

Hoback Ranches Service & Improvement District

Box 33, Bondurant, WY 82922

July 16, 2016 ANNUAL MEETING

MINUTES

A public meeting was conducted by the Board of Directors of Hoback Ranches Service Improvement District at St. Hubert's Church in Bondurant.

Directors in attendance:

Bill Conley	Chairman
Gary Ryan	Treasurer
Bruce Bartley	Secretary

Chairman Bill Conley called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. Approximately 35 people, including the directors, were present. Conley welcomed summer residents back to the Ranches and everyone to the annual meeting. He asked all present to introduce themselves as there always are new residents.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes for Annual Meeting, June 20, 2015

Minutes for Early Meeting, June 18, 2016

Director Ryan moved to approve the minutes from both meetings. Director Bartley seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

ELECTION 2016

Chairman Conley read a letter from Sublette County Clerk Mary Lankford detailing the results from the May 2016 election for one seat on the Board of Directors. The vote totals were as follows:

Bruce Bartley	83
Terri Sellers	10
Jim Jacobson	1
Jennifer Jensen	1

A total of 248 ballots were mailed out. Fifteen were returned as they had no forwarding addresses. Eleven ballots were rejected by the clerk's office because they were late, missing information, unsigned, etc.

YEAR IN REVIEW

Chairman Conley inaugurated a new feature highlighting significant events over the past year.

The Class II road project from Highway 191 to the Ranches entrance was completed. The contractor in June completed warranty work on the reconstructed and re-surfaced road.

The new arch at the entrance was completed with stone work around the bases and placement of a plaque honoring the memory of the Ryel's through substantial donations by the Mettler's.

Fire mitigation efforts were assisted by TipTop Search & Rescue which cut firewood along Kismet and Mountain View as part of its annual fund raising activities.

Jason Radakovich was recognized for his help in identifying the poacher who shot an enormous mule deer buck which frequented the area around Chippewaugh. The Big Piney man has been charged and is awaiting trial.

A resident on Fisherman Drive had to be "rescued" when her snow plow contractor abandoned her mid-winter. Local residents volunteered to dig her out and assure her access.

Against explicit directions, a truck driver took his 40-foot tractor trailer down Fisherman and Chippewaugh to try to deliver a greenhouse. To no one's surprise, he got stuck and left some serious ruts in the borrow pits. It cost him a day's worth of time and some \$5,000 in wrecker fees. The directors are looking at billing the driver if any road repairs are needed.

Working with the Wyoming Department of Transportation, the HRSID has been placed on the state surplus equipment bid list. The arrangement came after the Ranches agreed to pay \$300 for 300 orange delineator posts that WYDOT had discarded. The posts are used to mark culverts, power boxes, road edges, etc.

Private road access and easements continue to be issues of contention. To try to prevent some of the misunderstanding, the directors will meet July 18 with local Realtors to explain the realities of life in the Ranches.

More than 100 gallons of herbicide were sprayed in the Ranches in the past year in an effort to control invasive and noxious weeds.

Volunteers continued to make the community a better place by helping with fencing repairs, painting road signs and the parking lot kiosk as well as cleaning culverts.

Three residents of the Ranches, Ralph West, Norm Larsen and Nancy Ruf passed away.

NEW BUSINESS

Winter Committee Update

Director Ryan reported that winter 2015-16 was notable for light snow depths and there were no significant issues involved in the plowing of designated roads and the parking area. He reminded the audience that plowing and contributions to pay for it are entirely voluntary and involve no expenditures from the service district budget. The Winter Committee will meet in October to discuss the upcoming winter. People planning to plow ranch roads will have to sign a waiver releasing the Ranches of any liability resulting from plowing activity.

Road Maintenance

Director Ryan reviewed the previous year's maintenance activities, including blading, cleaning of culverts and beaver excluders. Ryan said more gravel was put down this year, in part because the district has not had to put any money into the road between Highway 191 and the entrance to the Ranches for the past three years. Some of the roads within the Ranches have significant wash-boarding, in the large part because of a lack of moisture this summer. He said once we get some moisture, it will be possible to grade and smooth the road. The directors also are aware of some road damage caused by large concrete trucks, particularly on Kismet. The plan is to wait until construction season ends before doing repairs. Homeowners responsible for the damage have agreed to pay the cost of the repairs. Ryan urged residents who are aware of road problems to bring them to the attention of the directors.

Fencing Update

Chairman Conley said fencing work during the past year was fairly minimal, concentrating on areas where cattle tend to break through. Future work is scheduled to repair fence along the northern boundary as far west as the Andrew Weller property. The original fence is 40 years old and even where the wire remains intact many posts are rotting off at ground level. Conley said it costs roughly \$15,000 a mile to put up new fence. Costs have been reduced by a considerable amount of volunteer labor.

Weed and Pest

The Ranches and individual landowners continue to battle noxious weeds. The road easements already have been sprayed once by Sublette County Weed & Pest at the board's request. Musk and Canada thistle as well as black henbane are the primary

culprits. Residents are encouraged to report outbreaks of invasive weeds. Directors can help provide the appropriate herbicides and equipment.

Budget Review

Director Ryan provided documents updating the Ranches' budget situation. The past year's budget was balanced despite a continuing decline in tax revenue as property values decline in accord with the economic issues affecting Sublette County. Tax revenues in 2016 are approximately what they were in 2007. The ability to balance the budget was aided by more than \$7,000 in donations from Ranches residents. Gravel borrowed for the road upgrade last summer will be repaid along with a 10 percent bonus. Two certificates of deposit, one for \$75,000 and one for \$100,00 remain untouched. With current interest rates, the CDs don't provide much of a return, but serve as emergency funds for the district. Fixed costs for administration, insurance, legal advertising and accounting remained relatively constant. Legal fees were up slightly due to research surrounding the fire mitigation issue.

The relevant budget documents can be found on the Hoback Ranches website.

Clark Stith, an attorney for a ranch resident, made a formal objection on the part of his client to the taxation level that has been in place since 2013. Chairman Conley acknowledged the objection and said it would be reviewed by the Board's attorney. He also noted the Board's close consultation with county and state officials regarding tax issues. Director Ryan made a motion, seconded by Bartley, to approve the budget resolution. No objections were voiced by anyone in the audience.

Fire Mitigation

In May, homeowners were mailed ballots asking whether Hoback Ranches should enter into a cooperative agreement with relevant local, state and federal agencies to mitigate the wildfire risk in the Ranches. There were 221 ballots mailed, four returned for lack of a proper forwarding address. Of the 93 ballots tallied, 80 were in favor of the agreement with 12 opposed. The gist of the resolution allows homeowners to remove deadfall, standing dead trees and to cut live trees if necessary to reduce fire danger, supplementing the covenants for safety reasons not apparent in 1976. It was emphasized there will be no mandates accompanying the agreement, nor will HRSID property taxes be increased to pay for mitigation. Approval of the resolution was the first step in developing a mitigation program. Work will proceed this fall and over the winter to develop a plan that could pave the way for state or federal grant money.

Resolutions

Director Bartley read the Resolution of Intent (16-001) and the Resolution to Approve (16-002) the 2016-17 budget, including the annual assessment that supports the benefits identified by the Board in the budget. Motion by Ryan, seconded by Bartley, to approve passed unanimously. Resolution 16-002 also names the *Pinedale Roundup* as the official newspaper of the district and approves First Interstate Bank, Wells Fargo Bank and Commerce Bank of Wyoming as official depositories of District funds, including those held in trust.

Director Bartley read the Final Budget Summary and Assessment Schedule resolution (16-003). Motion by Ryan, seconded by Bartley, to approve passed unanimously.

Director Bartley read the Resolution to Implement Fire Mitigation (16-004). Motion by Ryan, seconded by Bartley, to approve passed unanimously.

Reports

Lucy Conley reported on on-going efforts to refine the phone tree to notify residents of impending wildfire dangers.

Ann Reiniger reported on the unofficial list serve for Ranches residents. In its first year of existence, 21 items were posted to the list serve. Items ranged from lost animals to free vegetables. Those not on the list were encouraged to sign up if interested.

Jerry Johnson suggested a fund drive to purchase three automated external defibrillators (AEDs) to be positioned at key points in the Ranches. The money would be strictly from donations and the AEDs would belong to the Ranches. Todd Smith said the Jackson Police Department has multiple surplus AEDs sitting on the shelf. He said it might be possible to get them donated to the Ranches. The Board will pursue the matter.

Special recognition went to long-time resident Bill Fischer, who was in attendance, for his donation to the Ranches of a wood chipper. Chairman Conley said the engine has been refurbished, switches repaired, and new tires mounted. It needs a little more work before making it available to residents looking to rid themselves of tree slash.

Chairman Conley noted that the post-meeting picnic will be at a new location, the parking area at the intersection of Rim and Skyline. Meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

The 2017 Hoback Ranches Board of Directors election will be by mail-in ballot, as in years past. The ballots will be mailed the first week of April 2017.

Next year's early summer meeting: June 17, 2017

Next year's annual meeting: July 15, 2017

