Teton Waterways Recreation Advisory Committee

Thursday September 21st  4:00 – 5:30

Commissioners Room – Teton County Courthouse

**Agenda- 9.21.23**

* Welcome:(4:00-4:10)
* Update: (4:10-4:20)
  + Special work session Update (Rob M., Commissioner Whitfield)
* Discussion: Next steps for Recreation Advisory Committee (4:20-4:45)
  + Response to work session
  + Action Item: letter to commissioners
* Discussion: Public Outreach (4:45 - 5:10)
  + Update on progress in 1st year of committee work, status of rec MGMT @ Teton county, next steps
  + Action Item: decision on appropriate outreach avenues.
* Discussion: Future Meetings (5:10-5:20)
  + What is appropriate meeting schedule moving forward?
  + Action item: set meeting schedule for next year.
* Public Comment (5:20-5:30)
* Adjourn

**Minutes- 9.21.23**

* Welcome:(4:00-4:10)
  + Attendance, Charlie, Amy, Rob, Renee, Will, Commissioner Whitfield. Kyle E.
  + Ted Nolan is a river corridor landowner who is in attendance. He is interested in this committee as a potential member in the future.
* Update: (4:10-4:20)
  + Special work session Update (Rob M., Commissioner Whitfield)
    - TWRAC made a recommendation in June to hire a recreation manager at Teton County. The County had a special work session to discuss hiring priorities in the second week of September, 2023.
    - During the work session, Commissioners made the decision to hire a senior planning position and add some recreation management duties to this position.
    - Commissioner Whitfield gives the example of the County budget being stressed by slow growth of tax base because of state regulation. Property taxes can only go up 3% per year. County is limited to adding new positions at a rate of about 1 position every two years. This limits the ability to make specialized hires to keep up with the growing needs. County Staff need to become generalists to accommodate the growing work needs.
    - Planning Department has the highest need for new hire/support. Need for robust planning department for handling future planning and to handle future growth.
    - This is not to say that the commissioners are abandoning river recreation management.
    - Commissioners voice a priority for recreation management and dedication to writing recreation management duties into the future senior planning job description.
    - Some priorities are future access improvement and grant writing, MOUs and collaboration with IDFG for fee implementation, and general support for waterways committee to continue moving forward.
    - Intention to hire senior planner with an emphasis on natural resources and recreation.
    - Renee asks about local prospects and commissioner W acknowledges the challenges of local housing and hiring.
    - Commissioner Whitfield recommends committee to participate in job description
    - Rob emphasizes future priority of enforcement of ordinance with mitigation of visitor numbers on river. What is the future plan for dealing with numbers and appropriate enforcement with ordinance?
    - IDFG has created a MOU for Teton County/IDFG on future fee program, critical component in the MOU is to exempt fishing/hunting licenses.
* Discussion: Next steps for Recreation Advisory Committee (4:20-4:45)
  + Response to work session
    - Amy asks what is the timeline for the next Job description? Commissioners are currently working on the Job Description. Hiring would not happen until December and that is optimistic. The Budget is already set and there needs to be a couple months deferment of hiring to make the difference of the budget allocation and the new proposition of Senior Planner position.
    - Need for long range river recreation plan to guide priorities.
    - Development of Teton River Recreation Management Plan could be a leading priority for the new planner hire.
    - What are prioritized actions and what is the funding plan?
    - Would you ideally be seeking someone who has recreational experience? That would be the ideal candidate. Natural Resources background is a priority.
    - Charlie highlights the core value of natural resources in this county and the need for the person hired to have an interest/passion in natural resources and recreation. Challenge to find AICP planner that is also excited to take on recreation.
    - Targeted outreach to Mountain Town Planning conferences.
    - Amy recognized the tremendous and competing needs of the county and the need to break out of the current state of the county being overwhelmed and under resourced.
    - Commissioner W names the need to re-set the baseline at the state legislature.
    - Kyle brings up the idea of instituting $1 per head for rentals in Teton County as a way to raise money. And the folks that are renting boats are not using the shuttles and may be contributing to crowding. What is the legality of this? Livery/rental annual sticker like a license for the crafts that rental operations are renting to the public.
* Discussion: Future Meetings (5:10-5:20)
  + What is the appropriate scope for this committee?
    - Amy asks what does a Teton River recreation management plan look like, what is the priority?
    - Renee asks what is the plan with the river ambassador Program?
    - Continue river ambassador, Continuity of data collection, and continue Camp Host.
    - expand river ambassador program to include volunteers.
    - 2023 river ambassador does not plan on returning in 2024
    - Charlie asks, is there a way to document what the committee has accomplished this far and what is next.
    - Progress with river ordinance and the committee, need to keep committee active working towards the river recreation Plan. Suggested that this is the ideal next step for the TWRAC
    - Blackfoot River Management Plan was mentioned as an example to reference.
    - Is this an appropriate time to engage the public? Concern that we will duplicate the process of the ordinance.
    - Federal Grants for will need upfront cost for wetlands Studys and
    - Rob reiterates the need for a recreation budget to keep projects moving. As the current funding sources are being used and the recreation need is growing.
  + Action item: set meeting schedule for next year.
    - Renee Suggests keeping the meeting schedule for calendar year and then re-assessing in the next year
    - Michael can keep the committee up to date in the creation of the senior planner position
    - Rob will also be looking into summer recreation outfitter numbers and tracking the county budget for recreation.
  + How can the committee and county continue to share the workload to keep the process going?
    - Recreation management plan – Committee can start by working on the Recreation Management Plan priorities. And how to engage the public on next steps
* Discussion: Public Outreach (4:45 - 5:10)
  + Update on progress in 1st year of committee work, status of rec MGMT @ Teton county, next steps
  + Commissioner Whitfield supports the idea of a press release and can be supplemented by Rob’s FAQ.
* Public Comment (5:20-5:30)
* Ted- Information around how does the committee and staff look like? How do the committees at the county function effectively?
* Adjourn

Future Meeting Schedule

* Nov 2nd 4:00-5:30pm
  + Look for remote updates on job Description creation.
  + Agenda focus: recreation management plan
* Dec 14th 4:00-5:30pm