

# DOUGLAS COUNTY PARK ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of Meeting on October 28, 2009

1:00 p.m.

Douglas County Park Department Office

**PRESENT:** Dennis Acton, Lonnie Ferber, Jon Hill, Don Larson, Jim Peterson, Dick Swartzlender, Bill Swift, Rob Stevens and Jim Dowd

**ABSENT:** None

**GUESTS:** John Robertson, Marilyn Kittelman, David Jacques, Lois Eagleton, Norma Talburt, John and Marilyn Ulicny, Francis Eatherington, Celia Scott, Mike Burke, Barbara Taylor, Nikki Messenger and John Sowell

Ferber called the meeting to order.

## The Future of Douglas County Parks, a Discussion

Dowd explained the purpose of this special meeting was to have an open discussion regarding the future of the Park Division in light of the previous and future budget cuts. He reminded the board that the Board of Commissioners have directed another 10% cut in the general fund budget for 2010-11 and 35% cut for the 2011-12 fiscal year. The total amount to be cut over the next two years will be around \$239,500 which is a significant loss to maintaining the parks at the same level of service that they have previously been maintained.

Dowd encouraged the board to develop a vision or plan for the division and to determine what projects could be taken to the Douglas County Parks Foundation board to help raise money for the projects. New ways to generate funds will need to be explored as the BOC has told department heads they cannot raise current fees.

Discussion from the board included topics such as establishing a volunteer coordinator, revenue sharing as in hotel/motel tax, and creating a regional park and recreation district. It was agreed to prioritize the project list by income generation and how many people the project would include.

Dowd reviewed each project on the list. The projects prioritized were: Putting cabins at Ork Rock, putting more cabins at Chief Miwaleta, building the equine campground at the coast, adding more yurts or cabins at Whistlers Bend and possibly upgrading the Whistlers Bend Campground with water/sewer/electric. Dowd expressed concern that even with the income from these projects may not be enough to sustain the division long-term in light of more budget cuts.

Other revenue producing ideas were: Parking fees, voluntary add-on fees at campgrounds, selling advertising at parks, and seeking more outside grants. The board asked what other counties in the state are doing. Dowd will report back on models from counties who are operating outside the general fund monies.

The board will continue to look for alternative funding sources to take to the BOC so that services will not be reduced and that parks will continue to bring people to the county.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:**

Francis Eatherington suggested that priority be put on establishing wi-fi availability at campgrounds, and encouraged that emphasis be put on grants for ecological purposes such as solar power and climate change. She said that Mildred Kanipe Park is a good park for potential grants in those areas. She inquired about whether any new information regarding the trust was available. Dowd reported that as soon as he can make information known to the public regarding the trust, he will. There are still decisions and options pending.

Norma Talburt who represents the Oregon Equestrian Trail and the Douglas County Mounted Posse reported that people who attend the poker rides at Mildred Kanipe Park would be interested in camping at the park if a campground was established and encouraged the board to look into that possibility. She mentioned that users may be willing to pay to ride at the park.

Lois Eagleton was concerned that if the trust for Mildred Kanipe Park was dismantled, that it would go against Mildred's will. She asked that if the trust was dismantled, would the money be handled by the Park Foundation. Dowd answered no.

Marilyn Kittelman from the Roseburg Beacon reminded the board that ATV riders do not pay to ride and it should be consistent with the rules for equine parks. She encouraged the board to seek private donations to build necessary buildings and have their group/company name be put on the project. She supports the division in their effort to have wi-fi at the Windy Cove Campgrounds and said it should be taken to the BOC to insist that we continue to use the Salmon Harbor wi-fi as we have in the past. Other ideas she had were to lease property to private entities to help in maintaining parks, and to go out for bid on concessionaires at parks.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next Park Board meeting will be December 17, 2009.

A motion to adjourn was made by Larson and seconded by Swift. The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi Wilson, Administrative Assistant  
Douglas County Park Department