

**SEELEY LAKE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**August 2, 2010 – SEELEY LAKE HISTORICAL "BARN"**

PRESENT: Adreïn Marx, MaryAnn Morin, George Frasca, Walt Hill, Carol Evans, Jack Greenwood

ABSENT: Steve Johnson

PUBLIC: 10 with invited speaker Patrick O'Herren (Rural Initiatives)

ADMINISTRATIVE ASST: Kris Gullikson

Meeting commenced at 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES: Evans moved for approval of minutes from the July meeting. Hill seconded. All in favor.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Morin reported \$1293.00 in the Council account. Annual funding from Missoula Co. for \$1000. was applied for. One bill was presented and paid for \$5.00. A separate Trails Bank Account was set up this month and the balance is \$7904.97. There is a balance of \$4000.00 in 2 CD accounts. Total assets equal \$13,197.97. Morin motioned for approval of the Treasurer's Report and was seconded by Greenwood. All in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Lolo National Forest/Seeley Lake Ranger Dist.; Horseshoe West -a. restoration project and b. Fuel reduction treatments, c. Road treatment (32 miles; 10 miles in storage and decommissioning 10 miles). Initial 30 day comment period by Aug. 13 on project design and a second comment period of 30 days during the EIS review period. Send comments to SL Ranger Dist. Maps are in the Pathfinder for review.
2. Public Meeting Notice: Fish Wildlife and Parks: Draft EIS on a Wildlife Management Area 24,170 acres NW of Seeley Lake. Aug. 12- 7 pm at Community Hall. EIS may be obtained at the FS Office.
3. Notice to award grant for SLCC July 21. \$1000
4. Copy of Liability Ins. for John Richards for Trail work.
5. Person disturbed by July 4 music selection at the fireworks.
6. Recreation, Parks and Trails: West Yellowstone conference
7. Notice to Air Quality Committee from SL Community Foundation that SLCC will be receiving \$2500 at the upcoming banquet to assist in funding the fall Open House.

COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT:

Gullikson reported all is working as it is supposed to. Appreciated is the website users notification of problems so they may be fixed. Email accounts for the Council are working fine. They were encouraged to reply from those accounts as well. Both July Newsletters were published and posted; although the last one was slim in news. The last 3 months Treasurer's Report will be posted after scanning. All Treasurer reports will need to be scanned in the future in order to be posted as the program does not convert to pdf files.

Marx motioned for adding these 3 items to the agenda. Seconded by Frasca. All in favor.

1. Candidate Night needs to be scheduled for fall elections
2. Gerry O'Connell- requesting letter of support for volunteers
3. Marshall Wildlife Mgmt. Area- response by SLCC

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Ken Kronsperger: Asked for more funding from the Council for motorized trails and to for SLCC to encourage the Forest Service to quit closing off roads. He asked Council to fairly represent all of the community by doing so. Council recommended he come forward with a plan of action. Trails committee updated him on the existing grants and how those monies cannot be used for other projects (they are governed by existing grants that are 6-7 years old). There are no new grant monies at present. Marx reiterated that he was not being ignored, but informed him that the trails projects are facing difficult challenges. Morin and Frasca will attend along with Kronsperger in a proposed meeting with the Forest Service. This item will be added to September agenda.

OLD BUSINESS:

Rural Initiatives: Pat O'Herren made a presentation on how Rural Initiatives, Board of County Commissioners and rural Community Councils work together. He asked for questions to be held until the end. He stated that RI is the only County in

the state that has a department that works *solely* with rural communities. A contact list was distributed. He encouraged attendees to contact Rural Initiatives first in dealing with the BCC, however, he did stress that all residents are welcome to contact BCC directly at any time. He went into detail on the RI website and what was available for residents use/ease in communications. Emphasizing: Community Councils have an incredible responsibility in that they are most effective when they keep the Commissioners informed about their own communities. O'Herren reminded SLCC that as elected officials, they have the responsibility to represent the community and not self-interest. RI is there to help maintain your unique communities and all that go with it. How to move forward? First of all- recognize everyone is a human being and deep their set values already there. May not agree with his opinion- but yours is equally important. Always treat each other with respect. OK for the Council to say "you know I understand, but.... and the topic tonight is.... it keeps things civil and moving forward". He suggested to look for the 80/20 rule: If all change=100, and 80% do agree then it may be directed, and 20% is what will never be agreed on. Look for those things can be agreed upon on work on those. Mutually acceptable solutions. RI responds to many Councils and private individuals, but he encouraged residents and the Council to contact them for assistance. Due to the many assignments from the BCC, RI may have to say no sometimes, but he stated, RI will help if at all possible.

#### Questions/Discussion:

Hill asked that the County find the SLCC more funding for minute taking, Communications project and the infrastructure support that is needed. The \$1000 annual fee is not near enough for this purpose. Objectively, all Councils need this, but we need to find a way to fund it. Gave example of the new rate increase for refuse. He suggested a Community block grant.

Frasca: Noted he was associated with Council before RI and thanked O'Herren for RI's dedication.

Morin: Questioned O'Herren on the role of Community Council. Issues; Is the role to pass on information to BCC or do we gather, assimilate and pass on recommendations to them? Not clear on this. Our area dist 34 school dist., but it seems it has gotten much broader than this. O'Herren: BCC would hope you will hear an issue brought to you and "vet" it. Find out if it has a foundation in the community. He suggested: Take comments- have people look into it and involve other community members in the process. It will show soon enough if it is an issue in your community. You choose to do this (or not) and then make a recommendation to the BCC IF AT ALL POSSIBLE- best to also offer solutions along with issues.

Evans asked a poignant question: "Was there a reason that the SLCC not notified/invited to the first IAG meeting?"

O'Herren answered yes. He explained the meeting was goal specific. BCC was looking for some agreement between the three agencies (Plum Creek, Forest Service and DNRC) if at all possible. This decision was made in Co. Atty. Office. He lamented that he should have pushed harder for SLCC involvement, and he expressed his regret. He continued on saying this meeting would not have been possible if not for the years of dedicated, hard work done by *this Council* to move it to the arena for these three agencies to sit down together and look for the items they could agree upon (the 80%). Evans stated that the circumstances that this meeting took place under were "disappointing and unacceptable". The outcome was positive but the process was not. O'Herren stated he would report this back to the BCC.

Greenwood stated that O'Herren told him he would represent him to the group at the IAG meeting. He felt he did. Said that attendees did have an opportunity to speak at the second meeting.

Marx: All of the council members have been wounded by putting themselves "out there". She stated she hoped this won't happen again with other Councils- there is too much backlash; emotional, business and otherwise. Asked O'Herren to make sure it does not happen again. O'Herren apologized to those that were offended and assured SLCC that he would do his best to make sure this would not happen in the future with other councils.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Frasca added when new board members came on... he made a few comments..."we are here to represent everybody, not our personal agendas. For the good of this community".

Jenkins: Asked about the process of communications of RI and BCC? O'Herren: They meet daily with the Commissioners. Tomorrow they will hear about *this* meeting. He relays issues/communications to appropriate staff. Jenkins: How is Morin's position different? O'Herren: Each Council has a representative that is appointed by the BCC- this person is appointed to hopefully "balance" the Council. Marx reminded the group that she was the first appointed member of the Council and it was because the elected members were all men. It was asked by the community for the BCC to make sure the Community Council was a fair representation of the community. This was how the appointment process began.

J. Richards: Is the RI supposed to be a go between with the BCC- and have there been any other assignments since those were put in place? O'Herren: Yes, go to website and look at the list. All of those have been given to RI by the BCC. Richards: Was the land use plan of CO given to RI as an assignment? O'Herren: SL and the Co. had a land use plan (2005) in place when I was hired. MC had in place a LUP (2002) put together by the SLCC and Community. They asked O'Herren what would you do to have that move forward? Richards: Zoning? O'Herren: Those will be put in place if asked. It is implementation. Other ways to implement is through Economic Development. A past Commissioner said' "The least regulation to protect what we have to build upon is the goal." --- it still is. What about fire access? O'Herren: RI cannot deal with fire access.

Marx thanked O'Herren for coming and sharing his time and information with the Council. Any further questions were directed to personally contact O'Herren at Rural Initiatives.

VOLUNTEER EMTs SEELEY LAKE: Gerry O'Connell spoke on behalf of the local Search & Rescue team. History of the group was given: By mandate the S&R teams are regulated (and funding comes from same) the Sheriff's Dept. Bob Parcell is the Dept.'s representative in Seeley. 3 squads currently make up Missoula County's Search & Rescue; Missoula area(s) =22 and Seeley Lake=11. On July 6th eleven members of the Seeley Swan squad turned in their resignations to Sherriff McMeekin. Concurrently, they asked BCC for recognition as the Seeley Swan Search and Rescue. He stated, with that recognition comes the ability to control their own growth and future. O'Connell asked that the SLCC communicate in a timely manner with BCC for support on their behalf (in written form), as the BCC are still considering this issue. He stated that most residents of this area will not see any changes from normal operation. Questions were taken from the audience. Jenkins asked that an addition to the letter state that a specific allocation from our tax dollars to Seeley Swan Search and Rescue to be spent on rescues in this area.

Morin motioned to send an endorsement letter to BCC stating the Seeley Swan Search and Rescue form their own team under the Sherriff's Dept. and encourage appropriate funding based on case load and need from Missoula County. Greenwood seconded. All in favor.

LAND/WATER CONSERVATION FUND Support letter to Senator Baucus has been written. He has secured the bill according to Jenkins as of today. Further updates will be available.

ITEEM/Highway 83: SLCC sent a letter to BCC asking for assistance in moving Hwy 83 *Upgrades* to the State Highway Dept.'s *High Priority List*. Morin reported on research and status of this project. Morin "Googled" Hwy. 83 and found the state has a 163 page report on this project online and suggested that funding for that was probably extensive, so reasons states it is now time to put that kind of money into the road itself. Continued research and communication will be ongoing. Jenkins stated the Chamber of Commerce is vitally interested in this project as well and that their contact is Mark Mizner-Welch. Jenkins asked for a copy of the letter forwarded to her for the Chamber to see. The Council asked Pat O'Herren to bring this issue to the forefront with the BCC. He stated he would. Marx stated this issue will remain on the agenda until such time that it is put on the High Priority list with the state. Hill reported that a 5 mile stretch at Clearwater Jnct. north will be paved first. Richards stated that in 1986 it was first surveyed- and has been "planned to death" since. The current guard rail on Salmon Lake was put in place by a private citizen group and is a second hand rail. All present stated is a definite safety issue to residents here. Morin mentioned the HUGE rocks that are a constant hazard by Legendary Lodge. O'Herren offered to set up a meeting with the MDT and Hill said Glen Cameron has attended in the past to discuss Highway issues, but was not forthcoming with any results. He requested someone with "authority" come a speak with the Council.

#### CANDIDATE NIGHT:

Marx noted that a separate meeting needs to be scheduled for a Candidate Night for Nov. elections. Discussion. SEPTEMBER 8, 6 pm at the Barn was chosen. This will be publicized in the Newsletter and the Pathfinder. Hill will be the point person on this event. List of candidates to Debbe Merseal (MC) and she will provide necessary information.

MARSHALL CREEK WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA: Marx reported that the comment deadline for this project is August 12 for suggestions on the planning process and Aug. 31 form comments on the plan. The area covers 24,000 acres owned by Plum Creek and is under contract to be sold to the Nature Conservancy & Trust for Public Land and then to the Fish Wildlife and Parks. It would then be managed as a wildlife management area. This is the largest land exchange in US history and they have asked for a letter of support from the Council. Discussion/comments: Kronsberger asked about public access for ATVs and if the Council will support that. Marx answered the Council will support the request. Portions of the document were read aloud. Hill addressed concerns on access, "current uses and other activities" and "similar to current practices" was key.

MOTION: Hill motioned for a letter of support be written to the appropriate party with the inclusion (highlighting the request) asking for "continue use as it is today" in the letter. Discussion. Call for vote: 2 abstained (Greenwood and Morin), 3 in favor (Marx, Hill and Frasca). Motion carried.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Walt reported on behalf of the Committee on the meeting in July. Larry Gianchetta, (Dean of the Business School) and Pat Barkey (Bureau of Business and Research) were guests. What kinds of things we can do to

assess the community and find out who we are. We are not sure what is needed nor where our focus should be. Next meeting will be to contemplate what we want and who we want to be. All input is valued.

Marx gave a brief history prior to Hill's involvement:

A \$15,000 grant through the Mt. Dept. of Commerce to Seeley Lake Community Council for a feasibility study for a Cross Country Ski Training Center. A string attached is that the Community needs to raise another \$10,000 in the next 120 days. The potential is great for some economic development to be infused into the community and this will be pursued by the Committee and Council.

AIR QUALITY: A grant from the Seeley Lake Community Foundation was awarded for \$2500 for the event for educational materials. \$5000 has been set aside by the County for this purpose as well. Jenkins inquired if MCCHD (Missoula City/ County Health Dept) and SLCC can enter into a contract as vendor for this event. O'Herren replied it can be done through the SLCC- yes. Missoula Co. staff will work with the committee on this. Just call for help. Funds to SLCC will sit with Health Dept. and the balance will be in a separate fund within the council accounts. Need people to help with the event!

\*\*\*Later a date was set: Open House is set for Oct. 30, at the SL Fire Station from 10 am -2 pm.

LAND USE PLAN: A public meeting took place last Thursday, August 29 at SLE. The BCC came to SL for the final comment period. Lots of public comment. IAG report submitted a signed letter and it appears to be a step forward. The meetings were done professionally and he was encouraged. Written comment will be accepted up to Aug 20. Hill commented he was delighted with the results and felt middle ground was found. Key was that PC & FWP could get along with large range of densities. He stated he was grateful to BCC and RI in this process.

Morin inquired as to how this affected Greenwood family. He reported that his personal contact with RI did help, but that everyone has that access. The density on his family's land was set at 1/10 rather than the proposed 1/40 and the requested 1/5. He said the families involved wanted to give this land to his children not subdivide. Three families on Placid Lake got the same density; Kreizberg, Greenwood and Cahoon. Maps are in the pathfinder on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### TRAILS COMMITTEE UPDATE:

Carol Koepcke gave an upbeat report on the progress of the trails. The Mt. Conservation Corp has been responsible for much of the progress on the local trails this summer. Specific trails: Canoe trail to the FS station is complete; Papa Smurf loop is done but needs signing; West section of Seth Diamond Trail is next. Also the trail above the Community Hall is done to the XC Trailhead.

They are working on the High School to Airport road- need more volunteers. A memorial bench has been installed for Mr. Johnson, north of Archibald Crossing, on Boy Scout Rd. Sect. 36 Crossing – Airport Rd. to Cottonwood Lakes Rd. is proceeding slowly. Seeley Ranch easement is a liability issue with MC at present and O'Herren did not comment other than that. They are working with FS to get them to agree to let snowmobiles and ATV's use it.

Missoula County meeting on TRAILS ---- Oct. 5 at 7 pm. Place for meeting TBD.

#### OTHER:

Policy Manual: Marx reported that Laurie Heir (RI) has templates to use to do this easily. Marx will continue as planned.

Rural Initiatives purchased a sound system for the council. It will be used for public meetings and stored in SLE. Marx requested assistance with getting a space at the new co. building (old Plum Creek bldg.) for the Council records and the new sound system. O'Herren said he would look into it.

Meeting adjourned 8:45 pm.

#### Upcoming meetings:

SLCC: Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday due to Labor Day weekend) 6 pm at the Barn

Candidate Night: Wed., Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>, 6 pm at the Community Hall for any candidate running for public office in Nov.

Economic Development Committee: Aug. 12@7 pm at SLE

Sept. 14 @ 7 pm at SLE

Missoula Co. Trails: Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm @ place to be determined