



County Parks Board  
Meeting Minutes  
January 14, 2021

- I. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Natrona County Parks Board brought to order at 5:30p.m. By Chairman Roy Buck. This meeting was held via Zoom.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Those in attendance were Parks Board Members Roy Buck, Jim Miller, Stuart Hill and Tina Kruse. Parks Director Mike Haigler and Commissioner Brook Kaufman (Liaison).
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. **APPROVAL:** Roy Buck motioned for approval of the December 10th, 2020 minutes. Stuart Hill seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- V. **REPORTS: Park Director:** Roy Buck approved the Directors Report as written with no objections.

**A. MOUNTAIN PARKS UPDATE:**

1. **Mountain well/water system:**

Mike Haigler reported that the water is still not on but the well house has been delivered. The pumps have been installed in the well. They are waiting for electrical to be ran as well as a chlorinator that is on backorder. The driller will come back and install it and the electrician will connect all the electricity so it will be operational.

2. **Trail center:**

Mike Haigler reported that the temporary building was delivered in November. It still does not have electrical ran to it. It was scheduled for December 18<sup>th</sup>; the panel the first electrical company ordered has not come in. Another electrical company went up and looked at the project. They were able to come up with the pieces to put a panel together. They will be onsite to install that panel on January 15<sup>th</sup>. Once the panel is installed, Rocky Mountain Power will come back and reestablish power to the pole. There is not a date on that. It will have to wait until the inspection of the panel is complete. Mike reported that they bought a generator so it can run the stadium, but power could not be ran anywhere else.

Stuart Hill asked if the panel was something, you could plug a generator into.

Mike Haigler responded no, not when it's hooked up to power. They wouldn't let us do that.

Mike Haigler reported that they held the charrettes and had input from the public. They came up with the three selected designs. One of those was a final design that was presented to the County Commissioners as well as the cost. The Commissioners directed that to be revisited and try to downsize the cost of the building. One of the items looked at was the size of the kitchen. They are looking at re-designing that kitchen as a catering kitchen and then cutting back on the square footage. They will be getting a new estimate on that shortly. Worthington Lenhart has provided a survey so they have the contours to work with inside of the building.

**3. Rotary Park Bridal Trail Constructions:**

Mike Haigler reported that they did reopen the trails on Davis Way and moved the boulders out of the way. They are going to put the steps in next spring. They are working on adjusting the GIS map that is showing where that trail is so they can put one of those on site. People will be able to look at it and know where they are.

Stuart Hill commented on the Trail Center that it would be nice if they could have the guys at state line come and show it to them first so the public would have a chance to take a look at it. He stated that he didn't know if the County Commissioners had the public looking at it or not. He asked if they are still looking at the large one with the bigger parking lot.

Mike Haigler replied that the parking lot has been reduced. It could be added on at a later date but the whole design has taken a step back as far as size goes.

Stuart Hill asked if there was any way they could get a look at that.

Mike Haigler responded that he believes once they get the re-drawing of it, they can take a look at it.

Roy Buck commented that he recalled a discussion from the last charrette that they would possibly provide a public input session. He asked that once they get the elevation and a re-draw plan if they could pull something like that together.

Mike Haigler reported that it is not in the contract to do that. They had the two charrettes already and he believes what he heard from the Commissioners was that they wanted it to be seriously looked at for downsizing. They are going to regroup because it's not going to be what everybody looked at originally.

## **B. PATHFINDER/ALCOVA**

### **1. Road Maintenance Project:**

Mike Haigler reported that the construction has gone really well. Almost all of the gravel has been done, there is just a little bit of cleanup to do. They are working on culverts still. They will be doing a preliminary walk through in the next week to approve the gravel installation. They still have culverts and valley pans to put in as soon as the weather warms up a little bit. They might heat the ground so they can continue to work but that would be extra cost.

### **2. Full Hookup Bath House:**

Mike Haigler reported that the bathhouse is closed down for the winter and will be revisited in the spring. They will turn the water on and check all the lines and take the final acceptance on that sometime in April once they know everything is working.

### **3. Lowering of Alcova Lake:**

Mike Haigler reported that the lake is back up to its 10 foot level which is at its normal operating level. There are a lot of people working on their docks trying to beat the water level coming up, some people still have some finishing touches on them.

### **4. Disturbance of Federal Land without a Permit:**

Mike Haigler reported that during the site visits while he was looking at 71 Constructions' project, where the new picnic shelters are being built, he noticed a major earth disturbance that had taken place that nobody had authorized. Mike reported that he spoke to the burrow about it and had attached some pictures to the

agenda. The Parks Department didn't authorize it nor did the Bureau. There will be some corrective action taken and the material will be moved back to the way it was. The only avenue by Parks regulations is a \$100.00 fine and or 30 days in jail. They have never used that clause for something like this but Mike reported that the Bureau is not happy about it so it will be addressed in the next week as to what they are going to require.

Stuart Hill commented that it looks like a motorhome pad.

Mike Haigler responded that he doesn't know what it is but no one talked to him about what they were doing. He stated that you can't move dirt out there without the environmental study and it's a simple thing to do if you get the permit. He stated that there was no permit requested.

Roy Buck asked the Board if they had any questions for Mike.

Stuart Hill asked if on the new building if there was any way to get any work done this year because it is obvious that it isn't going to get all done in one year. He stated that they need a bigger parking lot up there, and that it definitely needs a bigger parking lot because one of the biggest needs is more parking on the mountain and he would like to see that happen. He stated that if they could get the ground work done for a bigger parking lot this coming construction season that it is going to take that to get this whole thing set up.

Mike Haigler reported that there are some studies that need to be done first. They have to see if the septic system will be able to handle whatever they do. That has been looked into and it has been certified so really it's down to the cost of the building and the money to come up with to do it. Mike stated that the parking lot could be added on at any time as could more length to the building as well. He reported that there are other things they are looking at putting into the building. As whether to put them in now or to stud them out. That is what Lyle is looking at. All of that together as the cost.

Stuart Hill comment that they will be in the temporary one for a couple winters it looks like.

Mike Haigler responded that if it was ready to go out to bid now it still wouldn't be ready with all the geological things that they have to do. He stated that it is going to be the following year for the building if they can start building it right away. It will be 2022 but there is no way they are going to get it right now.

Stuart Hill stated that he hopes the power company can get out there but they were running slow when he tried to get his connection.

Mike Haigler responded that he just doesn't have any leverage on that but it can't be done until the box is inspected.

Roy Buck asked if there were any further questions.

No further questions from the Board at this time.

Roy Buck thanked Mike and stated that he has a lot on his plate that he is dealing with so just try and keep it moving forward.

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Douglas Irvine commented via ZOOM stating his name and address. He asked what the game plan is going forward with the Bridle Trail. He stated that on the June 16<sup>th</sup> Commissioners meeting they thought there was an understanding in what the steps where and what was going to happen with the new trail re-route, the closing of Davis Way and the granting of easement. He asked what the timeline and expected path was going to be moving forward on the new work on the trail and getting the easement.

Roy Buck asked Doug what specific easement he was talking about.

Doug Irvine replied the Chrisman property on the top of the new trail work.

Brook Kaufman replied that they had placed those boulders without having permission or having a discussion with Howard Chrisman so they are going to follow up with him. They will go back to the status quo and have a conversation with Mr.

Chrisman. He is out of town but will have that discussion once he returns. Brook stated that Mr. Chrisman did notify her that he had not received the easement for signing. Eric is on vacation this week so she does not know if they received it back but hopes it's on short order.

Roy Buck stated that they know that this is a bit of a new strategy as far as a zoom meeting. As far as he is concerned they will try to make this available as long as necessary and hope that any of the public that want to participate in the Parks Board meetings; they will be held the second Thursday of each month at 5:30, will attend. Members of the public are encouraged to attend via Zoom if you can't attend in person. Go onto the Natrona County website and look for attending via Zoom. If they use something different that information will be available on the County website prior to each scheduled Parks Board Meeting. They encourage the public to attend any way that they can. They are looking for your input, ideas, and comments about any of these projects they are working on.

**VII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Stuart Hill asked Brook if they are looking to fill the position for the Parks Board again because they only have four members.

Brook Kaufman stated that the Commissioners have an hour slated for general discussion on Tuesday at their next work session and that is a topic of discussion. Mr. Irvine has also put in his application for the position. It is a topic on Tuesday.

Stuart Hill asked if that was in a regular meeting or if it was earlier in the day.

Brook Kaufman responded that it would be in a work session. It will come up in general discussion about how they want to handle their appointment process.

Stuart Hill commented on the roadwork out at the lake stating that it looked really nice. He thought that part of the work was done where they put the shelter up and was not aware that, that was not done by the County. {Referring to the land that had been moved without proper permitting.} He stated that it is cold out there so to set all that dirt in and get it plowed in just right is cold work so he hopes that they

do wait and do it when it warms up. He stated that it is great seeing everyone using the mountain even with the little bit of snow we have people are up there.

Tina Kruse commented that she agrees with Stuart that it is great to see everyone on the mountain. The new improvements are down the road but with the new lodge up there, it's going to be nice. She asked if the electrical will be up by the end of the month possibly.

Mike Haigler responded that it should be hooked up to the power line by tomorrow.

Jim Miller asked Mike if there would be a specific time that a grooming report will be reported on the trail system.

Mike Haigler responded that he can't tell him off the top of his head when the last one was registered on-line.

Jim Miller responded that he had received a couple calls asking if there was a designated time or date during the week that a grooming report would be reported. He said that in the past when they groom their report is given but he thinks people want to know what the grooming report is with such a lack of snow. He said for example if Bishops was closed because there isn't enough to groom, the report would say spotty because of lack of snow and a reason why some of the areas aren't being groomed. He knows it's because of a lack of snow and they can't get the big groomer up there.

Mike Haigler reported that he is aware that there have been a lot of comments on the cameras not working but until there is power it just isn't going to happen.

Jim Miller comment that the mountain use has been tremendous so far this winter with both snowshoes and skiers even in the Bear Trap area. He stated that it has been good to see.

Roy Buck commented that one of the big projects they have in their future is the Nordic Lodge project; and has a question for Commissioner Kaufman as to what they see as the role of the Parks Board on that project for 2021.

Brook Kaufman replied that that was a great question and said advocacy for sure. She stated that she can sense Stuarts' frustration and can understand that. It would have been unfortunate if the original and the price tag; that the commission does not have an appetite or ability to fund, wouldn't be a fair thing to take to the public. If we can just hone in a little bit on the scope and get something that's a little bit more likely to happen if there needs to be more exposure to the project that would be great. When you do see it and have a chance to weigh in there are a lot of people who still don't know what is going on; there was a discussion tonight about when the facility would be placed, they are now looking at 2022. So helping in educating people about what really is happening up there is really helpful because people don't know. Or they think we are going to be in that temporary facility for five years or that the County won't do anything which is not the case. They would like to see if there are some partnership opportunities on that facility from an operating perspective and a financial perspective so they can get a little more building for the money and find other pots to share the leverage across multiple resources to get that done.

Roy Buck replied that it is just something they are hearing questions and comments about so it's good to know where they are at in the process. It's a big project so they want to do it right and if that means taking a little more time than they are going to take a little more time.

Brook Kaufman replied that she believes that they will see some nice partnerships and will be able to share. She stated that their role is very valuable in this because they are the boots on the ground with their stakeholders, more than the Commission in this case and they play an important role.

#### **VIII. Adjournment:**

Roy Buck motioned for adjournment. Tina Kruse seconded the motion.  
Motion carried.