

**Prickly Pear Sportsmen's Association**  
**Association Meeting Minutes**  
**East Helena VFW**  
**September 14, 2021**

Board Members:

Chairman of the Board: Jason Swant  
Assoc. President: Neil Horne  
Assoc. President-Elect: Rick Yearry  
Assoc. Treasurer: Annette Rinehart  
Assoc. Secretary: Sherri Lionberger  
Website Mgr: Vacant  
Range Mtnce Officer: Kevin Horn

Director: Mathew Bartlett  
Director: Cory Olson  
Director: Scott Swingley  
Director: Kerry Bartlett - exc  
Directors: John McLaughlin  
Director: Paul Kienlen - exc

Meeting start: 7:00 pm Meeting end: 8: 04 pm  
Roll call: (see above)

There were 9 board members, the range management officer and 9 members of the Association, for a total of 19 present.

**Minutes from April 13, 2021** were read:

Motion made to accept minutes as read by Annette, seconded by Cory. Motion passed.

Neil asked the folks here to introduce themselves as there were new faces present.

**Treasurer's report:** beginning balance as of August 10, 2021 was \$8,485.47 with deposits of \$38,431.01 (including CDs cashed in for \$25,148.46) and expenses of \$36,936.10. Ending balance was \$9,980.38 and the total in CD's is \$41,294.93. In 2021 we've cashed 4 CD's totaling \$50,790.78. Motion to accept report made by Scott Swingley and seconded by Matt Bartlett. Motion passed. Annette submitted a \$1410.38 bill from the FS for our permit this year. She will pay it.

**Officers' /Directors reports:**

**Neil/Kevin: New shop/garage update** – We built the 30 x 32 shop with insulation, LED lights, enough power to use a welder and a good secure place to put everything now. Solar has been in for a couple weeks, and we haven't really seen the batteries going down in storage. We also put a lean off the side of the shed to store equipment out of the weather and sun. There is a drainage apron on the edge that looks like it is working well. There is a non-electric heater in the battery room to make sure the batteries don't freeze.

**Kevin/Cory : vandalism at the range** – Our range allows no shotguns. About 2 weeks ago someone went in with a shotgun and destroyed the mats in the pistol range. They also used a heavy pistol in the rimfire range and broke a number of the targets. A couple times people have been very nasty in the bathroom and making a deliberate mess, which is frustrating and not fun to clean up. He thinks it is happening late in the afternoon/evening and on the weekends. A member suggested that people can walk around our gates with ease, and he doesn't think it is members that are doing the vandalism. It was also asked about a remote system to keep watch. Both of these items are going to be discussed tonight. Todd asked what a member at large should do if they see something going on that shouldn't

be. Kevin suggested get the plate number they are driving and turn it in – just don't put yourself in any danger. If you are comfortable talking to someone about the rules, that's ok. Jason noted that it isn't just pistol, but the speed of the pistol bullet and the damage to the rack and cable system that happens when the bullet speed is high. There are safety issues as well. This vandalism is costing us all in the time it takes Kevin to clean everything up, and fix all of the broken targets, etc. The level of education of new shooters may also be a problem, but where that is the case, we need to help educate them. Matt noted that the new gate system will help as we will know what members are opening the gate and when. Cory noted that the incident has been reported to law enforcement and given a case number. Nothing further is likely until we find more evidence.

**Rick – soil testing:** We are a shooting range and so have lead in the area. We are doing some testing across the range to check the amount of lead and potential removal where the lead is in the berms. In a shotgun range, its easy to extract that lead, but at a rifle range, it is difficult because there are mostly fragments. There aren't a lot of folks who do this removal, but one was found in South Dakota that could do the reclamation. It is a very expensive process and even selling the lead covers only half the cost. We are supposed to do it every 10 years for the FS, but we may not get to it this year. It may cost between \$30-50,000.

**Neil: 500 yard range** – this is on hold because we need an archaeology study from the FS. It will also cost nearly the same as the lead removal, so the board/association may need to decide priority.

**Rick: Gate Project** - We know more about the gate than we do surveillance right now. They do have 12-24 volt systems to run cameras for security. Some store the images on the camera, others send the images directly to another outside unit, so if the cameras are destroyed, we still would have the images. The gate system can run with 4 to 6 digit codes for each member and can handle several thousand members. If there is a loss of power, the gate latch closes and cannot be opened – which could be a potential issue if someone gets locked in. It will have to be figured out. The system will have random numbers generated for members that will be reissued each year. We will also have cellular control of the gate at the building, which does have cell service. The bugs of the locking gate will be figured out before the system is implemented. The cards will have a random generated number printed on them – Rick and Annette will handle it. We plan to start this for 2022 as long as everything is working appropriately. Our keys have been costing us \$5000 per year, so this system will save a lot of money over a few years.

**Matt: FWP Grant** - We have the submittal done for the first reimbursement request for \$35,000+ and we still have about \$11000 of grant money remaining. It will take about 3 weeks to get the check back to us. Matt will determine if the check is to be mailed, or directly deposited.

**Mathew: - FS** - we've had a bad fire season, so when we went to stage 2, we had to make some changes at the range in order to operate, and we chose to shut down for a short time. In the future, if we continue to have these fire seasons, we may need to look into how to accommodate the requirements. We would have had to have a fire fighting person there all day, every day, and an hour past the last shooter. Eventually, they allowed us to open without that , but we had to agree to close if conditions deteriorated again.

**Annette: update on classifieds** – nothing to report. We do continue to get questions. People can put a notice up at the range if they choose.

**Kevin: range management officer report** - covered earlier, but still trying to organize the new shed with everything. If you need to get hold of him, leave him a note in the guest pass box. Especially if someone sees an item that needs to be fixed. Neil noted that Kevin took it upon himself to landscape around the new shed. Kudos and thanks!

**Jason: Christmas party** – last year we had to cancel our annual party. We plan to have one this year at the VFW. We will be paying attention to the pandemic and if necessary, cancel it, but at this point we will go forward. Date is December 14 on the second Tuesday.

**Old Business:** None more

**New Business:**

Jason – last week Paul Kienlen said he wouldn't be able to continue serving on the board. He did a great job for us, including the Postal Shoot. Consequently, we have an opening on the board. At our spring meeting when we held elections, we had 4 candidates, 2 were elected, and John McLaughlin took George Schiller's place when he passed away. With Paul going off the board, Jason wanted to check with the other person who ran last spring, and Todd Branscum has said he would be happy to finish that term. Jason can make the recommendation and needs the approval by the board, so Jason asked for that. Board voted to approve.

A member noted that the beetle kill above our range is pretty terrible, and even though he was frustrated by the range closing, he understands and agrees with the need to close it for fire danger.

Kevin – he doesn't remember the exact timing, but on the long range, he watched a person flick a cigarette out into the dry grass that was still lit. Smoking is allowed, except under stage 1 or 2 fire levels.

Cory motioned to adjourn and second by Annette.

Respectfully submitted by

Sherri Lionberger - secretary