oreille County Park. The timber consulting firm of Northwest Management Inc. provided a detailed report. High use areas have been surveyed by Northwest Management Inc. with trees identified for removal in March. Other trees, with a lower risk of failure, have been tagged for management and monitoring. The goal is for a balance of safety and liability.

Director Lithgow recently attended a meeting of the Northeast chapter of the Backcountry Horseman where he shared conceptual designs for the Pend Oreille Park Trailhead and Group Camp. Copies of these designs were shared with the Park Board. These designs are merely a beginning point and need continued refinement, it is hoped for actual construction in May or June. The water line will need to be extended. Bob Gish noted the Backcountry Horseman have access to some equipment and a sub-committee has been formed with meetings scheduled.

Further, Director Lithgow shared a work plan for the Rustlers Gulch Recreation Area (RGRA). The plan identifies 6 items, including restoration/replanting. PORTA director Susan Harris mentioned this would be an excellent opportunity for a positive press release. Perhaps Park Manager McLaughlin can be instrumental in this role of public relations. A signage component addressing some of these ongoing improvements was mentioned.

Vice chairman Dave Gruver asked for an update on the fee collection station needed at the Park. Director Lithgow is looking to view some of these stations in February.

The next Parks Board meeting will be February 18th.

Don Comins motioned to adjourn, Mark Bender seconded and the meeting adjourned at 3:33pm.