

Morrow County Parks Committee

Meeting Minutes – March 16, 2026

1:00pm-3:00pm

Committee Members and Staff Present:

Mike Gorman, Vince Guerrero, Greg Close, Glen Maret, Tim Wright, Kirsti Cason, Jeff Wenholz, George Shimer, Sabrina Bailey & Raymi Cain

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

- Meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Gorman at 1:00pm.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- Introductions made

2. Approval of Minutes

- Minutes approved by committee

3. Reports – Park Updates

Anson Wright Park

- Liz Morris will be returning for the 2026 season as camp host.
- Sandy McDonald coming back as a relief host for all Parks.
- Park crew has done lots of burning of pine needles and fallen trees. It is still too wet to burn any brush.

Cutsforth Park

- Don Ashcroft will be returning for the 2026 season as the camp host.
- Park crew has been able to burn brush, and they have also added gravel to campsites to accommodate larger camp trailers.
- All overhead power has been removed and now all Cutsforth's power is completely underground.
- No market for logging the trees.

OHV Park

- Kathy Spears will be returning for the 2026 season as camp host.
- Park crew has been working on trail clean up, water diversions, cleaning all the cattle guards, and widening cattle guards to 82" to accommodate large equipment and vehicles.
- Campground has been logged.
- Work and updates are going on at the Landing. Back room has been enclosed for use, tables have been retreated, adding new dinnerware and utensils.
- Three events planned for the 2026 season: April 17th-19th Stargazing event this is before the parks open and is the first year for this event, Mother's Day (opening weekend) weekend NWRA, and in October the Ride Over Cancer Event.
- It was reported that there were almost 700 reservations made when reservations opened back up January 1st, 2026.

4. New Business

The Landing Vendor for 2026

- Sharon Helms is the planned contractor for the 2026 season. Contract is currently being finalized. Sharon processes her own meat and has her own meat trailer she will bring with her to the OHV Park. She has agreed to do a soft opening for the Stargazing event the weekend of April 17th- 20th.

ATV Ordinance

- Has gone through review with the Sheriff's office and Forest Service and they approved the language and mentioned concern regarding speed limits.
- Draft is currently with Bob Blackmoore, the County's contracted attorney.
- Maps will be created once ATV Ordinance has been approved. Maps with legend and color coding will be created once ordinance is in place.
- Signage will need to be posted.
- Public input will be open after Ordinance has been approved by Commissioners.
- Currently, the plan is to begin by opening the area south of Blake Ranch to ATV use, with an initial focus on connecting the parks through ATV-accessible roads. Additional ATV-approved roadways within the County may be considered for future expansion if needed.

Park Host for 2026

- The contract is currently being reviewed by legal counsel. Once ready, Greg Close, Parks Manager, will coordinate with the hosts to complete signatures for the upcoming season.

Yurt Concept

- A concept plan for future yurt development at the parks is being discussed, with consideration given to location and quantity. The yurts would be dry units situated near restroom facilities.

2027 Tax Separation and Increase

- Discussed the upcoming increase in the state lodging tax and the possibility of applying the additional percentage to guest stay charges so the cost is covered by visitors rather than directly impacting the County's budget.
- Mike Groman stated that the tax will rise further, with the additional funds designated to support Wolf Depredation programs.

5. Updates

Parks Master Plan

- Approval for Parks Master Plan Grant has been received but the Notice to Proceed letter has not been issued yet.
- Last Parks Master plan was done in house and new Master Plan will be contracted out for professional assistance to capture all future needs and plans.
- Boardman Parks and Rec's George Shimer told the Committee that the City of Boardman recently updated their Master Plan and contracted out the work and was please with the amount of detail that was included.

TLT Tax

- County is looking into creating a TLT or a TID tax. Discussion is being had with County Administrator, Matt Jensen, Tourism Representative, Karie Walchie, and County Administrative Assistant, Vincent Guererro and deciding what tax to go with and what that will look like for the County as a whole.

Capital Improvements

- CIP group has discussed building a new shower/bathroom facility at Anson Wright Memorial Park that is larger than what is currently there and would replace current building. Parks will apply for a grant, and the Parks Department has enough funds to pay for the match portion.
- Replacement of 4H building discussed will be further out more than 5-year plan.

Updating Credit Card Processor

- Approval is being held up by Finance, follow up is being done by Parks staff, and County Administrator.

Event Planning

- Parks is looking to continue to add new events. One that is currently in the works for the Fall of 2027 is a Gravel Bike Race that is put on by Mudslingers, they host several events all over the state of Oregon.
 - George Shimer suggested a bike event where attendees could ride to each park.
-

6. Announcements

Events

- Stargazing Event is planned to be held April 17th-19th, 2026, at OHV Park
- Mother's Day Ride is planned to be held May 9th, 2026, at OHV Park
- Fishing Derby held May 30th, 2026, at Cutsforth Park
- Ride Over Cancer will be held in October 2026 at OHV Park
- Advertising with SMG utilizing radio and digital advertisements, social media, and local newspapers.

Parks Master Plan Grant

- Approved waiting for Notice to Proceed Letter

Equipment Purchase Grant – Morooka

- Notice to Proceed letter received, currently out for RFP bids
-

7. Public Comment

- None

Meeting adjourned at 2:10pm

Next meeting planned to be held Tuesday June 9, 2026, from 1:00pm-3:00pm