

Harvey County Parks & Recreational Advisory Board
Minutes of
July 18, 2011 Held at West Park

Members Present: Larry Schmitt, Pat Jackson, Zack Phillips, Jim Lasiter, Carol Buller, Debbie Cobb, Norman Alexander & Walt Silvernale

Members Absent: Derrick Richling, Dorothy Zook, Jerry Vetter

Rangers Present: Kass Miller, Lloyd Stoddard, Shannon Metz

Minutes: Minutes of the June meeting were approved as presented.

Special Use Permits: None

Park Staff Reports: Kass passed out new Park Board Member List updated 6/23/11.

Camp Hawk: Kass said the pond was low - covered with algae - fish that are being caught appear to be oxygen deprived. Still trying to locate someone to remove the two large dead cottonwood trees. Eagle Scout project in the works to clean up around the pond.

East Lake: Purchased a new mower that is working very well. Trimming trees; they have been very busy at East Lake until last couple of weeks. Wasn't sure if it was heat/economy. Also had some rumors of lakes being closed as they have received calls asking if East Lake is open. No decision has been made on the ranger residence. Talked with County Commissioner; thinking of letting the fire department use it as a practice burn. Suggested use is to clear all debris out & possible develop the area for horse trailer/camping use. There is already water & electricity in the area.

West Park: Lloyd said they have some scouts that are painting te gazebo. Work is in progress to get 10 new camper pads with hookups north of the swimming area. Not sure where the money will come from to achieve this, but there is a push to get it done.

Committe Reports:

Fishing, Boating & Hunting: No Report

Facilities Roads & Grounds - No Report

Land Park Use & Resource Management: Lloyd advised that the pipeline project was done at West Park; have not reseeded the area as they promised (they claim that too hot grass will not grow). Don't know if it will be done or not. The pipeline people are going to build a gated fence on 24th. Walt asked if the new trees were being watered at East Lake & Kass advised that it is being done. Got a good soaking today (July 18th).

Carol Buller gave a brief explanation of an organization called ACTHA (American Competitive Trail Horse Association) that is becoming quite popular among trail riders. She said if East Lake did develop the old residence area into horse facilities/parking, the possibility of holding an event for this organization would be doable. They only need 10 miles of trails; it is a one day event; could hold one day at East Lake; one day at West Park over a weekend period. Something to think about to promote our horse trail/park system and use our trails. Will try to find out more information regarding fees, etc. Only requires 6 obstacles for the horses to go over; East Lake already has bridges that would serve this well.

Old Business:

A discussion was held on recommendations to improve the Domestic Animal regulations for the parks. The members were given a copy of the current regulations to review and give advice. Kass commented he felt some of the regulations needed to be more specific. He also said that since the incident reported last month regarding loose dogs; the rangers have been more diligent in seeing that dogs are on a leash & also completely away from the swimming area. It was suggested that wording regarding leash be more specific such as "dogs must be either controlled by handler on a leash or confined at the campsite. The writing of tickets to charge fines is still undecided. Kass said he can give them warning tickets, but sometimes that does not work. Kass will rewrite the regulations and present back to the board with some changes he feels will help. It was again suggested that the regulations be printed on bright colored paper to pass out to camper when they come in to register.

The Golf Cart issue was resolved and Kass passed out a Resolution 2011-20 adopted July 18, 2011 regarding Golf Cart usage at the parks. It is attached to these minutes. The resolution spells out operation rules & places where they can be used within East Lake & West Park.

Carol Buller reported on the cell phone tower situation at East Lake. Her husband, Emergency Services Director Lon Buller, advised they cannot put an antenna on the tower at East Lake due to airport runway traffic. Also, there is no money that can be obtained from FEMA for the purpose of cell phone towers.

New Business:

Shannon Metz passed out a comparison of West Park Shelter fees to other area shelters. She said it was very hard to find good comparisons since West Park is a more rural area & has recreation facilities that the others do not. She advised that the commissioners would like the advisory boards suggestions regarding increasing the fees at West Park for the new shelter. Compared to the shelters on the list, the fees West Park charge are very low. At present West Park charges \$100 per day from 8AM to 12PM with \$100 clean up deposit & \$100 alcohol deposit plus there is overnite camping allowed. The other facilities on the comparison list do not offer this service. A lengthy discussion was held regarding the pros & cons of increasing

fees; some of the users of the facility that book from year to year might balk if the price increased. However, Lloyd's wife, Debbie, does all the reservations & she commented that she mentions fees could go up. The rangers/staff have had comments from people that the fee is "cheap" compared to other places for what they get at West Park. The deposit was also discussed. It was felt one deposit should cover both clean up & alcohol. Kass asked about starting a non-refundable deposit system. They have many people that reserve the facilities (in all the parks) and then 2 weeks before the event when payment is due, they decide to not use the facility with no money paid. He suggested that \$50 of the reservation fee be non-refundable for "no shows". This would be paid 2 weeks after the reservation was made; with the balance being due 2 weeks before the event takes place. It was general opinion of the board that this would be a good idea; but this was tabled to give the rangers & those making the reservations an opportunity to discuss the procedures/bookkeeping that would be needed. Increase figures for West Park Shelter were suggested in the amounts of \$150, \$175, \$200. General opinion was \$200 would not be too much. Both Shannon & Lloyd expressed concern that this increase might hurt rental of the shelter due to economy, etc. **Carol Buller moved & Norman Alexander seconded that the rental fee for West Park be increased to \$200 per day, with \$200 deposit which would cover clean up & alcohol. This would be effective January 1, 2012. No other discussion,. Motion carried.** Secretary, Pat Jackson will write a letter to the commissioners making this suggestion.

Regarding algae on the ponds/lakes, Zack Phillips cautioned the rangers to be watchful for blue-green growth on the lakes that could present a toxic situation.. He stated it only takes one complaint call to the state to result in a immediate "Contact Warning" and a shut down of all usage of the lakes. As an example, Santa Fe lake in Butler County. was shut down for a year and lost \$50,000 in revenue. The rangers asked what can be done; Zack advised really nothing - we are in a weather pattern that this toxic alga could cause a problem all over. This would be a huge financial burden on Harvey County Parks - he asked if there was any type of back up plan should this occur. He stated from the air, looking at West Park, you can see a massive bloom in a north area; this does not mean it is toxic; but could result in mandatory warning signs to go up. He said this would hit all media attention which could be devastating to the parks. He just wanted the rangers/staff to be aware of what could happen.

No further business to be discussed. Norman moved, Debbie seconded that meeting adjourn. Motion carried.

Respectfully,

Pat Jackson, Secretary