

**Minutes of Meeting
Parks & Waterways
March 15, 2021
10:00 a.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Leslie Duncan and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Parks & Waterways/Noxious Weeds/Snowgroomers Director Nick Snyder, KCSO Patrol Deputy Alana Hunt and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio. Also present were Parks & Waterways Advisory Board Chair Terry Werner, Vice Chair Doug Harris and Member Tom Torgerson, Spokane River Association Members Jim Stafford, Robert Stiger and Susan Stiger, Hayden Lake Watershed Representative Will Neal, Kootenai County Residents Craig Ely, Shawn Hathaway, John Rubert and Erin Barnard, and Coeur d'Alene Press Reporter Madison Hardy.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business (Action):**

Waterways Ordinance Request Checklist

Parks & Waterways Advisory Board Chair Terry Werner reported that his group had received a number of requests for No Wake Buoys. He presented a four item checklist stating the conditions that should apply for a request to be considered.

- A permanent underwater hazard is present on a public waterway and should be marked for the safety of the general boating public.
- Marinas with twenty-five (25) or more slips, which provide services to the public such as moorage, fuel, and other services.
- Public or "semi-public" swim areas located in high traffic boating areas where more than fifty (50) swimmers may be present.
- Unique conditions are present that create a significant hazard to public safety, as determined by the Kootenai County Sheriff's Office.

Mr. Werner requested the Board's approval of the document.

All three Commissioners voiced their approval of the document.

Commissioner Leslie Duncan moved that the Board adopt the Waterways Ordinance Request Checklist, to provide guidance to the Waterways Advisory Board upon buoy requests. Commissioner Bill Brooks seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, Deputy Clerk Ginorio called the roll:

Commissioner Brooks: Aye

Commissioner Duncan: Aye

Chairman Fillios: Aye

The motion carried.

Illegal Buoys

Mr. Werner reported that his group had also discussed this item. He stated that Parks & Waterways Advisory Board Member Tom Torgerson had volunteered to collect information on all the illegal buoys.

Mr. Torgerson, who resides in Coeur d'Alene, stated that he had discussed this with Commissioner Duncan, who then brought the issue to the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL). He said he would identify as many illegal buoys and their owners as possible, and then provide the information to IDL. He stated that IDL would send notices to the owners demanding that the illegal buoys be removed.

KCSO Patrol Deputy Dale Johnson entered the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

Mr. Torgerson remarked that there seemed to be about 150 of the illegal buoys on the Lake.

Commissioner Duncan stated that IDL was in favor of the project.

No motion was required.

Wake Surf Boats in Powderhorn Bay, Echo Bay, and others – Greg Brands

Mr. Werner said that his group had received a request on February 11, 2021 to ban wake surf boats in certain areas. He said that the Advisory Board had decided not to support the request.

There was no motion presented. The Board voiced agreement with the Advisory Board's recommendation.

Request for No Wake Zone Buoys – Neachen Bay – CDA Lake Home Owners Association

Mr. Werner indicated that his group did not recommend that the Commissioners pursue no wake zone buoys for Neachen Bay.

There was no motion presented. The Board voiced agreement with the Advisory Board's recommendation.

Proposed No Wake Zone – Honeysuckle Bay – Hayden lake Watershed Association – Will Neal

Mr. Werner stated that the Advisory Board had a split vote regarding a no wake zone in Honeysuckle Bay. He noted that KCSO had recommended approval because it was near the boat launch. He confirmed that there had been three votes in favor, two opposed and two members absent.

Hayden Lake Watershed Association Member Will Neal provided a slideshow illustrating the concerns regarding Honeysuckle Bay.

Commissioner Duncan suggested that this request be reviewed further, in light of the additional legal buoys that were being put in place this year.

There was no motion presented.

Chairman Fillios confirmed that a public hearing would be required in order to enact an ordinance change.

Request to Modify County Waterways Ordinance – Spokane River

Mr. Werner commented that this item had been raised on a number of previous occasions. He said that it was discussed in their February 11, 2021 meeting and there was a unanimous vote to bring the recommendation to the BOCC that they continue to study shore erosion, accidents and injuries on the Spokane River, the causes and types of vessels involved, Spokane River enforcement, with total number of hours Deputies were deployed, on which days of the week, the numbers of arrests, citations and warnings issued. He concluded that they were asking that more data be provided to them at the end of this coming boating season so that they could provide a more informed response to this request.

The Board discussed various aspects of the request in detail.

Parks & Waterways (P&W)/Noxious Weeds/Snowgroomers Director Nick Snyder stated that certain activities would be essentially prevented from taking place on the River if the request was granted. He remarked that P&W did not take a position on these sort of issues and that it should be discussed in a public meeting.

No motion was presented at this time.

- D. Public Comment:** This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. Idaho Law prohibits Board action on items brought under this section except in an emergency circumstance. Comments related to future public hearings should be held for that public hearing.

Kootenai County Resident Jim Stafford said that the illegal buoys and requests for changes were symptoms of an underlying problem: that people did not feel protected on the water. He stated that boats that create excessive wakes were behind much of the issue.

Kootenai County Resident Susan Stiger voiced her concerns regarding the 150 foot wake zone restriction and said it became impossible for the majority of boat types to be on the river safely last summer. She remarked that Hagadone Boat Rental was asking people not to take their boats on the Spokane River due to the damage being done to property. She listed a number of people who had stated that the River was unsafe last summer. She thanked the Commissioners for taking safety concerns seriously.

Mr. Torgerson said that Ms. Stiger’s statements were untrue, based on what all the Marine Deputies had reported in all the recent Parks & Waterways Advisory Boards meetings.

Commissioner Duncan suggested that a meeting be arranged which would include the Sheriff and the Marine Deputies and to have a Board workshop to look at the definition of “excessive wake” before the topic was introduced at a public hearing.

KCSO Undersheriff Dan Mattos entered the meeting at 10:46 a.m.

Kootenai County Resident John Rubert indicated a specific area where he felt there should be buoys placed due to the number of swimmers and boaters. He listed his complaints about fishermen, tubing, and other activities.

E. Adjournment (Action): Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 10:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk
