



BENTON COUNTY PARK BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

February 9, 2021, 6:00 p.m.
Benton County Justice Center
Kennewick, WA 99336

Meeting provided by Video (via Zoom)

Board Members Present

Laauli Faamausili, Chair-joined 6:39 pm
Dave McNeal, Vice Chair
Karla Brown, Secretary
Yessica Rosas, Member
Richard Nordness, Member
Diana Ruff, Member

Benton County Employees

Adam Fyall
Robert Blain
Peggy Brown

Board Members Absent

Robin Emmingham, Member

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call

Board Vice Chair, Dave McNeal, called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review & Approval of Agenda

The February 9th agenda was amended by adding Friends of Badger Mt. annual report, after which, it was approved.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of January 12, 2021 were approved as submitted.

Monthly Reports to the Board

Chair's Report

There was no report at this time.

Committee/Subcommittee Reports

The Horn Rapids Signage Committee presented an inventory and assessment of the current signage condition at Horn Rapids Park, with an aim toward making suggestions in the near future for the way the signage should be designed at the park. Some suggestions included that the signage be welcoming, informative, uniform in format, and show respect for the park(s).

Staff Report Update

Adam mentioned that Horn Rapids Park will be hosting a Ki-Be Cross Country meet Feb. 17th. He, also, mentioned a signage meeting would be held Feb. 16th @ 3 pm at the park. There was also a brief discussion about E-Bikes being used on Badger Mt. This topic will be for a future discussion.

Annual Reports to the Board-Round 2

- **Native Plant Society:** Mickie Chamness reported that the Native Plant Society was able to utilize three grants for projects. The 2019 REI grant was used at McBee Grade for adding plants and updating the signage. The Lamb Weston grant was used to install the Heritage Teaching Garden at CBC. The 2020 REI grant was used to lay weed barrier and add some plantings at Leslie Grove Trail with the help of the Eagle Scouts. Rattlesnake Slope saw revegetation with 550 plants being added. During Covid, the Native Plant Society used social media with webinars, which were a success, reaching over 500 people, self-guided wildflower walks in the Blues, and an on-line plant sale, in which all the plants were sold.
- **Miniature Aircraft Association:** Dick McGrew mentioned that there are about 40-50 members of the association. In February, they were able to participate in an IMAC Judging school. They were able to get a spring clean-up done in March. The MAA Master Plan for Higgins Field Project was completed. All other events, meetings, projects are on hold until Covid restrictions are lifted.
- **Friends of Badger Mt.:** David Comstock reported that geologists found 25 Ice Age flood rocks near Candy Mt. Interpretive Loop. Interpretive signs were put up near the 5 largest rocks for information purposes for those walking the trail. Some of the accomplishments of 2020 were widening Sagebrush Trail & Sunflower Trail, starting a trail to Little Badger,

installed 26 signs, including boundary signs, and participated in raising monies for a new trail. Dave would like to see for 2021 3 signs installed at Canyon Trail, Lake Lewis Island Ridge Trail become a "point of interest" to visitors to the area, and get the West Richland Trailhead Park opened up with the acquisition of the BLM property by the end of 2022.

Business

- **Hover Park Parking Lot-update, discussion of process:**
 - Discussion entailed the design and lay-out of the parking lot. The design must be able to restrict access of motorized vehicles within the lot, but still provide a large enough lot for bigger vehicles (horse trailers) to move around and park.
 - To keep visitors in the designated area, the use of gates and signage was discussed. Even putting up a Kiosk area for visitors.
 - Before permits can be obtained, the Army Corps of Engineers wants a more definite design and to see what the environmental and cultural impact will be.
 - It was also mentioned that some funding may come from the Corps.
- **Candy Mt. Preserve-discussion of adjoining BLM property:**
 - Adam's contact with the Bureau of Land Management is retiring the end of February, and Adam thought it would be to the County's benefit to file an application for leasing the property before that employee's leaving as to have it memorialized and passed along from that employee to his successors with his background with the situation and familiarity with the County's goals.
 - Adam reviewed the situation with the Board with the assistance of David Comstock from the Friends of Badger Mountain organization. Adam and David talked about how the 38-acre parcel is key to preserving the habitat and view scape of the north face of Candy Mt. and is critical for the progress of the regional ridgeline trail from the southeast to the northwest. That trail will most likely have to cross this parcel.
 - Three options were discussed: a "Recreation & Public Purposes" (R&PP) lease, Title V right-of-way, and a Cooperative Agreement with BLM.
 - The Board voted unanimously to move forward with an application to BLM for an R&PP lease and directed Adam to submit said application to the agency before the end of February.

Public Comments/Poll of the Board/Adjournment

The public comment.

David Comstock, Friends of Badger Mt., supports the application to obtain the BLM property.

Dick McGrew, Miniature Aircraft Association, wanted to thank everyone for their help during 2020. Hoping for a better 2021.

Cindy Faith, Purple Sage Riders, wanted to thank everyone for the hard work done on Hover. Looking forward to the spring clean-up.

Mickie Chamness, Native Plant Society, wanted to thank everyone for their hard work.

Dan Chappel wanted to apologize for not providing a presentation for the meeting. He appreciates the hard work going into Hover Park. He felt the signage update at Horn Rapids was overdue. The E-Bikes on the hiking/horse trails are a concern.

George Hager had nothing to report.

The Board had closing comments.

Dave McNeal appreciated the reports and updates from the park partners. He appreciates the opportunity to be on the Park Board.

Diana Ruff wanted to thank the park partners for their accomplishments in 2020. She's excited for 2021.

Karla Brown wanted to thank the partners for their reports. She also commented on E-Bikes becoming an issue in the future with more affordable versions coming down the line.

Richard Nordness wanted to thank everyone for the reports. He also wanted to thank the Friends of Badger Mt. for putting up more trails. He, also, expressed his excitement for the progress at Hover.

Yessica Rojas wanted to express her gratitude to the park partners. She mentioned that the Board has a lot to consider in the near future.

Laauli Faamausili wanted to thank the park partners for the great reports. He commended everyone by saying to keep up the good work on the parks.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm.

The next regular meeting will be held on the second Tuesday in March at the Justice Center/Zoom.