

Notes from the county discussions at the members meeting on May 19th, 2018

This is not a transcript. The information below is a simple summary from my notes of the highlights of the discussions with county representatives regarding future plans for the MSTU. The discussions took place at our annual members meeting at McCormick Lake house on May 19th 2018. Representing Jackson county were Eric Hill, commissioner for district 4, Michele Jordan, county attorney, Wilanne Daniels, interim county administrator, and Jayson Cain, road supervisor for district 4.

- Mr Hill began by discussing roads. He covered the history of the FEMA grants, dirt vs rock for surfacing, and plans for the roads in Compass Lake in the Hills.
 - He stated that plans called for a dedicated crew of 3 to be hired and assigned to our roads. They would receive support from other county crews such as dump trucks, asphalt, and others.
 - Jayson also participated in the discussion. He discussed the difficulties the county is having hiring qualified personnel and stated that there was currently no one permanently assigned to our roads but that they were working toward that goal.
 - Jayson also stated that if you encounter a road problem, please call the road department at (850) 482-9629. Your issue will be placed in a work order that will be given directly to him. He will then travel to the area and conduct an inspection of the problem and assign resources as necessary to get the problem or issue resolved.
 - Jayson also stated that the roads in Compass Lake in the Hills are in far better shape than other county roads in his district.
 - A question was asked about the county helping with the flooding problem at McCormick Lake due to the downstream beaver dam. Mr. Hill stated that the county could not help. He believed that the DEP might be the folks to call since the flooding could result in damage to our property.
- Michelle Jordan came to the podium and stated that she wished to get things more organized. She asked to create a list of 'categories' that could be addressed one at a time. She said her list already had roads, recreation, fire, and law enforcement. She asked what else the community would like to talk about. Several suggestions were made, mostly related to the use of MSTU assessment funds.
 - She indicated that the county could expend the funds on anything in the community as long as it was 'worded right'.
 - When asked about funding the lodge, tennis courts, McCormick Lake complex, and other recreational facilities, she stated that "public funds cannot be used on private property".
 - A property owner asked for clarification of this; "so what you are saying is that the money we pay cannot be used on the property we own?". The answer was a repeat of the statement about public funds vs private property.
 - When asked why our money could not be spent on our property, the response was "you would have to give the property to the county". This resulted in some heated discussions where this statement was repeated in the context that if we want our money to be spent on our facilities, we would have to give them to the county.
 - The discussion returned to the creation of the list of what the community wants. At this point, several property owners stated that the county should 'just give us our money and leave us alone'. This generated further discussions.

- Eric stated that we could rest assured that the county does not now, nor ever has wanted our property.
- Further discussions included the following:
 - Eric provided a document of “options” for Compass Lake in the Hills. This document is available at the lodge and has also been uploaded to the website under “POA”, “Documents”. [note: this document is the same that was provided during the Nabors-Giblen presentation several years ago about future possibilities for CLiH.]
 - During the on-going discussions, the attorney stated that it wasn’t clear if the county even owned the roads in CLiH. The county never officially accepted them, but there is some law about ‘maintaining roads for 7-years automatically conveys ownership’. This also led to more discussion with no clear understanding achieved.
 - The attorney also indicated that there may be other options available to the property owners to fund our facilities such as becoming an HOA or, creating a separate assessment just for funding our property.
 - I asked about accountability and reporting regarding our assessment funds. Under the contract with the county, the POA was required to provide monthly reports of expenditures with all receipts to the county. We also provided reports to the property owners in our board meetings. There is not mechanism for this reporting currently in place. Eric stated that he would work with Wilanne Daniels to create and provide some type of report that will keep the property owners aware of how our money is being spent.
 - Eric stated that he will arrange a special board meeting with the county commissioners where property owners can express the concerns and ask questions of the full board.
- Since time was running long, and the discussions at this point were tending to circle back to subjects already discussed, Eric yielded the floor back to me and the board concluded our members meeting.