



WHISTLER

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF WHISTLER BEAR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8th, 2016, STARTING AT 8:30 A.M.

At Decker Room
RMOW Public Works Yard

PRESENT:

Heather Beresford, RMOW, Co-Chair
Arthur DeJong, WB
Nicole Fitzgerald, Member at Large
Simon Gravel, Conservation Officer Service
Colin Hedderson, Member at Large
Paul Kindree, Carney's Waste Systems
Sue Maxwell, RMOW Council
Chris Riess, RMOW Bylaw Services
Constable Paula Haider, RCMP
Anitra Paris, Bear Smart Program Assistant, Recording Secretary

REGRETS:

Ellie Archer, Public
Sylvia Dolson, GBS, Co-Chair
Lori Homstol, Public
Claire Ruddy, AWARE/C2C Grizzly Bear Initiative

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by S. Maxwell
Seconded by P. Haider

That the Whistler Bear Advisory Committee adopt the Whistler Bear Advisory Committee agenda of June 8, 2016.

CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved by C. Riess
Seconded by S. Maxwell

That the Whistler Bear Advisory Committee adopt the regular Whistler Bear Advisory Committee minutes of May 11, 2016.

CARRIED

PRESENTATIONS/DELEGATIONS

Updates

Bylaw Services - 6 attractant calls. Communications coordinated between COS, Bylaw & BSPA. Half marathon, very clean. Many sightings in Emerald.

RCMP- 9 files in last month, most bears gone on arrival. COS advised on all calls. All RCMP trained by COS in bear aversion. Injured bear on highway 99, COS aware.

Discussion: dead black bear at Rainbow trail. No information. Discussion of letter to council re: hunting in Callaghan. Will be on July agenda.

Carney's- Quiet, nothing to report.

Whistler Blackcomb- Two separate garbage issues at top of Fitzsimmons since bike park opening, rectified. Michael Allen counting 35-40 bears. Green up is one month ahead, very quick upslope. 6 cubs identified, low number. 6 sub-adults. Blonde cub born on mountain.

RMOW Update

Whistler specific bear response and management plan being prepared by COS, GBS and RMOW. Bear website page reorganized and updated.

Action: BSPA to place bear in area signs in Emerald. Door to door education.

Action: H. Beresford distribute hunting regulations and synopsis.

Discussion: Bear population decline

- High drought, bad berry crop years.
- Bears being destroyed.
- Low reproduction.
- Whistler's current food sources can support a high number of bears, due to the creation of artificial habitat like ski slopes and golf courses.

Car-less Residents- document is circulating in draft form.

Action: N. Fitzgerald will follow up on adding bear information to Whistler Spirit video.

Follow up on May Actions:

- Tourism Whistler open to adding bear information on maps.
- Whistler Blackcomb bike park staff training being formalized
- Special events guidelines: concern guidelines are not stringent enough.

Action: H. Beresford to contact District of Squamish re: events guidelines.

Simon Gravel - COS arrived at 9:17am

COS Update

- B. Mueller met with Riverside Campground. Good continuity with staff and bear awareness. Adding virtual education on-site.
Recommendation: provide food storage to walk-in sites with locked bins rather than suspended food caches, campground is currently doing cost assessment.
- Calls in May very low. Increased COS presence in anticipation of increased activity. Employed external COS to conduct audits.
- Restaurants leaving doors open. Gave staff education about finding solutions to improve air circulation but keep bears out.
- Very busy on Callaghan road, bear viewing has likely doubled in the last 5 years. Many people getting too close to bears, approaching them.
 - Short term Callaghan solution: COS and RCMP will increase presence. Concern over public safety and dangerous parking habits.
 - Long term Callaghan: improved signage, connect with more bear viewing businesses. Hiring an aversion conditioning contractor being considered.

Discussion: Bear Tour Companies

- Consider meeting with all the bear tour companies. Consider Bear Smart Tour Certification to increase training and standards.
- Consider planting trees along road shoulder, limit sight of view and food source.
- Dead bear near Rainbow trail head, potentially a road strike. Removed by individual and COS following up.
- Call center not open to responding differently to Whistler calls but the call center must receive all calls.
- Tough Mudder coming soon. Communication protocol with COS in place. No overnight storage of food.

Action: Add wording to RMOW website "Report bear sightings in residential areas, Whistler conservation officers are notified daily".

Discussion: Trophy Hunting Letter to Council

- Trophy hunting is not an official term but related to hunting grizzlies for sport, not food.
- Discussed extending no hunting area full length of Callaghan road. Overlap of recreation and hunting area, cultural clash and safety concerns.
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Action: H. Beresford to collect information: RMOW boundary, hunting areas, bow hunting, WOP for next meeting.

- Day lots: New bear proof cans. Bigger capacity, WB hired 2 full time staff to manage.

Nicole Fitzgerald
exited at 10:05am

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by S. Maxwell

That the Whistler Bear Advisory Committee adjourn the June 8, 2016 Regular meeting at 10:25 a.m.

CARRIED

CO-CHAIR: Sylvia Dolson