

OHV Working Group

January 15, 2019

On the call: Ron Leach, Terry Langley, Marlene Crosby, Manette Anderson, Chris Cox

Marlene said that Mark would no longer be part of the group as he is no longer with the Sheriff's Department. Ron said that he plans to go over and meet the new Sheriff. Shelley is probably furloughed.

Ron expressed gratitude to Chris for getting the letters from the residents of Crystal. He particularly mentioned Rob Anderson's idea of constructing gates. Marlene said that this would probably require public input and would not be a quick short-term solution.

Chris asked about the best strategy for proceeding. He suggested a petition. Marlene said that we would lose our focus if we did that before we gathered all the information. She has talked with the Gunnison County commissioners and feels that there needs to be a meeting with Pitkin County to work together on both policy and enforcement. Chris asked about a manned station. Marlene suggested starting with a person who would explain that losing the privilege is a possibility if users are not respectful. She thinks charging a fee would help with expenses for the program, but does not know if limiting usage is possible. Ron said that the paid parking that Marble will be implementing may help cut down on parking problems. Marlene said that the combination of Marble's paid parking and prohibiting parking in the pull outs along the road will help. Chris feels that the paid parking in Marble might push the parking problem farther up the road, particularly in regards to the pull offs and enforcement. Marlene said that she was going to emphasize this when she meets the new sheriff. She said that we need more presence of law enforcement. Ron said that he wants to meet with the new sheriff early in his term to get this on his radar. He also wants to meet with the new undersheriff. Chris offered to go with Ron.

Ron said that the town is also looking at a PR campaign in coordination with the parking program to educate the public – a baby step, but a step. The formation of the working group is the single best thing ever done to address the problem. Chris said that PR is something he and Heather can help with. The Marble Chamber wants to work on education as well.

Marlene asked about the numbers of emergency response calls and the fact that they went down. It may be because more people up there mean more people helping each other so that an emergency call is not needed. Ron said that a 12-month graph would be a bell curve with the peak (95%) happening in the summer. Traffic counts went way up.

Ron said that there would be no outside ATV rental enterprises allowed on town property. They will not get a business license. Chris said that that could not be enforced on the other side of Beaver Lake. Marlene said she would check with the county attorney to see if the county could prohibit it on county roads. The Forest Service already prohibits it on FS land without a FS permit.

Ron said that the information from Shelley provided on other permitted areas is very informative as to the process of working with the FS. Ron said that we have already begun to focus on the impacts and on possible solutions such as gates and enforcement officers,

Chris asked about staffing. He asked if staffing a couple of booths had to be a federal or county employee or could it be done privately. Marlene said it would require a contract document. Chris feels that he could do it through his business. Marlene will check with the attorney.

Ron said that Shelley said we need to come up with a vision of what we want to do with this. Do we want no ATVs? A certain number per day? What is the vision regarding jeep tours, motorcycles, hikers, horseback riders? Marlene said that we need to look at the impact of prohibition to residents and business owners.

Manette asked if any long-term solutions and been formulated. Ron said that he had been thinking about that and he suggests a face to face meeting of this group in March followed by a public input meeting. A well-defined format/agenda and vision followed by a game plan is crucial. Manette suggested a time line and an action plan with assigned duties. Ron said that reaching out to Western State for an intern who knows the planning process is still an option. He said that Shelley Grail is another resource for leading such a meeting.

Ron will start to put a vision statement, goals, a public input process, timeline, impacts and solution options together. He encouraged the group to hang together and to push for action, but also to understand that government moves slowly. Strategic moves and result oriented actions are also key to keeping the group together and working toward solutions.

Other solution ideas that have been mentioned to Terry are: days for ATVs and days for hiking/horseback; and one-way traffic.

Action items

1. Ron will coordinate a meeting with the sheriff.
2. Chris will check with Heather on PR.
3. Marlene will check with the attorney on prohibiting businesses from dropping ATVs on county roads and on Chris being able to handle staffing privately.
4. Chris will check with Shelley for a definitive need for permitting, particularly for those operating from private property.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, Feb. 19 at 3 p.m.