

NFLA – June 14, 2026 Membership Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Sunday June 14, 2026

Location: Community Hall

Host: Jim Rittenburg

Attendees: All Members invited

- ✓ Jack McFarland
- ✓ Jim Rittenburg
- ✓ Beth Ulrichsen
- ✓ Kevin Ulrichsen
- ✓ Cheryl Crane
- ✓ Ruth Kinsolving
- ✓ John Stone
- ✓ John Zardis
- ✓ Betsy Holycross

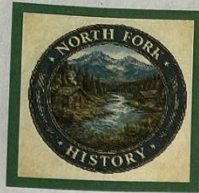
- 1) 7:00 pm: Guest Presentation:
 - a) Anthony Nelson – The Glacier Institute - hosted by Jim Rittenburg
- 2) 8:00 pm: Membership meeting
- 3) Call to order at 8:10pm
- 4) Welcome and Opening Remarks
 - a) Welcome Back – Jim welcomed everyone back. He thanked the Board, who meet over the winter, for their planning and organizing of activities for the summer. He thanked all who worked on the Spring Newsletter and contributed articles. He also thanked Bill Walker for all his work on the website and Cheryl Crane for maintaining and running the North Fork Montana Residents Facebook page.
 - b) Friends and Neighbors, we lost – Lois shared that we lost Ray Hart, Heather Matthews, and Eric Kirvel. She will compile a complete list for next month's meeting.
 - c) October 12th Membership Minutes – Short summary (copies available online) Beth briefly shared the highlights of the October 2025 Membership Meeting
- 5) Treasurer's Report (John Zardis)
 - a) Budget Summary – John Zardis shared that we are on target for the year. He shared that we currently have \$42,000 in cash, mostly in CDs. Donations are similar to last year's donations, with the exception of the Carol Daly donation.
 - b) Jim asked the membership for ideas of projects that might benefit the community.
- 6) Committee Reports
 - a) Sunshine- Bonny Ogle did not have a complete report to share, but will report next month
 - b) History -Lois shared the history she has been researching. See the attached report
 - c) Maintenance -Jim reported that the Hall Cleanup went well, Kevin shared that he has taken the fire extinguishers to be tested and re-certified
 - d) Welcome -Beth shared that she and Zoe will soon resume visiting folks, starting in the north
 - e) Fire Mitigation –Allen Chrisman shared that they are celebrating the new County Wide Protection Plan. He credited Molly Shepherd for the encouragement to write the new plan. Allen shared that the plan is out for review, comments are needed from the NFLA Board and community. Lincoln Chute has offered to run the copies of the plan, saving the NFLA \$1,200 in printing costs. Allen asked if the Board would consider cost sharing fire prevention signage with the Forest Service (about \$500). Allen will come to the Board with a proposal.

1. Wildfire Awareness Training is June 18th

2. Suzanne Hildner reminded all to keep track of their Fire Wise hours. This includes hours spent cleaning up from the December blowdown event. (cutting, piling, burning, equipment expenses, contractor expenses, hours)
- 7) Organization Reports (Non-NFLA)
- a) North Fork Patrol
 1. Mark Heaphy shared that they will be having their first of two Patrol meetings tomorrow
 2. Mark also shared that the Patrol has put in 1,200 miles of patrolling this year. The mileage is up due to the blowdown incident
 3. Two Bear Air was down; however, the new helicopter was put in service last week
 4. Alert helicopter will be at the Hall next month at 6:30 for a presentation
 5. Mark reminded all of the importance of river safety. There have been many calls lately, he encouraged all to use safety measures on the river
 6. Kevin asked if the river had been checked for sweepers, jams, etc. Mark will be checking from Polebridge down in the next week. From Border to Polebridge was clear at this time
 - b) Polebridge Bear Smart - Suzanne Hildner reported that the North Fork has had very few issues as of late. A pair of twins accessed the back of a pick-up truck, no food reward. Bear Smart purchased an “unwelcome” mat to deter bears. Suzanne reported that site visits and trainings have begun. She also mentioned that Bear Smart bags are available for purchase.
 - c) NFPA- Suzanne Hildner shared that the annual meeting will be held on the 3rd Saturday in August, Speaker Dan Fagre—retired climate scientist from Glacier National Park
 - d) NF Trails -Bill Walker reported that the forest service has been busy, many of the trails they had planned to clear have been taken care of. Trails are in pretty good shape.
 - e) NFLUAC -Randy addressed the recent zoning petition to the county to change setbacks to 10 feet. There will be a meeting held on June 25th at 4pm for public questions and comments.
 1. Cheryl Crane asked about the landing pad being made on Trail Creek Road as part of the Park’s project to cap off a well in the Park. Is the county aware of this?
 - f) Fire Chief -Lynn Ogle encouraged all to check propane lines for safety. He also mentioned that permits can be obtained through the forest service for cutting blowdowns for firewood.
- 8) Old Business
- a) Hall back porch project is completed
 - b) Outhouse improvement -John Stone shared that the improvements will include bolting down the outhouse, door privacy improvements, grab bars, and new handles.
 - c) The Hall will be sprayed for knapweed and mosquitoes. We are spraying for mosquitoes this year to see if there is any improvement and will decide if we want to continue in the future.
 - d) This is the off year for mag chloride placement in front of the Hall.
- 9) New Business
- a) Community Hall Fire mitigation project -John Stone shared that a new 2500 gallon tank has been installed behind the woodshed for fire protection. Hoses, foam, and equipment will be stored in the woodshed. The cost was \$5,000 for the system. The tank can be over wintered. Kevin and John will fill the tank. The funds are from the Carol Daly donation.
- 10) Community Events Update - Beth shared the upcoming events that are on the calendar.
- 11) Member Comments
- a) Beth thanked the Wernicks’ and Loseys’ for donating the two hanging baskets for the front of the Hall.
- 12) Next Membership Meeting
- a) Sunday July 12, 2026, at **6:30 pm** with Alert/Medivac – Mark Heaphy

13) Adjourn at 9:14pm

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Ulrichsen
NFLA Secretary
June 26, 2026



NORTH FORK HISTORY PROJECT

June 2026

It was a busy winter, as always.

I supplied Tom Hoiland with materials about Austin Weikert and his wife Ruth, as well as information about Tom's great-grandparents Ruth and Bert Coan. (The Hoilands own the former Austin Weikert homestead.) Both of those ladies served as teachers at the Ford Schoolhouse, Ruth Dinwiddie Weikert in the 1920s and Ruth Coan in the 1940s.

Looking through old documents, I discovered that in the early days the NFIA offered a reward for the conviction of anyone who broke into an NFIA member's home

The Dan Block book, which many of you have, *Trail Creek—A North Fork Saga*, was published by his grandson Zach Block. The Blocks owned the former Price Homestead, where the Kinsolvings and the Ingrams live now, and where Bud Block's daughter Carol O'Neil and her family still have their cabins. It's a great read. I brought some to sell today, as well as the latest revised edition of the *History of the Polebridge Mercantile*.

I wrote an article about marriage of Frank and Ethel Newton for the spring NFLA newsletter

I've had a request from a fellow named John Ansotegui, a filmmaker based in Columbia Falls. He's doing research for a documentary about the challenges the three forks of the Flathead River have faced over the years. He's particularly interested in the story of the Glacier View Dam that wasn't built and the efforts to stop the Cabin Creek mine in Canada, as well as efforts leading to the signing of the North Fork Watershed Protection Act in 2013. I've told him that he's welcome to come comb through the archives for materials and photos.

Along those lines, I dug out a picture for Flannery of John Frederick and Roger Sullivan testifying against the drilling on the Home Ranch Bottoms property in the late 1980s.

Bill has helped me add some materials to the History Project link on the NFLA website. Recordings and transcriptions of our History Day events have been added. Then after Ray Hart passed away, I added more materials to his link, and also to the Mid Connelly link. We have three History Day gatherings coming up this summer: Coffee with the Ogles in June, with Ray Brown in July, and Rob Fisher in August. In terms of oral history interviews to conduct, I have Ray Brown, Ted Ramon, and John O'Hara on the list this summer. I'll be posting my oral history with the Ogles to the website soon—94 pages worth.

I'm working with the Flathead Land Trust to help a family that is considering nominating their property to the National Register of Historic Places

Lois Walker, Historian



Income Statement
North Fork Landowners Association
For period ending

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Balance Sheet
North Fork Landowners Association
For period ending

	5/31/26	5/31/25
Checking	4,906	15,888
Paid account	(0)	-
Poaching fund savings	2,138	2,144
Emergency fund CD	18,620	17,913
Improvement fund CD	7,100	6,831
New CD	10,095	-
Total assets	42,859	42,776
RE	40,789	32,834
Current profit	2,069	9,942
Total equity	42,859	42,776