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## **BENTON COUNTY NATURAL AREAS & PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

### **MINUTES**

**August 11, 2021  
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

#### **GOTO MEETING**

**Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.**

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/972008037>

**You can also dial in using your phone.**

United States: +1 (571) 317-3122

**Access Code: 972-008-037**

**Committee Members Present:** Mary Derr, Bob Hansen, David Smith, Jackie Hastings, Elizabeth Spatafora, and Suzanne Lazaro.

**Committee Members Absent:** Dan Rosenberg.

**County Staff Present:** Lynne McKee, Natural Areas, Parks & Events Director;  
Jesse Ott, Natural Areas, Parks & Events Deputy Director;  
Adam Stebbins, Natural Resources Coordinator;  
Leanna Buck, Recorder.

I. **Introduction of Guests** ~ Ann Eissinger member of the Oak Creek valley housing community.

#### **II. BUSINESS**

##### **A. Approval of July Minutes**

Bob moved to accept the minutes as written and Suzanne seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

##### **B. Introduction of new Board Member and Board Recruitment ~ Lynn**

Lynn talked about recruitment for the board as we are down by two positions. She advised that if anyone has any interest in being on the board to let her know and she will be happy to send the link to sign up to them. There is one possible application waiting to be reviewed now by the Board of Commissioners. The gentlemen that has been talking with David has not been notified yet on whether or not he has been accepted. [Lynne will follow up with his application.](#)

**C. Wildland Fire and Park Closures Report ~ Jesse & Ad-Hoc Committee**

Jesse sent out the draft protocol report from the ad-hoc committee via email. David Smith reported that the committee met to discuss fire risks and trail closures and advised that there was a great deal of feedback and that Benton County has taken a strong leadership role in this. There was quite a bit of great information shared by each land manager and he feels now that they are in a position that they can recommend a way forward on this issue for the safety of the public and the land. Jesse thanked the committee for meeting and getting everything researched, discussed, and vetted to create the best protocol for our County. He started off sharing that there was not a template in place and that this group had to develop one especially for our area. He also talked about the discussion regarding how or when trail closures will happen. He added that anyone along the trails will help with trail closures when they happen which will be a big help. Jesse and the ad-hoc committee recommended that the Parks Advisory Board accept the draft protocol. Adam added that the public that are actually using the trails have been very helpful in alerting us of any issues out there so it has been super helpful to keep them out there using those trails. He also approves of the draft protocol. Lynne thanked Jesse and the ad-hoc committee for all of their work on this issue and meeting with each land manager to discuss the best procedures. Jackie also thanked Jesse and the ad-hoc committee for their work on this. Jesse added that if there was a fire event now that we are totally ready to address everything. Dan moved to adopt the protocol as written. David seconded the motion. [Adam will pull together the number of days of red flag and extreme weather warnings issued by ODF for the general public for the 2020-21 year.](#) Motion passed unanimously. [Jesse will inform all of our land management partners that this board has approved this protocol tomorrow.](#)

**D. Beazell Road Project Update ~ Adam**

Adam reported that one of the priorities of the Timber management plan for Ft. Hoskins, Beazell and Fitton Green was to improve the road system at Beazell for forest operations. This was started in June and was just finished. We had a great contractor that worked on the project and did a fantastic job. [Adam will forward the pictures and maps to the board so that they can see the end result.](#) The job was estimated to be over \$75,000 but actual costs came in quite a bit less and is looking more like \$65,000 instead. Jesse thanked Adam for his work with all the contractors and creating a great relationship with the contractors getting each job done

**E. Old Forest Analysis - Beazell Pilot Project ~ Adam**

Adam advised that a major component of the Stewardship Plan was to focus on sustainable forestry. There was an addendum to the Stewardship Plan update 2020 that incorporated the public comment request to complete an analysis for old forest and establish reserve areas for "old forest" - greater than 100 years old at minimum dominated by Douglas Fir. Currently Adam is working under temporary contract internally with a GIS specialist within Public Works, to develop a new GIS mapping visualization of: species class, age class, size class, aspect, soils, drainage, and other conservation reserve priorities. The maps will be shared during the September meeting and follow up ground truthing will occur prior to development and establishment of old forest conservation reserve. He shared that it will be multiple units that are roughly 10 to 20 acres. He is hoping to get everything wrapped up in the next quarter.

**F. Outdoor Ed & Rec Program Update ~ Adam**

Adam shared pictures of a successful youth outdoor adventures program at Ft. Hoskins and Beazell. There was double the amount of kids that they had last year. The next one coming up will be the Family Mushroom hunt in the fall. Adam also shared that they will continue the traffic counts which are focusing on Beazell, Ft. Hoskins, Fitton Green and Adair parks.

**G. Park Project Updates**

Jesse shared that we are heading into the Adair Master Plan with help from Steven Doberich. We will be starting this process very soon. He then shared about the Salmon restoration project going on at Seeley Creek that Adam has been working on. We are still working on where we are going to go with the Jackson-Frazier boardwalk project. Adam and his intern Thomas are working on the groundwork for this project now. Jesse also talked about our two new employees that have now rounded out our staffing needs. Bob shared that he had a great time at the Bellfountain Park playground grand opening. Jackie and Suzanne shared the same sentiments.

**H. Updates from AFRANA**

Suzanne shared about AFRANA's roll in working with Benton County to coordinate the board walk replacement at Jackson-Frazier as well as their donation of some of the money for the project. She also talked about AFRANA funding one of the 'Safe Routes to School' projects in South County. This will help with the continued effort of more trail connectivity in South County. West Point Joint Meadow restoration project up at Mary's Peak was a project that AFRANA help partner and support as well. The celebration of the completion of this project was today.

**I. Other**

There was discussion regarding having face to face meetings again but in light of the indoor making mandate that will be taking place at the end of this week we will continue our GOTO meetings for the time being.

**III. MEETING ADJOURNMENT ~ 7:27pm**

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