

Park Cattle ushering in era of change

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Know an executive with working knowledge of cattle ranching, alfalfa farming, water utilities, golf course management and casinos?

That person could be the next chief executive of the 125-year-old Park Cattle Co., a family operation based in Minden that is conducting a nationwide search for someone to help maximize its assets.

Those assets include significant land holdings in Stateline, including the land under the area's large hotel-casinos, Edgewood Golf Course, Park Cattle Ranch and Edgewood Water Co.

What are they looking for in a leader?

"Character and integrity," said board member Jeanne Park Blach. "Their core values and ours should match up very well. We hope the person has lots of patience, is a creative thinker. Visionary. Someone who is bold and has very good people skills. As soon as you meet him or her, you want to know what they have to say."

The company's part-time president, attorney Robert Armstrong, whose father helped the late Brooks Park start the company, is stepping down as the company moves ahead with a new strategic plan.

Armstrong was brought aboard two years ago to help develop the strategic plan, but is not ready to give up his career as an attorney, Park Cattle board members said Wednesday.

Park Blach and sister Kay Park Seeliger didn't want to release the specifics of that plan, but said it could include any number of business options, from new business ventures in Carson Valley to something that capitalizes on the growth in the Reno area.

"One thing we are working on currently is the golf course and improving things up at Edgewood," Park Blach said, adding that some of the holes could change.

"Maybe in the next year, we will do feasibility studies and economic studies to make sure our grand ideas are worth our salt."

Added Park Seeliger: "We always wanted it to be one of the best courses in the country."

Whoever gets the job also will have to contend with at least two pending lawsuits involving Park Cattle, one initiated by Bruce Park, a brother of Blach and Seeliger and former president of Park Cattle, who is suing to dissolve the company.

"If there has been any affect of the lawsuit, it has galvanized the board and caused us to make stronger plans and get those enacted," Park Blach said.

The company also terminated the lease in November for the Horizon hotel-casino, and ordered casino officials to surrender the property, which the casino company refused. Columbia-Sussex, which is doing business in Stateline as Wimar Tahoe Corp., runs the casino. It also is converting Caesars Tahoe into a new casino, and leases the land under that property from Park Cattle, which is asking the courts to allow the company access to Horizon.

Park Cattle's shares are entirely held by three generations of the Park family. Officials said it has five board members: Blach, Seeliger, Bruce Park, Margo Kelly and Wally Lourdeaux.