

Harvey County Parks & Recreational Advisory Board
Minutes of
September 16, 2013 – East Lake

Members Present: Carol Buller, Pat Jackson, Derrick Richling, Deb Cobb, Terry Gowin, Zack Phillips, Jerry Vetter, Cynda Conrade

Members Absent: Jim Lasiter

Rangers Present: Kass Miller, Carol Dilts

Minutes: The minutes of the August meeting were approved after corrections were made. (spelling of Carol Dilts name & Kass corrected the fact that Stu did attend fish tournament/seminar and Kass did not attend).

Special Use Permits: None

Park Staff Reports:

Kass for Camp Hawk: Kass reported that on 9/28 – the parks department will sponsor The First Annual Party in the Park at Camp Hawk. This will run from 2:00 PM until midnight. They will have 6 bands & Big Brothers & Big Sisters will furnish concessions. Tickets are \$12.00 in advance & \$15.00 at the door and are sold at Midland Bank, First Bank & Citizens Bank at Wal-Mart. They will also have a Frisbee Golf Tournament the first weekend of October.

Trees still down in the area – still working on clean up. The “tube” still has not been repaired. Shelter is busy.

Kass for East Lake: Road & Bridges have been a tremendous help in cleaning up around East Lake pulling big trees out of the lake. he stated without their help they would not be as far along as they are. The blue stem area still needs work – they have a lot of burning to do. They hoped to get out on the horse trails & start working there, but have not been able to do so yet. Pat commented that some of the Newton Saddle Club members planned a couple of work days over labor day weekend on the trails. Carol Buller said she rode the trails after they had worked & they did a good job cleaning up the first part from the old ranger residence area to the first open hay field. Still needs lot of work – bad at the second bridge crossing – lot of trees down cannot work your way through.

Kass stated they had a good labor day weekend at the lake. With the water being up, they had a lot of boaters. They are short 2 staff persons. They have one couple for Camp Hosts at present. (they are the ones that lost their camper from the storm which has now been replaced).

Carol for West Park: They are pretty much back to normal. Water is down; a tree that had fallen over a boat dock has been removed. Kansas Game dumped some more channel cat into the lake – do not know how many – they were not aware they were doing this. They have had some problems with mosquitoes – but that seems to be coming under control. Deb stated there was a lot of rental activity for shelters & camping pads. They are also short 2 staff persons. Carol reported that Bill Tracy, Chief of Police at Buhler, who worked part time for them has resigned effective August 1. Felt he needed to spend more time with family.

Park Board Committee Reports:

Fishing Boating & Hunting: Fishing has been steady – better at West Park than East Lake. Need to get the blind set up at East Lake for geese hunting. Deb said they are hoping to have a carp tournament at West Park next year as they do have a lot of carp in the lake.

Facilities, Roads & Grounds: Roads are a little rough due to storms – Road & Bridges have helped in smoothing out some of the rougher spots.

Land Park Use & Resource Management: (Refer to comments made by Carol Buller in the East Lake report). Carol Dilts said there was some water on the horse trails at West Park – but they have had riders.

Old Business:

Terry Gowin commented to Kass that the clean up at East Lake was tremendous. Kass said they had a lot of help from a lot of people. Terry asked if there was any idea of the costs for the clean up. Kass said they log the time spent on clean up on time cards plus they log fuel used for clean up. He believes they qualify for federal assistance which is in the works. But, as far as a dollar cost, he did not have a figure to give. He did say he bought a \$600. chain saw to assist in cutting down the big trees.

New Business:

Chairman Jerry Vetter reported he received a call from John Waltner advising that Shannon Metz was no longer employed. That was all the information he was given. Zach asked about hiring/replacing rangers. Jerry understood they may be going in a different direction for the running the parks. They may be looking at hiring a Harvey County Parks Director that would be in charge of all 3 parks. This was done some years back.

Deb Cobb presented a proposal which is attached to these minutes. It is a request from “several” patrons at West Park asking for an annual permit running from January 1 to December 31 at a suggested fee of \$200 per year. They want the park to be open year round.

Discussion –

- *Go from recreational park to RV park

- * Water is shut off at East Lake – however Deb said the water is left on year round at West Park as they have freeze-proof faucets

- * Zack asked about the possibility of people just “living” at the park – not camping if open year round.

- *Deb stated the particular individuals requesting this change are just campers & are pretty sure they do not want to live there. However, how could you keep someone out paying the yearly fee that wanted to live on the grounds.

- * Kass commented that he was told by former ranger Marion Rowland this proposal was discussed some years ago. According to utility companies – either water or electric or possibly both, if the parks went to being open year round as an RV park – each camp site would have to have their own meter & that this was extremely costly.

- *Deb stated she was presenting this as a favor to the individuals, but she would like to keep the park a recreational park.

- *Kass suggested they just sell storage space to these people for their campers.

- *What about homeless people whom Kass stated they had some at East Lake that they helped find places to stay.

Zack asked what other state parks do. Kass commented he was sure the majority are not open year round. Some may offer 30 day rates – but very minimum. Zach also asked if opening up the parks year round would compete with private RV parks such as Spring Lake.

Carol Buller moved that the advisory board recommend the Seasonal Pass from April to November remain in effect and no changes be made for an annual pass due to comments/concerns stated above and the costs that would be involved. Terry seconded. No other discussion – Motion carried.

Deb stated she would advise the individuals of our decision and invite them to come to a board meeting if they wished to proceed further.

No further business – Meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Next meeting October 21, 2013 at Camp Hawk.

Respectfully,

Pat Jackson, Secretary