

Park Board Regular meeting May 20th, 2015 @ Cusick Community Center

Park Board members present: Chairman Sam Nicholas, Vice-chairman Dave Gruver, Treasurer Jeanetta Taylor, members Greg Jakeman and Mark Bender.

Guests: Mary Maxfield of Sacheen Lake, and Pend Oreille River Tourism Alliance (PORTA) Executive Director Susan Harris.

Pend Oreille County staff: Director Mike Lithgow, Parks Manager Todd McLaughlin and administrative assistant Terri Ann Hedtke.

Following introductions, Ms. Maxfield asked if there were plans for signage for Fertile Valley, and yes there are.

After a brief summary of the April minutes, they were approved. Treasurer Jeanetta Taylor reviewed the Treasurers report. Member Greg Jakeman asked about tree planting and herbicide; member Mark Bender commented the Pend Oreille Park is appropriately managed as “an ecosystem and not just a harvest.”

Parks Manager Todd McLaughlin provided his report.

- Hazard tree removal at the Park is finished, including chipping and mastication. 6 loads of logs have been set aside for the Mountain West fall firewood project. Director Lithgow added some background on the bid process for those members who have been absent.
- Batey Boulder might qualify for one of two Recreation & Conservation Office (RCO) grants for Non Highway Off Road Vehicles (NHORV). The first step needs to be a master plan, next would be to design a technical route, bringing the stake holders to the table, including the all-terrain vehicle (ATV) users. Currently a nice trail head exists along with a huge single track area; both good places to begin a dialogue. PORTA Executive Director Susan Harris said it is important to keep and document interest in the site, let the Forest Service know the County is actively pursuing funding & partnerships, all assurances that there continues to be enthusiasm; it is a complex site, and a challenging course.
- Geo Cache update. The coordinates & pages are ready to submit for review, the kickoff event is scheduled for July 18, a meeting with 4-H coordinator Dixie Chichester is planned. It is estimated the challenge will take no less than 2 days, there will most likely be an economic “ripple effect” for Pend Oreille County. No insurance policy is required for this free Geo Cache event. It was noted the Kalispel Tribe of Indians is also involved.
- Todd would like to see the Park trails mapped prior to the Geo Cache event and Dave Gruver recommended Bob Gish of the Back County Horseman to help. Mike Lithgow recommended the brown carbonite posts for trail markers.
- An Eagle Scout project to construct a kiosk at the Park has been proposed. Mary Maxfield mentioned part of the project could be securing donated materials, and Dave Gruver suggested Idaho Forest Group might be a good source for materials, as they were the recipient of some of the Parks timber.
- The new “Iron Ranger” pay station was discussed, with Todd McLaughlin explaining how the State parks function, using fee envelopes.

- An “open house” is planned for the Section 16 aka Rustlers Gulch property, the road will first need to be graded & graveled prior to scheduling this event. Mike Lithgow praised Todd’s diligence.
- Mike Lithgow and Todd McLaughlin shared highlights from their recent field trip to the Riverside Equestrian Center. Many of the sites are ADA accessible, campsites include corrals & fire pits, some are pull thru, there are bear proof refuse receptacles and an ADA mounting station. Camp rules, emergency information, adopt-a-park programs are all included on the informational kiosk. An obstacle course “trail class” is also incorporated.

The Road Dept will be hiring an engineering intern for the summer, she will begin June 1st. Parks will be able to utilize part of her time for the 3 phase Pend Oreille Park, trailhead & group camp project. Mike Lithgow will be preparing a budget for signage for Parks and Trails. Susan Harris shared information re: Water Trail signage and the Public Utilities District (PUD) project.

Town Hall meeting dates and location for the Edgewater North facility were discussed. The Lone Community Center, June 29th 6:00pm was tentatively chosen. It was suggested to advertise in the Selkirk Sun.

Chairman Sam Nicholas asked for an up-date on a potential land swap near the Pend Oreille Park. Mike Lithgow obliged.

Vice-chair Dave Gruver re-visited the ¼ of 1% Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) proposal as a potential revenue stream for funding Parks and Recreation. It was agreed the public would need education and exposure to the idea prior to an initiative on a ballot.

Playground equipment for the Pend Oreille Park would be an asset, it was discussed to choose items that would appeal to 5-12 year olds.

Disk golf was mentioned with the Pend Oreille County Park being a possible location, there should be no conflict with the trails system. The Forest Service is still entertaining the possibility of a disk golf course, perhaps by the “Frog Pond” in Newport, adjacent to the Forest Service headquarters building.

The Sacheen Lake folks are looking for trees to plant.

The meeting adjourned at 3:35.