

Bear Lake Regional Commission

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Minutes Bear Lake Regional Commission Garden City, UT October 27, 2021

Those in attendance:

Bradley Jensen- Board Chairman, Bear Lake County Commissioner
Sim Weston, Board Vice Chairman, Rich County Commissioner
Burdette Weston - Board Secretary, Mayor of Laketown
Dan Fisher - City Council of Montpelier
Ron Jensen – Recreation
Ken Brown - Rich County at Large
Mitch Poulsen - Executive Director- Bear Lake Regional Commission
Christy Jensen - Bear Lake Regional Commission

Excused: Albert Johnson, Bear Lake County at Large
Roy Bunderson, City Council of Bloomington
Mike Leonhardt - Mayor of Garden City

Also in attendance: Quinn Dance-JUB Engineering
Kirk Rich-Manager/ Idaho Bear Lake State Park
Andrew Stokes-Ranger/ Idaho Bear Lake State Park
Richard Drosbeck-Manager/ Utah Bear Lake State Park

Via Phone: Vaughn Rasmussen/ Bear Lake County Commissioner
Utah Senator Chris Wilson

Chairman Bradley Jensen conducted the October 27, 2021, meeting of the Bear Lake Regional Commission, the meeting started at 7:08 pm.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Jensen asked for an approval of the agenda, The agenda was reviewed, and approved.

- **Sim Weston motioned to approve the agenda.**
Burdette Weston seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Kirk Rich-Manager/ Andrew Stokes-Ranger Idaho State Parks updates

Kirk Rich updated the board on the changes within the State Parks. Idaho State Parks has a new director, a new assistant director, a new park bureau chief, and another region manager. The region which includes Bear Lake has been split. So, a lot of new changes and getting to know new personnel.

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Revenue continues to come in as online reservations for next summer are open now in October and are filling quickly for next summer. Due to a state legislated law Bear Lake was one of 5 parks that were required to increase day use fees, so beach entrance fees are now \$14. Summer beach usage is starting at 6:00am and going until 10:00pm. Self-collect usage was as high as it has ever been compliance wise.

Park aids wages were increased to \$14 per hour. This is an increase up from \$10 to \$12 that those individuals started out at. This year's aids were good employees, they were required to work overtimes and did so willingly, and they stayed the duration of the season. The two park rangers at Bear Lake worked more overtime than any other rangers in the state of Idaho system. Park rangers do not get paid overtime as the seasonal aids do, but they are compensated with comp time. However, high usage and other projects have made it difficult for those rangers to be able to use comp time. Manager Rich feels that it is getting to the point that the Park may need to be rated as a class higher park. Which would provide more funding and more personnel. Gross income numbers for the year are not available currently. Overall, it was a good season without serious incident or injury at Idaho Bear Lake State Park.

Ranger Andrew Stokes presented a power point presentation. With the water being lower more cars were able to be allowed down on the beach. The lower water also created availability for other beach access around the lake, which also relieved a bit of overcrowding at the ID State Park on the north end of the lake.

There were a few fire issues at the lake this year as a boat was destroyed by fire, a few days later they had a trailer fire and then a dumpster fire. Fortunately, no injuries accrued with these fires. Andy had some impressive pictures of these incidents on his presentation.

Irrigation well went out which was a major repair and took a few weeks to get repaired, also required extra attention to get irrigated areas greened up again.

Turning lanes were added that separated the vehicles into two lanes and helped prevent some of the bottleneck issues at the bridge. A couple of Saturdays traffic was still backed up for approximately thirty minutes, only two days were so busy they had to close the park for a short time. They are able to get three hundred cars an hour into the park.

Development of an old access road to the beach helped get cars down onto the beach earlier in the season and helped with the flow of traffic on and off the beach.

Choke Cherry Beach parking lot is now paved with 278 parking stalls. Cement pad for a new Kiosk servicing that parking lot is scheduled for pour on Monday, with additional asphalt work around that area finished up before winter. Discussions are ongoing for adding additional primitive camping off from that parking area that would help fill shortage needs until it could be more developed in future years. Currently the park offers 47 individual camp sites and 2 group sites. Funding in the 2022 FY has been requested for 2 restrooms at that parking area.

The campground is scheduled to get an electrical upgrade. Sites 1 through 20 will update from a 30-amp pedestal to a 50-amp pedestal that offers all three options. And a water upgrade to the centralized water system in the campground is planned and has been funded. The water system will be upgraded to offer a few more water spigots throughout the campground.

West Beach development on the 65 acres owned by PacifiCorp continues to be on the capital improvement list. This project would help overcrowding on beaches all around the lake. Anyone with legislative ability to help encourage PacifiCorp to move forward on this project is encouraged to do so.

Richard Drosbeke-Utah State Park update

Utah Bear Lake Park visitation for the fiscal year 2021 (July through June of 2021) is at 649,000 people. In fiscal year 2020 it was at 514,000 visitors, in fiscal year 2019 it was at 383,000. For comparison, looking back farther in the calendar year of 2011 it was at 230,000. In 2007 it was 226,000, and in 2004 it was only 45,000.

Revenue collection for 2021 was \$2,608,000 after taxes. Reported profit was \$1,579,000. Revenues for the 2020 fiscal year were \$2,194,000 with a profit of \$1,182,000. Resident fees for day use in peak season (Memorial Day through Labor Day) are \$15 per vehicle and nonresident is \$20 per vehicle. On peak days (Friday through Sunday and holidays) it is \$5 additional dollars. For further comparison in the fiscal year 2011 revenues were at \$788,000 with \$592,000 in expenses, and a profit of \$205,000. Fee collection percentages were, 40% camping, 35% day use, 17% slip rental, 8% permits & other payments.

Comparison notes:

Camping	FY21 = 40%	FY20 = 39%	FY 19 = 38%	FY 18 = 35%	FY 17 = 37%
Slip Rental	FY21 = 17%	FY20 = 20%	FY 19 = 25%	FY 18 = 27%	FY 17 = 29%
Day Use	FY21 = 35%	FY20 = 31%	FY 19 = 26%	FY 18 = 26%	FY 17 = 23%
SUPs and Other	FY21 = 8%	FY20 = 10%	FY 19 = 11%	FY 18 = 12%	FY 17 = 10%

Park Events/Activities organized and/or hosted

- 12th Annual Cisco Disco and Bear Lake Monster Plunge
- 10th Annual Swim across Bear Lake
- 20th Raspberry Days Boat Light Parade
- Over 60 Special Use Permits for family reunions/camping and other events

A few minor on the water and Search and Rescues and a few minor boating accidents and incidents. A few off-highway vehicle (OHV) accidents with 1 fatality.

Projects:

- At Rendezvous Beach some asphalt work was done, and the 4 oldest restrooms were replaced.
- At the Marina new entrance access lanes and traffic flow. Including widening the exit lanes, new tire rippers and exit arms, and asphalt overlay on main marina parking lot.
- Eastside: 5-million-dollar project - North Eden is ongoing, parking for 120 vehicles, plus 10 parking spots for vehicles with boat trailers. 35 campsites with power and water hookup, restrooms with flush toilets, the day use area will have restrooms with vault toilets.

The Rainbow Cove project will be starting. Improvements on the road and boat parking, more day use and camp sites. Advanced management system for RV Dump station that will handle 4 RVs at one time.

Important Issues at Utah Bear Lake State Park

- **Park wide:**
 - Full-time maintenance position obtained with current fiscal year.
 - Full-time office manager/accountant position.
 - Second full-time maintenance position
 - Number of days/times park areas reaching capacity.
 - Affordable housing for full-time and seasonal employees.
- **Marina:**
 - Capacity to launch and retrieve boats.
 - Parking capacity
 - Replacement of oldest concrete launch ramp lanes.
 - Marina expansion proposal – funding source (s)
 - Additional restroom near launch ramp.
- **Rendezvous Beach:**
 - Day use parking capacity
 - Additional day use restroom
 - Renovation of Cottonwood Campground
- **Eastside**
 - First Point and Rainbow Cove vehicle with trailer parking issues
 - Water and sewer development
- **Winter Snowmobile Trail Grooming**
 - Impact from poor snow/precipitation levels

Staff Report

Busy with development applications on both sides of the state line.

The aquatic invasive species contract goes from January to December of 2021. Utah does not expect to submit a reimbursement for the year until May of 2022, so the states have decided not to renew the contract until January.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes were reviewed and approved.

- **Ron Jensen made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 29, 2021 meeting. Ken Brown seconded the motion, motion carried.**

Bills, Payroll

The bills and payroll for the Bear Lake Regional Commission were reviewed, a motion was made to approve them.

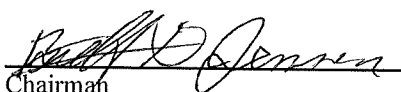
- **Dan Fisher made a motion to accept and approve payment of the October 2021 bills and payroll for the Bear Lake Regional Commission Ron Jensen seconded the motion, motion carried.**

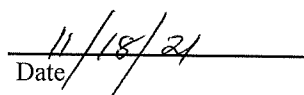
Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting ended at 8:20 p.m.

- **Ken Brown motioned to adjourn the meeting of the Bear Lake Regional Commission Burdette Weston seconded the motion, motion carried.**

Minutes Approved:


Chairman


Date