

LARIMER COUNTY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES

Tuesday, April 8, 2014, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.,

Natural Resources Administrative Offices, 1800 S. County Road 31, Loveland, 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

John Gaffney

David Hattis

Ron Kainer

Chris Klaas

Linda Knowlton

Forrest Orswell

John Tipton

Absent:

Mark Caughlan

Mark DeGregorio

Russ Fruits

Frank Gillespie

Rob Harris

Steve Johnson, Commissioner

Stephanie Sigler

Staff:

Shannon Barnes

Gary Buffington

Chris Fleming

Dan Rieves

Sandy Werkmeister

Public: None

The April 8, 2014, meeting of the Parks Advisory Board was called to order at 5:34 p.m. Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Board photo for 2014 Annual Report – Sandy Werkmeister

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS – None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

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GENERAL INFORMATION:

- Reservoirs opened to boating March 25th. The reservoirs opened a week early.
- Gary Buffington and Dan Rieves attended a work session with the BOCC on the special event process. Due to road construction this summer, there are a couple of road events where exceptions will be made to the county regulations on road closures.
- On March 18th the department hosted a meeting and tour with staff from Active Network our reservations service provider. Many new services and promotions will be available.
- Dan and staff have been nominated for the Innovation Award through the county for our Automated Pay Stations. Our Plug Into Nature program came in 2nd place last year.
- Dan Rieves won employee of the month for February for the entire county. Good job!
- Natural Resource Events for this month: See website <http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources>.
- 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

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Introduction to the Carter Lake Sail Club – Chris Fleming, Blue Mountain District Manager – Overview of Carter Lake Sail Club, Guests Cindy Klyn and Mike Gurley:

- Cindy Klyn is the 2014 Commodore for the Carter Lake Sail Club (CLSC).
- CLSC will be hosting the Carter Lake Open Regatta June 7 & 8.
- Carter Lake Junior Sailing Program will be held 3 weekends in June and July this summer.
- CLSC will be hosting a Junior Racing Regatta in August for the first time in several years.
- CLSC is a nonprofit working social club and is open for anyone to join.
- Members are required to meet a certain amount of work hours per year which in turn help keep the fees low.
- Work hours include working on the docks, clubhouse, cleaning boats etc.
- Mike Gurley has been with the club for 23 years and is the Rear Commodore.
- Mike is an instructor for Victoria Sailing School.
- The Carter Lake Sail Club was founded in 1953.
- The Carter Lake Sail Club is the oldest sail club in Colorado.
- The club moved to Carter Lake and held their 1st regatta in 1954.
- The club house was built in 1957.
- The junior sailing program was started in the 1960's.
- In 2000 and 2001 the sail club hosted the FJ Nationals.
- Junior Olympics was hosted at Carter Lake several years ago.
- The club is starting to see 2nd and 3rd generations coming back to Carter Lake and the CLSC.
- 10 to 12 members have been with the club over 15 years.
- The junior racing team began with 2 members last year. This year there are 6 members.
- The Club maintains 37 to 38 slip holding members.
- Two members of the club are Victoria Sailing School instructors.
- The club members put in and take out their own docks.
- The club is scheduling a Ranger Race to help cross train the rangers.

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Board & Staff Comments:

Linda Knowlton: Do you have any membership goals?

Cindy Klyn: We have approximately 50 slips. When those are filled, people will be placed on a waiting list. There is no limit to how many members we can have.

Dan Rieves: In our operational agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation we are capped at the number of slips and moorings we can have. This is the 2nd renewal since this board has been formed. The club owns the clubhouse but it is on Bureau of Reclamation property.

Dan Rieves: The events that the Carter Lake Sail Club run are well run events. They have very little impact on our staff. They are very good event hosts.

Mike Gurley: When I think of the term “Racing” I think of NASCAR. Racing a sail boat is like running at less than 5 miles per hour. Racing a sailboat is not fast and therefore not a danger to the public. The boats only go 5 to 10 miles per hour.

Cindy Klyn: We will be doing an on the ground training for the rangers using Sunfish so they can gain some perspective.

Linda Knowlton: During the last renewal, wasn't the lease fee going to go up over a period of years?

Dan Rieves: We did a graduated scale. We went incrementally by years. At the end of that agreement we were at \$15,000. When we renewed last time we started at \$15,000 and carried that for the last 5 years.

Linda Knowlton: So we are at where we want to be.

Dan Rieves: Yes, and have been for the entirety of this agreement.

Cindy Klyn: We will have posters at the gate houses and throughout the parks for the Sailstace event. Everyone is invited to come to our events. The racing goes on every other weekend, and it is free to race. If you have any questions, please contact me.

PRESENTATIONS:

Big Thompson River Restoration Coalition – John Giordanengo, Wildlands Restoration Volunteer:

- The Big Thompson River has changed a lot in the last couple months.
- A River is a carpenter of its own edifice. Because of the power of moving water and the resistance of rock, over time rivers carve a channel that is appropriate for them based on time.
- During the 1976 and the 2013 flood, there was a lot of power in a short amount of time sending lots of sediment downstream.
- Power = Work/Time

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- Power = Force x Velocity
- Aggradation is the raising of the general flood plain due to deposition of sediment. Aggradation occurs in areas in which the supply of sediment is greater than the amount of material that the system is able to transport.
- A lot of work is being done to try to dig the river channel back down through the aggradation to change the relationship between the river and the flood plain.
- The Big Thompson River Restoration Coalition goals include:
 - Stabilization of banks and channels to protect at-risk property and infrastructure.
 - Restore river function, riparian/wetland habitat, and aquatic habitat, while maintaining existing recreational access.
 - Reduce threats to water quality.
 - Incorporation of designs that reduce the risk to life and property during future flood events.
- Coalitions are a pact among individuals or groups, each of which is operating in their own self-interest, joining forces together for a common cause.
- Reasons for a Coalition: Agency Coordination, Leverage Resources, Neutral (non-governmental) entity.
- The Coalition should have a Master Plan by August or September of 2014.
- Public input is a very important part of this process because so much of this property is private. The first formal meeting is Saturday.
- Poorly-designed infrastructure destroys habitat, highways and homes.
- Master Planning coordinates multiple entities to come up with a reasonable river restoration plan that will be sustainable in the long-term.
- Waterslide principle: A river is a continuous course of water from spring to ocean. Whatever happens at a given point along the stream will impact your neighbor up, down, and across the stream.
- There are a lot of volunteer opportunities: trash removal, debris management, reestablishing wetlands etc .

Board & Staff Comments:

Gary Buffington: We are members of this coalition and a financial partner as well.

John Giordanengo: Thank you! It is crucial support you have provided as well, basically to fully fund the Master Planning process along with some other agencies.

Gary Buffington: The Big Thompson Master Plan will parallel with the Coalitions Master Plan so we will all be on the same page as we move forward.

John Giordanengo: I understand that there is some restoration need and support from FEMA to work on some of the parks up and down the canyon, is that correct?

Dan Rieves: Kind of, one of the big red circles on the map is the Forks park area. We had a discussion with this board last month about the restoration dollars that will be coming in for that. The timing that John discussed about when CDOT is going to hire their engineer to do the final alignment is in October. A lot of the work that is being done right now is preparing for the spring runoff. Forks park is being used as a staging and transfer station of material. There are not a lot of big flat areas in the canyon for these types of stations. We are having discussions about where the river is going to wind up. We need to know that for planning purposes.

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John Giordanengo: The other common variable is the shape and flood plain may change. That is something to keep in mind as well.

Dan Rieves: The way the funding works is, you look at what you had there, and how much it would cost to replace it. We are taking the flexibility from some of the pilot programs to take that money and pool it and do an alternative project. We are trying to capture all those FEMA dollars. The only park right now on paper with any type of agreement is Sleepy Hollow. You can change things but you will suffer a percentage loss on the funding. Sleepy Hollow will stay the same.

John Giordanengo: The first Big Thompson River Restoration Master Plan kick-off meeting and workshop will be held this Saturday April 12, 2014. I highly encourage anyone who is interested in the river restoration to attend.

David Hattis: Who is responsible for making the decisions on the other parcels?

Gary Buffington: I believe the Army Corp of Engineers and CDOT.

John Giordanengo: Yes, on most parcels.

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:

Blue Mountain District:

- Hiring and training seasonal staff is underway.
- We are in the process of hiring a new full time maintenance person for our Estes Park areas to replace Josh Wagoner.
- Mandatory trainings for the full time rangers to maintain certifications: driving training, firearms, arrest control, taser etc.
- Ranger Excellent School planning is underway. We have revamped a lot of the classes and we are offering some new classes as well.
- Water projections are really good. We should have good water levels through June.
- The cabins at Flatiron are gone and we are hoping to be replacing them with Tipi's.
- A lot of time is being spent working with FEMA projects.
- We should be going out to bid to restore the roads at Hermit Park by the end of this week. The target date to open Hermit Park is July 4.
- The pavilion at Hermit Park will be renovated.
- Estes Valley Rec. Park District finished the upgrade to the sewer project at Mary's Lake Campground.
- East Portal and Mary's Lake campgrounds will open on time, May 15.
- This is the final year of the 5 year contract for managing the East Portal and Mary's Lake Campgrounds.

Horsetooth District:

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- Spring maintenance, hiring, trainings are underway.
- Rotary park project will begin the end of April. Should be about a 2 week project

Board & Staff Comments:

Ron Kainer: Where are the ranger trainings held?

Chris Fleming: It depends on the training: Arrest control is at the Sheriff department, Firearms is typically at the Sheriff departments range, Driving was held in Adams county. Our relationship with the Sheriff's department allows us to utilize their facilities and we usually don't have to pay for the facilities.

Ron Kainer: This time of year where are you at in terms of staffing?

Chris Fleming: We are just ramping up. Typically our full time staff is up and running. We have 3 full time rangers that will be out on maternity and paternity leave in the spring which has been really challenging.

Ron: So are you fully staffed by mid May?

Chris Fleming: Yes, we are struggling staffing the Estes Park area, but all of our other areas are fully staffed. Mid May through early September is our peak time for our seasonal staff.

David Hattis: Regarding Hermit Park, will the entire park be closed until July?

Chris Fleming: It depends on how the bidding goes. We are looking at phasing open some of the property. We will be asking the contractor to start working on the front half of the park and working their way to the back.

Dan Rieves: One of the issues that is really challenging is between where the majority of the work needs to be done and the entrance. The majority of work will be on the cabin road. The ingress and egress of the equipment and where they want to stage equipment is what we need to know. The work gets completed much faster if you give them a blank canvas to work with. Once we know where the staging area etc. will be, we may be open certain campgrounds early. We do not want to sacrifice the schedule of the completion of the construction. If those two can coexist we will open certain sections of the park early. If opening certain campgrounds and areas are going to postpone the overall construction, we would rather keep everything closed and do it right.

David Hattis: Will you stipulate in the contract where the contractors get the gravel?

Dan Rieves: The material that is being used for the roads is a very dynamic conversation because there is a lot of material coming out of the Hwy 36 corridor right now. We are staging some of that material already at Hermit Park. We are trying our best to get this free material, all you have to do is pay to have it transported. Generally speaking we do not tell the contractors where they have to buy material. We specify what type of material is needed and they have to figure out those costs. We don't really care where it comes from as long as they have a competitive price.

Gary Buffington: They are looking at getting fill from Lake Estes as well.

Chris Fleming: Some of the Lake Estes material is from Hwy 36 but they have already sorted it. The material we are getting from Hwy 36 is raw and not going to be usable.

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Gary Buffington: Todd Jergens is our Engineer project manager who has done projects for us for the last 5 years. He saw Hermit Park for the first time last week and he is very encouraged about the timeframe.

Dan Rieves: The FEMA meetings are twice a week. Somebody from our department is probably meeting with FEMA everyday either from the number crunching side or the submittal side. The firm the county hired to be the go between with FEMA and all the departments is doing a fantastic job. They are an extremely aggressive advocate for the county.

Gary Buffington: We received a GOCO grant for \$80,000 for Hermit Park.

Dan Rieves: Regarding the Estes Valley Rec. Park District properties we have a 5 year agreement that will expire December 31, 2014. We have had a lot of discussions for the past 2 years about the future management of the properties. We should have a definitive answer from the EVRPD this Thursday. There are a lot of budget decisions and staffing adjustments we will need to make if we will not be managing East Portal and Mary's Lake. The indications are we will not renew the contract. We have encouraged them to have a staff member work alongside us and train so it will be a smooth transition. They have posted and are planning to hire a campground manager. The position will integrate itself into our operation sometime this year. We are hoping for a smooth and positive transition.

David Hattis: So is it a done deal?

Dan Rieves: We don't have it in writing yet. It is necessary to have it in writing from their Board of Directors stating they are going in a different direction.

Ron Kainer: How often does their board meet and is there a Larimer County representative?

Dan Rieves: They meet monthly. We attend a board meeting once a year. The board members have all of our contact information and we communicate with them often.

David Hattis: Is the Bureau of Reclamation involved at this point?

Gary Buffington: The Bureau has a lot of managing partners. They do not get involved unless it is necessary.

Steve Ambrose: Did you say they will be hiring a Campground Manager? That could be a positive step.

Dan Rieves: Yes, they are in the process of hiring a Campground Manager.

Chris Klass: Is the contract with Larimer County Dept. of Natural Resources? Is there anything within the contract that requires them to give you a renewal by a certain date for budgeting purposes for the following year?

Dan Rieves: The contract is with Larimer County Natural Resources. It is a very loose agreement in that either party can dissolve the contract within the 5 years. The deadlines do not speak specifically to the 5th year renewal, which is a flaw in the agreement in my opinion.

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Chris Klass: Is the renewal a Board of Directors decision? Was there an action item at their board meeting and what was the outcome?

Dan Rieves: Yes it is the board's decision. We should know what the decision is on Thursday.

David Hattis: I have one last comment. Larimer County has made some really good headway with those campgrounds over the last 5 years. You should be commended for how far those campgrounds have come along and all the improvements that have been made. In my opinion, the best use for those properties is to have Larimer County manage them. It doesn't sound like under the current agreement that would be possible.

Dan Rieves: The current agreement had to be made in a very short timeframe. If we were to move forward, it would be completely re-written. The Board of Director's are in the driver's seat. We are certainly open to whatever their decision is.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- The Senior Management Team decided we need to plan ahead for our future office space needs. We have begun our facilitated sessions. We are up to 43 full time employees with over 100 seasonals. We are at capacity and need more office spaces and buildings. We are looking at innovative ways to house people to save space and money. We have completed 1 session and have at least 2 more sessions in the next 2 months. It is going well and we have learned a lot with regards to our vision. Horsetooth is slated for a new building in 2015/2016. We are looking at some possible new offices located mid county. Longview Farm is a possibility.
- We met with the City of Loveland regarding the Master Plan of the Big Thompson Canyon. The meeting was very productive. Cedar Cove is a blank canvas for conservation and recreation. It may become a focal point because of the amount of acreage and there are a lot of damaged properties that will never be able to build on again. Viestenz-Smith managed by Loveland was completely destroyed and they are trying to figure out what to do at that location. We will gather all the information between the City of Loveland and Larimer County and interject it into the Master Plan process to make sure everyone is on the same page .

Board & Staff Comments:

Linda Knowlton: Does the conservation easement at Long View farm allow for a new building?

Gary Buffington: Currently no, but you will be hearing more regarding that issue.

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Barnes

APPROVED:

Linda Knowlton, PAB Member

*Next regular meeting: May 13, 2014, Larimer
County Courthouse Office Building, Boyd Lake
Room, 200 W. Oak Street, Ft. Collins, CO*

Public can view agenda and minutes at
www.larimer.org/parks
