

1                   **Clatsop County Recreational Lands Planning and Advisory Committee**  
2   **Regular Meeting**

3  
4   **MINUTES**

5  
6   **Thursday, December 7th, 2023**  
7

8 Members Present: Lynne Leland (LL), Steve Ferguson (SF), Brad Catton (BC), Tom Sayre (TS),  
9 Mike Hinton (MH)

10 Member Absent: None

11 Commissioner Liaisons Present: Pamela Wev (PW)

12 Public Present: None

13 Staff Present: Steve Meshke (SM), Erica Keyser (EK)  
14

15 **Welcome and Call to Order**

16  
17 Chairperson called the committee meeting to order at 13:01.  
18

19 **Agenda Approval**

20  
21 Agenda was approved.  
22

23 **Minutes**

24  
25 The minutes for September 28, 2023 were approved as presented.  
26

27 **Public Comment**

28  
29 None  
30

31 **Parks Report**

32  
33 SM reported he will do a slide show presentation at the January 17<sup>th</sup> Board of Commissioners  
34 work session. He has about 20 minutes of time to educate the BOC on the parks, staffing levels  
35 and budget. The recent letter written by this group to the BOC will be presented and the intent to  
36 update the Parks Master Plan. PW wants to make sure the members of this committee are  
37 invited to attend the presentation.  
38

39 PW asked SM if he receives crime information involving parks property from the Sheriff's office.  
40 He said not often, unless it is serious like a theft. The Law Enforcement Officers check in with  
41 the Park Hosts regularly and are quick to respond with issues.  
42

43 Two articles were provided to the committee on the end of recreational immunity. SM has  
44 spoken with County Counsel and Assistant County Manager on this topic. A lot can be fixed with  
45 wording and is in legislation now. Parks staff has assessed foot bridges and trails for condition  
46 and ways to improve traction. All of the trails in Clatsop County parks do not link to other  
47 properties with the exception of Klootchey Creek. Boat ramps are a grey area and need more  
48 discussion. Westport and John Day ramps are new and in good and safe working order. A few  
49 government entities in Oregon have already closed trails and areas to avoid lawsuits due to loss  
50 of immunity. The group had discussion on ramps, roads and trails connecting to and from

1 various properties in the county, i.e. county, city and private property. Some trails are a  
2 patchwork of owners and who is liable?  
3

4 MH suggests this committee encourages the Board of Commissioners follows Oregon  
5 Recreation & Park Association (ORPA) in lobbying to improve and reinstate recreational  
6 immunity. All property owners need to be protected while giving access to the public. PW added  
7 a lobbyist company has been recently hired to represent Clatsop County. TS said at some point  
8 there has to be a balance between municipalities and patrons.  
9

10 TS asked about camping at Klootchey Creek Park. Group discussed general camping  
11 possibilities and costs. SM added information He has gathered over the years from experience  
12 and from colleagues. Small campgrounds are a losing battle and do not make money. TS  
13 questioned why does the county always have to have a fee-based system instead of absorbing  
14 the cost to entice tourism and offer more camping sites. SM questions if the county is willing to  
15 take on the risk and expense of allowing camping in its parks. Many years ago, Clatsop County  
16 terminated the lease and returned Spruce Run Campground back to the Oregon Department of  
17 Forestry for reasons of high expense. EK pointed out, when people call the parks office looking  
18 for camp sites she will give them the Fair Grounds number for RV/tent sites.  
19

### 20 **Committee Member Reports**

21  
22 MH: Cranberry farmers around the Cullaby Lake area are talking to each other about the  
23 summertime blue green algae blooms. One farmer in particular is using less herbicide. MH  
24 stopped by Westport Park and noticed there is little signage to the park. SM said he is still  
25 waiting for the ODOT/Public Works improvements to complete. MH reported Sunset  
26 Transportation is placing a shelter at the Sunset Lake park. They might have intentions of  
27 sponsoring the park maintenance.  
28

29 LL: Shared some information on her recent trip to New Zealand with funny terms from the  
30 island.  
31

32 SF: Referring to earlier immunity discussions, should the county consider temporary liability  
33 signs? PW said that is a legal discussion and the BOC will follow what the Lawyers decide.  
34

35 BC: Gave congratulation on the SOBA award for the Westport Boat Ramp. BC attended the  
36 recent Clatsop Economic Forest Tour. It was a good tour with trip to Hampton's Big Creek  
37 Complex to see the new bridge up Mill Creek on Pig Pen road. A grant was used to help with  
38 the bridge construction. BC is hoping to dedicate a heritage tree on Northrup Creek in April.  
39 New signs at the Oregon Dept of Forestry arboretum made by Oregon Corrections.  
40

41 EK made aware Steve Ferguson, Lynne Leland and Tom Sayre's three-year terms expire  
42 February 1, 2024. Public notice will be published on the county website. They will each need to  
43 apply if they wish to serve another term.  
44

### 45 **Commissioner Report**

46  
47 PW: Gave congratulations to the committee for work on Westport Boat Ramp. She also thanked  
48 the group for being on top of the issue of recreational immunity.  
49  
50  
51

1 **Next Meeting**

2

3 January 25, 2024

4

5 **Adjourn**

6

7 As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 14:27

8 Respectfully Submitted,

9

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*Brad Catton*

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Brad Catton, Chair