

Harvey County Parks Advisory Board
Meeting – East Lake

June 20, 2016

Members present: Pat Jackson, Carol Buller, Zack Phillips, Cynda Conrade, Bill Kiehl, Jack Bender, Brittany Welch, and Ron Hoffman

Members Absent: Jim Lasiter, Brandon Wills, Carolyn Schwab

Staff Present: Parks Director, Kass Miller & Operations Supervisor, Derrick Richling

Minutes: A May Meeting was not held. The April minutes were approved with addition of Ron Hoffman being present (left off the member present list).

Public Forum: Tony Wheeler – Merlin Johnson – Brian Haag

The above gentlemen appeared before the advisory board and asked for a change in the resolution of park regulations to allow cast netting in East Lake for shad to use for bait.

- They would take only large shad (6 to 12 inches) leaving small shad in lake.
- It is legal to cast net for shad and transport from one body of water to another as long as they are dead
- Tony had talked with Jessica Mounts, fishery biologist and she advised him that it is legal to take shad from one body of water to another as long as they are not alive.
- Ron Hoffman asked if the use of this bait would be for a guide service – Tony replied he is just a fisherman.
- Merlin stated he does offer a guide service at other lakes and gets his bait elsewhere. He just is asking to cast for shad at East Lake to have bait on hand.
- Pat asked how often they would need to cast for shad – Merlin commented he was thinking of once a week – did not know how often for the others.
- They do not keep any game fish that are caught in the net (they would keep carp) – the game fish are immediately thrown back into lake.
- How would Rangers police this activity? Some concern about others doing the same thing (cast netting) for game fish.
- Zach asked how many would they take – Merlin commented perhaps 8 shad each – enough to fill 2 -3 gallon bags. They do not plan to take “thousands” out of lake.
- They use small 5 to 10 foot nets – with holes that let the smaller fish out.

Zach thanked the gentlemen for their interest/proposal and advised them that we are an advisory board only & recommend to the commissioners.

Discussion by board members:

- Carol asked if this would affect the balance of the lake
- Ron again mentioned how would this be monitored
- Pat commented it would take a Ranger’s time to be there every time a cast netting catch is done – especially if as Merlin suggested he would like to do it once a week.

- Zach suggested park staff get with Jessica & come back with recommendation on this request.
- Kass commented we have a bait shop at West Park which loses money anyway – also there is a bait shop near East Lake and they would obviously lose some business.
- Kass suggested a way to possibly control this situation would be with a Special Use permit – cast netting for shad only – individual(s) must give 48 hour notice before activity and perhaps schedule for one a month.
- Derrick agreed – at present we do not have staff to monitor/regulate this activity without some type of time stipulation.
- Ron Hoffman suggested that we get a written opinion from Jessica Mounts, fishery biologist, on the cast netting of shad from the lake(s). Zach asked Kass to obtain this for the records & for the board to decide on a recommendation.

Operations Report – Derrick Richling:

- Doing some repair on the RV spots at East Lake
- Camp Hawk – one of the renters of the shelter decided to “party” and proceeded to do “donuts” in the parking lot leaving some pretty good ruts – Derrick said it was after 2:00 AM before they got the individual taken care of and the party to leave the premises.
- Had flooding at East Lake & West Park over Memorial Day weekend.
- At West Park – due to flooding – some of the road has washed away. (Kass will discuss)
- At Walnut Grove area at West Park – they are brought in some portable potties since the bathhouse is being rebuilt.
- Some of the electric boxes in the area are getting old – Derrick has secured some replacements for around \$39 each to have on surplus for when they need to be replaced or new boxes are installed.
- During the flooding – the staff was able to put in use the new barricade chains/cables and they worked very well. At East Lake – there was an area where people could drive around them – but they since have placed large boulders to prevent this from happening again.

Directors Report: Kass Miller

- They had to shut down various areas of the lake due to flooding over the holiday weekend (Memorial Day) at East Lake.
- West Park they were able to avoid most of the flooded area.
- Road erosion that Derrick eluded to – Kass is in contact with Road & Bridge to decide what to do – how could they improve this area to prevent from happening again. Project is too big for the park staff – they do not have right equipment. They are in contact with FEMA to help with the cost that will be incurred.
- Due to resignation of camp host at West Park – they will be advertising for another camp host.
- Had to postpone the Horse Scavenger Hunt due to other priority matters. Plans are to try & reschedule in the fall when it is cooler.

- Kass mentioned he was asked why Harvey County Parks did not offer military discounts. This was over the memorial weekend. He asked the board their opinion.
- Carol asked how much discount – and this had not yet been determined.
- Zach asked for Kass to check with other parks & see what their policy is regarding military discounts & bring back to the next meeting.

Old Business:

- **Progress on bath house** – Received bids for foundation work – lowest just under \$7,000 from Excat – work should begin shortly.
- **FEMA** – Received monies for storm damage – around \$4800 – brought in tons of sand to put on beaches – then it flooded – but all sand appears to have stayed.
- Working on getting bridge replaced on the horse trails at East Lake – Osage Nature Trail area – Carol remarked that people walking not about to cross in that area due to bridge being out & very muddy.

New Business:

- **Staffing** – Ken who was the maintenance man has resigned due to health reasons. Kass advised they have been allowed to change this position into a Ranger position which will give them one more person to patrol/perform other duties along with maintenance.
- **Activity Fee** – Due to time constraints – Kass suggested that this be discussed at another meeting. He mentioned briefly that he would like to charge an entry fee into the park. Many people come into the parks to picnic – use swim area, etc at no charge. He said many parks charge an entry fee. If this could be done, it would add to our revenue. This would not be put in place until next year – Zach suggested this be discussed, possibly in September when budget items are being put in place.
- **Military Discount** – Jack commented – while undoubtedly well deserved – with one complaint – is this reason enough to consider a discount. Bill mentioned possibly offering over Memorial Day – if we decide to give a discount. Also, how would the rangers know especially at self-pay stations – who might take advantage? Kass commented the self-pay stations are honor system anyway – staff would simply follow up with individual while working log books.

Board Member Comments:

Ron Hoffman – Asking again about securing cell service at East Lake. In the 90's, we only had cell phones for phone calls – now with all the new “smart phones” able to secure weather – make calls – etc – felt this should be looked at again. He suggested some type of petition securing names from campers – perhaps set up a committee to determine the advantage of getting a tower put up at East Lake. Carol commented this had been done several years ago. Ron said the population has increased over the years & the need would be greater now. Zach asked if Ron was wanting some type of feasibility study or if this was something planning & zoning would be in charge of. Ron stated the recommendation would still have to come from the advisory board.

Jack commented he was involved with a tower in Halstead & that there is a lot involved in obtaining this. The cell companies want things done their way & there is a lot of items involved – 1) land 2) landscaping 3) is effort worth the benefit.

Pat commented the need for this service for safety reasons – campers – horseback riders – swimmers – general public.

Zach asked Ron to look into what we would need to do to get a tower at East Lake.

Pat reminded Zach that officers for 2016-2017 need to be voted on. Zach asked Kass to put this on agenda for next month,

No further discussion – Carol moved, Ron seconded that meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

Next Meeting: Monday, July 18, 2016

Respectfully,

Pat Jackson, Secretary.