

**SUMMARY MINUTES**

**BENTON COUNTY PARK BOARD**

Tuesday, November 1, 2016, 6:00 p.m.  
Benton County Justice Center  
Kennewick, WA 99336

**Board Members Present**

Robin Emmingham, Chair  
Diana Ruff, Secretary/Treasurer  
Yessica Rosas, Member  
Donna Raines, Member

**Benton County Employees**

Adam Fyall  
Cami McKenzie  
Commissioner Jim Beaver

**Board Members Absent**

Michael Crowder  
Richard Nordness  
John Becker, Vice-Chair

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

Chair Robin Emmingham 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 submitted.

**Approval of Minutes**

The Minutes of September, 2016 were approved as submitted.

**Chair Report**

Chair Emmingham commented on the October meeting held at Hover Park. He said there was a lot of discussion and tonight he wanted to hear from the Board members on their vision, options and priorities and then from the audience.

Adam Fyall said they wanted to learn about neighbors and adjoining landowners, including KGH Foundation, Corps of Engineers, the adjacent landowners and Fire District #1 at the meeting. He briefly discussed the following issues:

- Concern with the wasteway and that it was migrating upstream up to the property line and soon there would not be a dry crossing. He said he would make contact with KID to talk about that situation.
- Railroad crossing and access - question was out to the Corps; for safety into the park they were looking at east of the park at the Toothaker entrance.
- Start having conversations with ATV folks;
- Create parking areas or barriers (jersey barrier was reasonably affordable);
- Big issues
  - Park has multi-uses; public safety for compatibility;
  - Using public land and then accessing private property and impacting private property;
  - Litter, dumping and vandalism;
  - Wild fire sensitivity;
  - Wasteway issue - not sure how a fire engine would get past that; he was looking at the lease to see if they were upholding their end of the lease.
- Main recommendations - bring in the Corps of Engineers and start having conversations about mutual expectations and priorities and look closely at the lease.

### **Board Comments**

Donna Raines talked about designating certain areas, like other parks. Adam indicated there were a number of problems with enforcement. Donna discussed the following:

- Importance of historical value of Hover - no respect out there and she wanted to restore that and get people involved with cleaning up; add kiosks to display history;
- Create a parking area on the top part of Hover Road, block it off and make it available for trails for riding and bird watchers;
- Signs for "no shooting" and show there was a presence;
- Safety and liability concerns regarding ATV's and motorcycles.

Yessica Rosas said she did not make the meeting but depending on what activities were allowed, agreed with designating and clearly marking areas with proper signage. She said it sounded like a lot to fit into this area and it should be a priority to figure out a way to keep it clean and prevent further destruction.

Diana Ruff stated that originally she was thinking of a way to have compatible uses with ATVs, horses and non-motorized uses but Hover was not designed to be an ATV park and she had concerns about safety and liability. She wanted to find out whether motorized uses were allowed and if they were, were they willing form a user group and police themselves and have clean-up parties, etc. She didn't like how the land was being destroyed and everyone's main heartburn was the southwestern portion and that should be their area of focus and where their money went. Her priorities included:

- Create a plan to limit ATV access;
- Signage for rules and what is being enforced;
- Whether present illegal issue could be turned into legal use; give them the opportunity to organize.

Robin Emmingham said he was concerned there was a user group (ATVs) not present for the discussion. Additionally, through neglect there was a group of users doing damage to the land and without control and some enforcement they would continue. He discussed the following:

- Concerns about liability; people using County property to get to private property;
- Desire to accommodate ATV users but horses and ATV separation was essential;
- Development - if it required more than occasional attention they did not have the staff;
- Talk to the Sheriff and see if they would be able to police it - no point in setting up rules if they were not able to police it;
- Parking

## Public Comments

Linda Smith said she heard there was an ATV group that had cleaned up in the park; she said she would make contact with someone to try and find out their names. She said if there could be accommodations made for ATV's she was in favor of that.

Jo Sheeley said she did not know why they would want to keep the ATV's when they were not allowed in any of the other parks. She said they continued to do further damage and the park was not big enough to accommodate all the users. She stated the signs said not to cross onto private property and no shooting allowed but they did it anyway. She recommended new signs and barriers to keep them out before anything else could be done and the longer they waited the worse it would be.

Vicki Clark stated that Hover did get a lot of use and once they blocked off the use on Hover Road, she was concerned they would go over the railroad tracks. She mentioned that ATV use and horses could be compatible. She talked about creating a barrier, a parking area, and a master plan and include picnic tables and pit toilets and eventually improve the road. However, until they could control the use and educate the users, it would be difficult without a presence and participation from the users.

Cindy Faith encouraged a parking area with picnic tables, hitching rails and barrier and signage with expectations. She said she was not against motorcycles and ATVs and believed they had a right to recreate and if they could get them invested in the process they could cohabitate.

Dick McGrew, Miniature Aircraft Association, said you would not get the others involved until you closed it off. He said not all land was useable for all recreation and recommended they survey the land to find out what activities could co-exist. Additionally, he recommended putting up a sign stating what was proposed and restrict the access and post the hours of operation.

Lerae Rockne said her family moved to that area in 1947. She stated she didn't think they would get much involvement until they blocked it off and did not know if they would be content with just park use. She said she wouldn't mind if it wasn't used for horses as well but agreed it should be blocked off completely first.

Commissioner Beaver said he was excited about the vision process but cautioned about moving ahead. He discussed the County's upcoming budget and they were currently \$3 million in the red; there was a reason why things didn't move forward. He said the Park Board needed to look at its budget very closely because he didn't know if the Park Board was going to get \$500,000 during the next budget.

After further discussion, Mr. Fyall summarized:

- Signage, blockage and parking - will come up with some options;
- Concern about the outflow of the irrigation and its safety - will be calling KID tomorrow
- Corps of Engineers - the Board agreed it was important to involve the Corps.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.