



**October 5th, 2023**  
**Mid-Year Meeting Minutes**  
**DRAFT**

**Location: Kalispell City Hall**  
**201 1st Ave E.**  
**Kalispell, MT**  
**MLCT Conference**  
**Time: 10AM - 11:30AM**

Zoom Video Recording:  
<https://youtu.be/a330ggMmPRc>

Download Meeting Packet:  
<https://mtrpa.info/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/2022-Mid-Year-MTRPA-MLCT-PACKET.pdf>

**Meeting Call to Order**

**Maria Butts**

- President Mitch Overton joined remotely and asked Vice President, Maria Butts, who attended in person to run the meeting. Maria called the meeting to order.
- Kelly Lynch, the new Director for Montana League and Cities and Towns. She gave updates of Parks and Recreation. MLCT Director had an announcement about the Legislative Session that could affect Parks & Recreation.
  - 1. MACKO seeking an ownership of annex bill with into city parks  
Macko bill would require cities to take on parks that are annexed into a city from county parks.
  - 2. Sued Whitefish over “impact fee bill” meaning the state would be deciding body on what fees would be charge and what departments they will go to. This could challenging for Parks and Recreation.
  - 3. Kelly also shared she is a Certified ADA Coordinator and could hold session for us.
  - 4. Kelly would like to have Parks and Recreation to be more involved with Parks and recreation and there are ways we can establish sessions that are focused on Parks and Recreation or crossed with other departments. She did state they have challenge to have enough space for all departments. Next year is in Helena. The following year is in West Yellowstone which could be tight. Maria explained we keep in communication with her.

**Item #1****Mitch Overton****Consideration of Approval of September 2022 Quarterly Meeting Minutes**

- No changes were suggested to the meeting minutes.
- Danielle made a motion to pass.
- Second by Steve Herrig.

**Item #2****Maria Butts****Current Budget Update**

- Looking at the Actual 2022 column, with the exception of revenue source in membership, because we did not transfer the \$4500 from the PayPal and once it is transferred that will increase the revenue area.
- The invoice for the Great Falls conference was received and approved. Steve explained they had about \$2000 startup cost and made \$8500 from the conference. Maria explained how that is excellent revenue for conference.
- Budget is on track to hit the goals. We put forth some expenditures we do not meet throughout the year. Like office supplies, mid-year meeting cost, legislative support, that we do not have costs for but we budget for just in case they are needed.
- An approved 2023 and 2024 Budget included in the packet as a reminder of what future spending is.
- The idea of bringing forth a sponsorship program for smaller rural communities that have not been able to attend our annual conference. The idea is the board would sponsor a member of a community to come to one of our conference. The community sponsor would get to know MTRPA, the player throughout the state, usher our organization a bit more so we can add to our membership to know better what our smaller communities need, what types of information we are coming out with, what types of trainings they need and so on. Thinking the conference committee would choose the community to sponsor. Put out a call for the sponsorship. If no one applies, the conference committee could invite/choose a community to bring. This idea would be voted on at the Annual Conference. MTRPA would sponsor the sponsor's conference cost and hotel room cost and an annual one year membership estimated at \$500. It was agreed that this will go on the quarterly agenda.
- Need to include in the Treasure's responsibilities to transfer funds from PayPal. Will work with Nick to make sure whatever is processed with PayPal will go to the correct line item in the budget.

**Item #3****Maria Butts****Board Vacancies****A. Secretary/Treasurer**

- Chris Waite left the Montana for a Director position in Oregon leaving the Secretary/Treasurer seat open. MTRPA received a letter of interest from Carla Belski, Community Resource of Whitefish Parks and recreation. Maria highly recommended her. No one else applied.

## **B. Tribal Representative**

- Cassie presented a draft for Call for Tribal Board position. She asked the board to approve the draft to start using in communications and she asked members to share the letter once it is published on all MTRPA channels.
- Cassie put together roles for the Tribal Board position based off of what is in the Bylaws and duties for auxiliary board members. She asked for feedback.
- Hearing no feedback, the draft was accepted to go out on all media channels. Maria stated this position will be of great value for the Association if filled by a passionate individual.

## **C. Student Representative**

- Brie Nickal submitted a letter of interest for the Student Representative included in the packet. Brie is a junior at the UM studying parks and recreation management. She grew up in Boulder, CO and had meaningful experiences with Parks and Recreation programs in her community.
- Mitch motioned to approve Brie Nickal as Student Representative.
- Second by Steve.

## **Item #4**

**Jamie Saitta**

### **Membership Update**

- Jamie, membership chair, could not be with us today but she met with Cassie prior to the Mid-year meeting to have her present the Membership update.
- At the annual conference, Jamie passed around a legal pad and asked for attendees to write down a name of an organization in their community that could be a potential member. She did not get any entries on that paper. She asks again of current members, if there is some department, non-profit, or commercial entity in your community that could join us, please let us know by emailing Jamie or MTRPA contact@mtrpa.info
- Usually membership for the next year starts to open up December. With the new software for the membership website, Jamie and Cassie recommended we start membership with the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year. So expect 2023 Membership to open on January 1<sup>st</sup> and put it on your calendar to renew.
- Jamie is preparing 2 different letters to drive membership registration. First for current members and second for potential members and she is working on creating a list of potential members.
- Cassie and Jamie are planning to use list from MLCT to reach out to all Parks and Recreation departments or individuals throughout the state.
- Cassie is working with Jamie on a membership portal on the website that will include new member benefits such as MTRPA Email Signatures, Recurring Zoom Meeting, and Member Resources.
- Cassie and Jamie and Danielle are planning to provide MTRPA Monthly Meetups. These informal meetings will keep membership engaged and the conversation around parks and rec going. Planning to meet every THIRD TUESDAY of the month. Will alternate between 1pm and 4pm every other month to give options for times. Cassie intends to create a calendar subscription button to add monthly meetups to a calendar that will automatically update if there are changes. These meetings will have a fun agenda. The first meeting theme will be “partnerships”

- Cassie showed earnings and signups reports included in packet.
- Jamie and Cassie explained the numbers on the member's list are skewed as not everyone has submitted their department's roster. Cassie showed how members can add their department's members to the account. Maria noted whoever is signing up for the membership becomes a "point person" to manage their group.
- Maria suggested that the email right after registration has subject line with "One more step to complete membership" vs. "welcome" so that new members will not miss that step.

#### **Item #5**

**Danielle Beaudin**

#### **Website/Communications Update**

- Danielle and Cassie have been working together closely and have created a Trello Board for organizational purposes.
- Danielle reminded members of the Job Posting board. She also reminded members that if you post a job you can close it when it is filled and she asked that if your position is filled to please mark it as filled on the website.
- Danielle explained how we are working on non-member job posting becoming more streamline by offering a payment button on the website whereas right now it is all done through email and invoices.
- Wants to kick off website forum. Danielle talked about ideas to post on the forum. She gave example of wanting to start a forum to talk about Recreation Software.
- Danielle was reminding members to check out the website and look out for communications from MTRPA. She wanted to look at creating push notifications.
- Danielle and Cassie will be creating tutorials for how to use membership benefits on the website like adding jobs, forum items, member rosters, etc.
- Danielle highlighted that Cassie has been putting video recordings of meetings on website.
- Maria brought up a conversation during the business meeting, about Website/Communications position duties being revisited and a rearranging of duties and positions, specifically with Website/Communications position and Secreatatry/Treasure position.
- Reminder of duties for all positions on the board going to the next quarterly meeting. If any changes to bylaws would be proposed and voted on at Annual Meeting

#### **Item #6**

**Cassie Lason**

#### **Resource Development Coordinator Update**

- Cassie is enjoying working with MTRPA and sees herself becoming viewed as a parks professional.
- Meeting quarterly with the board. New area on the website devoted to quarterly meetings.
- Created a YouTube channel, mainly for posting recorded Zoom meeting.
- Meeting regularly Danielle and Jamie to increase communication and membership.

- Tribal Membership Call draft letter a big focus, she worked with a member of the Cree Nation to create the call, who suggested to put the call out within the universities.
- Entering last quarter of the year, focusing on prepping for 2023. First weeks of December will focus on registration for 2023 Conference, and the last weeks of the year will be focused on 2023 membership going live for next year.
- Cassie requested to be paid on-line vs. via check.
- Only change on Cassie's upcoming contract was quarterly newsletter changing to regular newsletter communications.
- Carla suggested other email communications platforms than Mailchimp and Constant Contact. Cassie and Carla will work together.
- Maria reminded the group Cassie's contract is up for renewal under item #12.

#### **Item #7**

**Jennifer Thompson**

#### **Student Liaison Update**

- Jennifer was not present for meeting.
- Brie Nickal, new Student Representative shared that her and Jennifer plan to re-start the student chapter and bring more student involvement into MTRPA.
- Cassie suggested a Facebook Group for the students. Brie suggested we include not only students but all professionals. It was decided that a general MTRPA Facebook group would be helpful for promoting MTRPA and networking before the conferences. Mitch recommended we ask questions for incoming Facebook group members to do a sort of screening.
- Danielle brought up the idea of reaching out to other schools in Montana and Brie was asked to help with that.

#### **Item #8**

**Bob Walker**

#### **Montana Trails Coalition Update**

- Bob was not present for the meeting but sent a letter with Cassie to iterate there are millions of dollars available for grants and to get your project proposals ready!
- See letter in packet from Bob about upcoming funding.

#### **Item #9**

**Bob Walker**

#### **Legislative Update**

- Bob was not present for the legislative update. Maria reminded everyone of the Legislative update we got at the start of the meeting from Kelly.

#### **Item #10**

**Elizabeth Hill**

#### **Aquatics Update**

- Elizabeth Hill was unable to attend the meeting as she was attending World Waterpark Association conference in Las Vegas and Mitch presented on her behalf.
- Mitch shared struggles with staffing in Aquatics nationally. Elizabeth sent Mitch examples of communities. One example of a community with a lifeguard job fair that

usually attracts 400+ people, only had 35 attend, and out of those 35 only 9 people choose to do the lifeguard course. Another example is a community that bases their staffing plan now that 4 people are needed for every 1 position due to the need for off requests and flexible for scheduling. If anyone is going to fill a position, employers must be extremely flexible. Mitch shared these are lifeguard positions are moving towards being seen as first responders. The City of Austin was short 900 guards this year. Salt Lake short 500 guards this year. Mitch noted aquatic facilities and lessons are still running, but the aquatics departments need support.

- Maria opened the inquiry for campaigns to support the aquatics with slogans like “Lifeguards are First Responders” and asked everyone to can be thinking about how MTRPA can help with a campaign for Aquatics in our state.
- Cassie suggested having monthly, bimonthly, or quarterly focus of campaigns to bring awareness to areas needed to highlight.

## Item #11

Maria Butts

### Conference Update

#### A. Members to vote on 2023 Conference in Whitefish and 2024 in Billings

- Requested shift for conference in location for next year. Originally planned for Billings in 2023 and Whitefish in 2024, however due to changes in staffing in Billings it has been requested to change locations to have the conference in Whitefish 2023 and then Billings in 2024.
- Michael made a motion to hold conference in Whitefish 2023 and Billings in 2024.
- Motion second by Maria.

#### B. Update on Whitefish Conference Planning

- Maria shared their conference planning template and the idea to pass on the planning as a roadmap for the next conference committee to use.
- Still working on a keynote speaker. Maria has a connection she is hoping to get but is still waiting to hear back. Have had many inquiries from professional speakers.
- Maria shared her ideas for theme with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. She explained community skate park story tying into that theme. She has ideas for a potential Keynote speaker Jeff Ament and connections with Dreamland Skatepark Company to come speak for Whitefish 2023 Conference.
- Steve shared advice from hiring Keynote speakers from the Great Falls Conference that was helpful.
- Maria showed examples of schedule, tracks, and potential session titles.
- Steve suggested State Parks sessions including SCORP to be included on the schedule.
- Maria asked if there are any other tracks that need to be included.
- Brie has ideas for conference planning like matching up students with professionals based on their interests and student tracks. She suggested tying in in the Facebook group to introduce people or match people up. Maria suggested opening breakfast at the conference for professional meet up.
- Brie said MTRPA Olympics were very helpful at the last conference.

- Maria asked Brie if she would help with activities during socials.
- Steve suggested Sunday night for a casual “ask a professional” or activity to help students get to know professionals.
- Cassie asked how to highlight art in parks within the schedule.
- Maria plans to schedule subcommittee meetings. Maria will send out a doddle poll.  
Initial subcommittee members include:
  - Maria
  - Cassie
  - Steve
  - Brie

**Item #12**

**Mitch Overton**

**Consideration of Renewal of Resource Development Coordinator Contract**

- Proposal included in packet. Maria entertained a motion to renew the contract with Cassie.
- Steve motioned to approval the contact.
- Danielle second.

**Item #13**

**Mitch Overton**

**Swearing in of New Board Members**

- Maria conducted the Swearing in of New Board Members, Carla Belski for Secretary/Treasurer and Brie Nikal for Student Representative.

**Items #14**

**Other Items from the Board**

- Next quarterly meeting on January 11<sup>th</sup> at 3pm.

**Item #15**

**Adjourn**

- Maria adjourned the meeting.