



**BENTON COUNTY PARK BOARD**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

December 14, 2021, 6:30 p.m.  
Benton County Administration Building

**Board Members Present**

Laauli Faamausili, Chair  
Dave McNeal, Vice Chair  
Karla Brown, Secretary  
Yessica Rosas, Member  
Robin Emmingham, Member  
Richard Nordness, Member

**Benton County Employees**

Adam Fyall  
Robert Blain

**Board Members Absent**

**Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call**

Board Chair, Laauli Faamausili, called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m. following the holiday social event, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Review & Approval of Agenda**

The December 14, 2021 agenda was approved with the addition of the 2022-2023 election of Park Board officers.

**Approval of Minutes**

The Minutes of November 9, 2021 were approved as submitted.

## **Monthly Reports to the Board**

### **Chair's Report**

There was no report at this time.

### **Committee/Subcommittee Reports**

There were no reports at this time. Adam briefly discussed the e-bike issue in which the City of Richland is not implementing restrictions on e-bike use on soft surface trails like Badger and Candy Mountain at this time. However, the City Park Commission recommends a 15-mph speed limit when others are present and a 5-mph speed limit in congested areas. Robin suggested waiting to take action on the e-bike issue until the Comprehensive Park Plan was implemented.

### **Staff Report Update**

There was nothing to add to the staff report. Adam mentioned that there is still a vacancy on the park board. Member Richard Nordness asked about homeless encampments and if they're an issue in the county parks. The City of Richland has faced this issue, and he wanted to know if the County has had any problems with homeless camps. Adam mentioned recently a motorhome was near Horn Rapids Park but wasn't attempting to use the campground as a permanent place. He isn't aware of any homeless camps in any of the county parks, but County staff is looking out for any signs of encampments due to the difficult times we're living in.

## **Business**

- **Parks Comprehensive Plan:**

Discussion entailed the selection process for choosing a consultant to be used for developing the comprehensive park plan. The Board agreed that a subcommittee should be formed to assist in the process of selecting candidates, scoring candidates based on the same metrics, interviewing the selected candidates, and assisting the selected consultant with plan development. Members Robin Emmingham, Yessica Rosas, and Dave McNeal have volunteered to be on this subcommittee. The initial kick off meeting will be to discuss the scope of work and plan of action. Adam will reach out to the 7 park partners to get their input on the upcoming comprehensive park plan. The final decision on contracting a consultant rests with the Board of County Commissioners, but the Park Board will get to make the recommendation on which consultant gets the contract. Once a consultant has been approved by the County Commissioners, the subcommittee will need to meet with them

monthly as the plan develops. This will be a 6-8 month process.

- **2022 Park Board Meeting Calendar:**

The calendar for 2022 was reviewed. Robin will be enjoying the sunny Caribbean so he may not be at the February meeting. The regularly scheduled meeting for March 8<sup>th</sup> was unanimously agreed upon to be moved to March 15<sup>th</sup>. It was suggested that a Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility (RMSF) field meeting be held next year since it's been awhile since one was held. August was suggested so the Board members can visit Horn Rapids Park and RMSF with a tour and parking lot dedication. George Hager will check the date to see if it's a go. Adam may need to move the October 11<sup>th</sup> meeting to the week before or the week after depending on his schedule. Any calendar changes Adam will send out updates as needed.

- **Presentation to Board of Commissioners:**

The presentation to the Benton County Commissioners will be Tuesday, January 25, 2022 at their regularly scheduled board meeting at the Courthouse in Prosser, WA. All Park Board members are invited to attend either in person or via WebEx. Adam will be presenting a slideshow that covers an overview of the events/projects at the parks, a discussion of the challenges and major projects from the last 2-3 years, a discussion of future projects, and a comment/suggestion section ending the presentation. Adam will provide the Board with a draft slideshow for their review and comments prior to the presentation.

- **Elections of 2022-2023 Officers:**

An officer election was held Dec. 14, 2021. All members approved the re-election of Laauli Faamausili as Chairman, Dave McNeal as Vice Chairman, and Karla Brown as Secretary. It was noted that member Nordness commented that a member can serve two consecutive terms.

## **Public Comments/Poll of the Board/Adjournment**

### **Public Comment:**

Dan Chappel and Linda Smith, Rattlesnake Ridge Riders, mentioned the Prize Ride (successor to the annual chili feed) will be their replacement fundraiser and will be held April 30, 2022. This fundraiser will help support RRR's activities throughout the year. A Umatilla Forest meeting is scheduled for January to discuss fire damage to the trails and bridges. Dan passed out a print-out of the volunteer

hours of the Back Country Horsemen of Washington. The RRR will get back to the Board on their plan for fencing.

Linda Smith, Rattlesnake Ridge Riders, wanted to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Cindy Faith, Purple Sage Riders, told the Board of the pictures of the potential signs they reviewed and liked them. The Purple Sage Riders will be putting an event calendar together soon and sending it to Peggy. Cindy will be gone January/February and will send a replacement or attend virtually. She's excited about Hover moving along.

George Hager, RMSF, is busy finishing up the year and getting calendars done. The Silhouette Range has not been surveyed yet. Before the State will give approval, a cultural survey needs to be done by the Umatilla Confederated Tribes. George mentioned having a match at RMSF in November with the group camping at Horn Rapids. Adam doesn't think there will be a problem accommodating the group at the campground for the event.

#### **Poll of the Board:**

Yessica Rosas expressed appreciation for the potluck social and wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Laauli Faamausili reaffirmed the Board's commitment to continue making progress, pushing the partners projects forward, and the Board's willingness to help where needed.

Richard Nordness found the volunteer hour print-out provided by Dan and the Back County Horsemen to be impressive. Dan mentioned documenting volunteer hours supports grant funding approval.

Dave McNeal noted moving forward is very important considering the last year we've had, and we can use the upcoming year as a springboard. Dave and Richard both expressed gratitude for being able to meet in person, where other groups haven't been able to have in person meetings since March 2020.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm.

The next regular meeting will be held on the second Tuesday in January at the Admin Building.