

**Parks Advisory Committee
January 13, 2003**

Members Present: Janet Alexander, Merle Bottge, John Rosselli, Johnny Medlin, Damien Gilbert, and Emily Schue

Members Absent: Steve Davis

Staff Present: Rich Fay, Jake Risley, and Christine Johnson

Guests Present: Gene Benedict, Property Owner in Florence

Merle Bottge, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

I. Announcements/Agenda Modifications

Fay wanted to add an item regarding a discussion of video lottery dollars for a campground at Armitage Park, and Rosselli wanted to add the election of committee officers as well as discuss our accomplishments and goals.

II. Approval of Minutes – December 9, 2002 Parks Advisory Committee Meeting

Bottge asked that the minutes from the December 9, 2002 meeting be approved. Schue so moved, Rosselli seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Public Comment (Maximum of 20 Minutes)

No public comment.

IV. Election of Officers

Rosselli nominated Janet Alexander to be our new Vice-Chair and Merle Bottge as our new Chair.

Motion: Schue moved that the nominations be closed and that this Committee cast a unanimous vote for these two nominees. Medlin seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

V. Parks System Master Plan Requirements

Fay began by referring to the agenda cover memo that was mailed to each Committee member. This memo is a report back to the Board on the master plan requirements at HBRA to allow certain activities, such as camping and concession sales, at the North Bottomlands. In order to allow these activities to occur it must be included in the park's master plan and currently it is not. The estimated cost for one employee to go through the process of an addendum to the master plan (maps, drawings, photos, public meetings, etc.) is between \$54,000 and \$60,000. Fay said that there are still some legal issues to be resolved and this will not be going before the Board this month as expected. Fay also said that we could possibly apply for video lottery dollars to pay for this process.

Rosselli clarified that the agenda cover memo was really two separate issues, 1) the over-all Parks Master Plan, and 2) an amendment to the HBRA Master Plan to allow camping and concessions in the North Bottomlands. Fay stated that we could take these to the Board as two separate issues or combine them and go with whatever the Board decides, but in either case we don't have the money to do either. Fay said that it would be nice to have the Board's support when applying for video lottery dollars. Bottge asked what the most recent parks plans that were done. The Parks 2005 Plan was approved by the Board in February 1999 and the HBRA Master Plan was completed in June 1994. Risley is currently working on master plans for both Armitage and Perkins Peninsula Parks. Schue asked what our current limitations are at HBRA. Fay said the according to Land Management, we shouldn't allow camping or concession sales. However, since the activities at the horse arena were included in the HBRA Master Plan, they don't have the same restrictions. Discussion followed which included the need for an all-parks master plan to help give the Division direction as well as help when applying for grant monies; the suggestion that this Committee go back and review the HBRA Master Plan before moving forward; whether or not an all-parks master plan could be completed in one year; and, whether it was financially feasible to spend \$60,000 to get the approval for camping and concessions at HBRA when the return may only be up to \$30,000 in revenues (the new fee structure at HBRA has not yet been determined).

Rosselli reminded everyone that if we apply for video lottery monies to fund a master plan, it wouldn't cost the Park's Division any money. Medlin stated that he is in favor of supporting a master plan but suggested some sort of position paper be drafted stating the benefits of parks because he's not seeing a plan on what we are trying to do and how to sell it. Schue agreed and also said that things like this need to be promoted for longer than just a few months, sometimes a year or two in order to get public support.

Motion: Rosselli moved that this Committee recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that the Parks Division proceed with researching possible funding sources to initiate the master planning process to include the entire parks system. Schue seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

VI. Ocean Woods Property – Jake Risley

Risley stated that since the discussion of this property at the last meeting, he has met with Gene Benedict who owns 40 acres adjacent to the Ocean Woods property. Risley also stated that in both the Parks 2000 and Parks 2005 Plans, drafted by Bob Keefer and adopted by the Board, this property was to be looked at and held in reserve for future park funding opportunities. Of Mr. Benedict's 40 acres about 17 or 18 acres are developable and is also connected to the 160 acres that the County owns. With our budget the way it is this might present an opportunity to generate some additional revenues. One option would be to trade Ocean Woods for Mr. Benedict's property plus some cash. Lane County would have to determine property values, but it could be as much as \$100,000 to \$120,000. Frank Simas, in Real Property, has contacted the State regarding the deed restriction and feels that a letter to the State requesting they lift the deed restriction will be all that is necessary. Medlin asked about any cash generated going into the General Fund. Risley felt that since the Board approved keeping this property as a funding resource for Parks when they approved the Parks 2000 and 2005 Plans, this might not be a problem. Discussion followed which included the water wells that Florence still needs and the value of the water under the land, the need to get an assessed value of both properties before proceeding further, what the neighbors might think – consider a joint public meeting with the City of Florence, and what are the County's plans for their 160 acres. Mr. Benedict is willing to work with us and look at some of the options. He would also like to be kept informed.

Motion: Rosselli moved that this Committee encourage staff to gather more information and explore all the options regarding these two properties. Alexander seconded, and the vote was unanimous.

VII. Capital Improvement Projects Update – Jake Risley

The Richardson Creek Restoration project is going well. We currently have the Looking Glass Work Crew placing erosion control matting down. The grading and seeding has also been completed.

The new Richardson Park Picnic Shelter is also going well. The cement slab has been poured and the masonry work has been completed. Pretty much on budget. We do have a request into Weyerhaeuser for some grant monies and should hear from them in the next couple of months. Risley is also working on a fun run that would include running across the dam and through Orchard Point Park and back.

VIII. Amending Lane Manual to Increase Fees

Fay said he was still working on the Board packet as well as options in case the Board doesn't approve the fee increases, which include possible service reductions, staff reductions and park closures. Fay said that to save money we might need to hire more part-time seasonal and park laborer people and not fill the two vacant PM2 positions. The Board order includes raising fees across the board by one-third. We have no control over some of our revenue sources or unexpected expenses like additional PERS costs that may occur, but we do have control over what fees we charge. We are also looking at legislation to change how the RV registration fees are distributed. Right now the Counties get 30% and the State gets 70%. We want change that to 40% and 60%. Discussion followed which included whether or not people will be willing to pay the increased fees, changing what we charge per picnic site to \$1 per person and not raising admission fees into the parks, extending the fee collection season two weeks longer at the beginning of the season and at the end of the season – and maybe just on weekends, and if we increase park fees will the quality of maintenance at the parks also remain high. Fay said that if the Board approved the fee increases, it would be about three months before they went into effect and that this would be going before the Board in about a month.

IX. Video Lottery Dollars

Fay stated that we will be going after about \$200,000 in Video Lottery dollars to put a campground back into Armitage Park. We will probably combine this with the County Opportunity Grant program.

X. 2003 Goals and 2002 Accomplishments

Fay asked this Committee for what we should list as goals for the coming year and they came up with the following list: 1) Create a comprehensive parks plan, 2) Add more camping opportunities, 3) Resolve Florence property issues, 4) Acquire adequate funding to keep service levels up, 5) Amend HBRA master plan to accommodate large groups overnight, 6) Find funding for an admission fee scholarship program, 7) Work harder to pull in more grant opportunities, 8) Create an adopt-a-park program, and 9) Add more special events like the Run for the Mountain event.

XI. Parks Manager Report

- **Eagle Rock Residence Status:** The Park Host from Hendrick's Bridge has moved to the Eagle Rock site to provide on-site security there.
- **HBRA Trial #17:** The new trail at Mt. Pisgah was named for Theodore Palmer.
- **Run for the Mountain Design Contest:** The design contest has begun and we have already received our first entry.

XII. Good of the Order

There was nothing for the Good of the Order.

XIII. Adjournment:

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.

Submitted by Christine Johnson, Secretary