

# LARIMER COUNTY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD

## MINUTES

Tuesday, May 14, 2013, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.,

Larimer County Courthouse Office Building, Boyd Lake Room, 200 W. Oak St., Ft. Collins, CO

*The mission of the Larimer County Parks and Open Lands Department is to establish, protect, and manage significant regional parks and open lands, providing quality outdoor recreational opportunities and stewardship of natural resource values. We are committed to fostering a sense of community and appreciation for the natural and agricultural heritage of Larimer County for present and future generations.*

### **PRESENT:**

#### ***Parks Advisory Board members:***

Steve Ambrose  
Mark DeGregorio  
Russ Fruits  
Rob Harris  
Ron Kainer  
Linda Knowlton

#### ***Absent:***

Frank Cada  
Mark Caughlan  
Frank Gillespie  
David Hattis  
Steve Johnson, Commissioner  
Forrest Orswell  
John Tipton

#### ***Staff:***

Shannon Barnes  
Gary Buffington  
Chris Fleming  
Pam Mayhew  
Rob Novak  
Dan Rieves  
Deb Wykoff

#### ***Public: None***

The May 14, 2013, meeting of the Parks Advisory Board was called to order at 5:35 p.m. Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

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**INTRODUCTIONS:** Pam Mayhew, new Volunteer Coordinator

Pam has been with our department for 3 weeks. Pam started as a Parks seasonal 25 years ago. Pam brings with her a combined 12+ years of volunteer management experience with the City of Westminster and the 9News Health Fair. Welcome Pam!

**BOARD MEMBER REPORTS – NONE**

**PUBLIC COMMENT: Items not on the agenda – NONE**

## **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

- Natural Resource Events for this month: See website <http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources>.
- Linda Beach, a fiber artist from Estes Valley, was selected as the 2013 Visual Artist for Larimer County Natural Resources Department.
- Filming for the Colorado Lottery video projects will take place this Spring. Poudre River, Laramie Foothills Mountains to Plains, and Horsetooth Recreation improvements will be featured, along with our partnerships.
- To sign up for Parks Advisory Board minutes go to <http://larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm> put in your email and click 'subscribe', then check "Parks Advisory Board" box
- Estes and Big Thompson properties tour May 17. Departs 9am from Administrative office. Mark DeGregorio will meet the group at Hermit Park at 10am. Box lunches and snacks will be provided. Rob Harris is doubtful he will be there. The Estes Valley Recreation and Park District is thinking about re-purposing the Mary's Lake area. They will be meeting and considering this proposal soon. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> year of our 5 year contract.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

- Airstream Tour – Dan Rieves and Shannon Barnes

Dan gave a tour of the new Airstream. He explained how the first Airstream deal fell through and why we decided to go with a newer model instead of a vintage model. The Airstream will be at Horsetooth Reservoir at the South Bay campground in site #73. It will cost \$99 per night with a 2 night minimum at all times. It is available for reservations beginning Memorial Day weekend.

- Special Event Procedures – Dan Rieves

Dan explained the Special Event procedures. A special event is any event/activity that may require special planning or scheduling, or may significantly impact departmental values, norms, liabilities and/or visitor expectations. The current Special Event process has been in place since 2005, and is now incorporated into the County's online Special Event system. The policy identifies the criteria to be used in evaluating special event proposals. These include impacts to other visitors, resource impacts, etc.

- There are certain events that we will not entertain which are not congruent with our mission, such as monster truck rallies, medieval festivals etc.
- When and where the event will occur will affect the price;, December vs. July etc.
- The first step in the process is to go online and fill out the application. The cost is \$25 for the application fee. If the applicant is not prepared to fill out the application with complete information, they are not ready to apply for a special event.

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- The application then goes to the District Manager of the area that will be affected. Dan gets the applications for events that will affect more than one area. The application will also be reviewed by all other pertinent county departments. All approvals must be obtained before a special event permit will be issued by Larimer County for the event.
- We have a number in mind of how many events we can have at a location before it starts affecting the public.
- We provide only the venue – we don't do event management.
- Some events are “grandfathered” in from prior years, like the Carter Sail Club Regatta. New events are on a trial basis for the first year.
- If you wait until a month before the event to apply, we will charge \$100 application fee.
- Fees are determined on a sliding scale; entrance permits are required, or may be incorporated into the fee. The impact value and the venue value are also evaluated, and fees are assessed accordingly. The manager has discretion in waiving fees assessed, but the fee worksheet format allows the applicant to see the full value of the event, and the discount applied.
- The price of a repeat special event will usually go down if it is a well-run event.
- We would rather do fewer well-run events than more events that aren't well-run.

### Board and staff comments:

Mark DeGregorio: How do you deal with the impact to surrounding residential areas? Do we turn down last minute requests?

Dan Rieves: The event organizer does a lot of the leg work. For a large event we may send notice to neighbors or go door to door. We won't do events that will have a significant negative impact on the neighbors. We do deny requests.

Mark DeGregorio: Do we ever require bonding up front to cover potential liability? For example, at Rocky Mountain National Park, they had a big race where weather caused serious problems and cost the park a lot of money to bring in extra staff, etc. None of those costs were recovered.

Dan Rieves: The county determines insurance requirements for events. For the Horsetooth Marathon, there was a lot of snow the week before. The race organizer made a donation to Larimer County Search And Rescue to have emergency equipment on site. The route was also changed, and they ran on service roads.

Linda Knowlton: Was there damage to the trails?

Dan Rieves: No, because they used the service roads and with the snow pack, it didn't hurt our trails. All the racers loved the event and were glad they did it. We got a lot of good press for that event. The fee for the event was \$2500.

Linda Knowlton: How are the entrance permits handled for large events?

Dan Rieves: Event organizers can pay for permits in advance, or for large groups being bussed in, the fee may be incorporated into the fee.

Linda Knowlton: With social media, what happens if the event gets out of hand? For example, 1000 extra people show up.

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Dan Rieves: We shut the event down.

Rob Harris: How much revenue is generated from special events?

Dan Rieves: Less than 5% of our total revenue.

### DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Marina survey sample – Chris Fleming

Survey questions have been developed for use with the marina customers. The survey covers customer service, store amenities, food service, prices, boat repair, fuel service, boat rentals, slips and moorings. The survey questions were displayed and feedback was requested from Board members.

#### Board and staff comments:

Mark DeGregorio: How are these surveys going to be distributed and collected?

Dan Rieves: Probably electronically through Survey Monkey, and also handed out to slip holders.

Linda Knowlton: How will input be obtained from other customers besides slip customers?

Dan Rieves: The survey is geared more for the slip customers. It will be more difficult to get the survey out to all the customers.

Gary Buffington: Most of the complaints are from people who rent boats.

Rob Harris: For Denver customers, Carter Lake is a phenomenal experience – clean deep water, scenic, new marina. It would be nice to get a good grilled hamburger at the marina!

Gary Buffington: We looked at adding a grill – it would cost \$100,000 to meet the Health Department and other requirements.

Gary Buffington: Horsetooth Marina does twice the gross revenue of the Carter Lake Marina.

Dan Rieves: Carter and Horsetooth have distinct user groups.

Rob Harris: The survey looks good. Will there be a box of surveys outside of the marina for people to fill out? (Not yet determined)

### ACTION ITEMS - None

### STANDING AGENDA ITEMS:

- *Park District updates and Parks Master Plan Implementation Progress report* – Dan Rieves, Visitor Services Manager, Chris Fleming, Blue Mountain District Manager

#### Horsetooth:

- Boat ramps are open and on the regular schedule for the season. They are open, 6am to 10pm, 7 days a week.
- The snow and moisture has been very beneficial.

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- Ranger hiring and training is complete and we have a really good crop of rangers. Ranger Excellence School was last week; seasonal ranger training is tomorrow.
- Airstream will be at S73 at Horsetooth through October.
- The projected water level will be about 18 feet from full, possibly higher. That's high!
- Elimination of the 45 minute free parking areas: we have had 2 emails regarding this. The climbing groups see one of those closures as restricting access to the climbing areas. There has been a little push back; we are getting the word out that Skyline parking lot is now free. Skyline parking area can actually hold more vehicles than all the 45 minute areas. Fort Collins also has 3 free parking lots on the east side of Horsetooth.
- Field Manager is up and running and so far going well. Shannon finished the last training session today. The camphosts at Horsetooth will be a good test to see how that model works.

### Blue Mountain:

- We went from winter to summer like that.
- We only had 12 sites available last weekend, with the good weather.
- So far we have had 5 arrests for a variety of offenses in all three districts.
- Fire danger is down and water levels are up.
- Carter is about 10 feet from full which is right where we want it. Carter will not receive any more water this year.
- Carter Lake Marina has put in the new electrical slips.
- All water is on except at South Shore at Carter Lake (problem with the well) and East Portal where opening has been delayed a week.
- Camphosts are in place at all parks. South Shore and Eagle are returning camphosts.
- Camphosts at Horsetooth Reservoir are all new.
- We have a 75% turnover of seasonal employees for this year.
- Pinewood improvements were not funded by GOCO. The project will still be done, but may be scaled back if necessary.
- Hermit Park Equestrian Campground is open and popular.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- The budget for 2014 has just been developed. \$200,000 in capital equipment replacement for the Parks Fund. Most budget requests were approved by Gary.
- The 2012 Annual Report was distributed. Sue Burke developed the report this year and did a really great job. The quality is just as good as prior years when it was produced by a consultant.
- Gary recognized Deb for taking the minutes for all these years.
- We have interviewed 3 applicants for the Parks Advisory Board and we have appointed all 3. They are a good mix of people and we will be up to 13 board members. Frank Cada will be retiring from the Board. These changes will take effect at the July meeting.

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The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Barnes

APPROVED:

Russell Fruits, Chair

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*Next regular meeting: June 11, 2013, Larimer County Natural Resources Administrative Office Building, 1800 South County Road 31, Loveland CO.*

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Public can view agenda and minutes at [www.larimer.org/parks](http://www.larimer.org/parks)