



LARIMER COUNTY OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 24, 2009 – 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Loveland Library, 300 N Adams, Loveland CO

The mission of the Larimer County Open Lands Program is to preserve and protect significant Open Space, natural areas, wildlife habitat, and develop parks and trails for present and future generations. These open lands provide opportunities for leisure, human renewal and protection of our natural and cultural resources.

Present:

Nancy Wallace	John Ericson
Bill Newman	Patricia Brennan
Steve Vessey	Brian Hayes
Trudy Haines	

Staff:

Meegan Flenniken	Travis Rollins
Kerri Rollins	Zac Wiebe
Rob Novak	

Absent:

Jeff Hindman	Peter Kast
David Roy	Ted Swanson
Commissioner Tom Donnelly	

Nancy Wallace called the meeting to order at 5:16 pm.

John motioned to approve the August meeting minutes with changes*, Trudy seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

*Steve Vessey wasn't listed as present, Jean and Sue didn't approve minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

INTRODUCTIONS: Trudy introduced herself to Patricia and Steve.

INFORMATION:

- Report from the Open Lands Advisory Board (OLAB) liaison to the Parks Advisory Board (PAB), PAB liaison – Trudy Haines

Trudy asked about a suggestion from Linda Knowlton concerning attending PAB meetings based on applicable agenda items and asked for advice from the Board. Nancy mentioned considering seriously the potential board merger and suggested that Trudy keep it in mind as she attends the meetings. Nancy stated that county staff supports the merger. Bill suggested staying abreast of Gary's discussions of the campground takeovers in Estes Park since it affects the OLAB. Nancy suggests that Trudy pay attention to the park budget and lack of money for Hermit Park Open Space and make sure the PAB is aware and pays attention to their budget. Trudy asked the Board to continually give feedback. Brian asked when the PAB meets. Kerri responded that they meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Nancy recommended that the Board look at the PAB agenda each month to advise Trudy. Everyone should subscribe. Trudy will get similar feedback from the PAB.

Gary is not here because his dad is in the hospital. He sends his apologies. Charlie's mom passed away. Kerri passed a card around for everyone to sign.

- Report from the Open Lands Operations Manager – Travis Rollins



LARIMER COUNTY OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The Boxelder fence contract is out to bid and contractors are currently submitting bids. The drilling of the well for horses is out to bid also and field trips with contractors will happen this week. The water system at the McGraw house has been reconfigured and should save the department money on utilities. Meegan and Travis met with the Division of Wildlife (DOW) to discuss limited hunting starting in 2010. They are getting closer to developing a plan for the Board's approval. Trudy asked about hunting regulations. Travis replied that it will be game hunting for nine hunters. John asked if we have hunting on other properties. Travis answered that we have archery and muzzle loading in September during the weekdays on Eagle's Nest Open Space (ENOS). Hunting on ENOS has taken place since September 1 and hunter access is allowed through ENOS to get to United States Forest Service (USFS) land. Travis did a presentation for the Livermore women's club. Nancy heard a report that it was successful and Travis concurred. The rangers are preparing for the Northern Colorado Birding Fair at Fossil Creek. Unfortunately, the pier was damaged by ice and wind and will have to be demolished and rebuilt. Kerri mentioned the implications of the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) funding. Staff is working with them to determine a solution. The engineering department is working with a consulting company on a redesign. Nancy asked if we'll have to pay GOCO back. Kerri responded that she hopes not because while the overall grant was big, they only paid 15%. The black wood fence at Devil's Backbone Open Space (DBOS) has been removed by two volunteer reserve groups. The groups finished on Saturday and took the wood away. It was a win-win situation. The rangers did some outreach with the Diamond Peaks biking group. One outreach event took place at DBOS and there's another one at Horsetooth Mountain Open Space (HMOS) next week. The forestry program is underway at HMOS and the firewood program will begin the first weekend of October. There will be 12 vehicles a day. Participants will volunteer for one hour stacking slash in exchange for a load of firewood. It's good for the department and the citizens. The department now has a Twitter account. The account has "followers" that we can send messages via email or text. Examples of messages include trail conditions, volunteer and education materials, fish stocking, boat ramp waits, weed information, etc. It will be a useful communications tool. We just started and already have 15 followers. There is a link on the website. At the recent COSA conference, the County hosted Aron Ralston, who had to amputate his arm while canyoneering. It was a very touching story and well received by around 50 participants. John asked about hunting legalities and if we have liability for an injured hunter on our property. Nancy assumed we would be exempt. Travis concurred and noted that the biggest concern is if we know of a problem but don't fix it. John asked about the alabaster mine status. Kerri had an update from Jerry. The miner must prove that he has proper permits from the state before he can mine. There has been no response from him or his attorney. Steve asked if he will be allowed to mine if he shows the proper permits. Kerri said yes. Travis said that his attorney had documents showing that he may have rights but he doesn't have a state permit. His attorney sent a very threatening letter that was out of place. It appears that he has rights on the entire property. Brian asked if there is a title insurance policy. It seems to be a policy infraction but it doesn't necessarily give full insurance for minerals. Nancy said that usually minerals are excluded. John asked about an update on the CSU wind farm and the potential impacts. Nancy said that she's heard that the energy company hasn't met the demands. Nancy said that the real issue is two-fold. There isn't a way to get the energy to the provider, they either ignored it or didn't think about it. The issue with utility providers is that you have to have land as well as access to the grid. They thought they could use the Poudre River Power Authority grid but don't have that ability. Part of it was recession issues, part of it was that they had to have contracts to sell electricity before they proceed but didn't get them. Kerri asked if they would have eminent domain. Nancy answered that they do but wouldn't exercise it. John asked if we're listening but have no seat at the table. Nancy responded that we would have the ability to review their plan but they're not close to that. Meegan mentioned a call by the city of Cheyenne about some acres north of RMOS, they are putting in a grant for a conservation easement (CE) on more acres near the Belvoir ranch. Nancy thanked Meegan for the George Wallace tour of RMOS that she and Zac did.



LARIMER COUNTY OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

- The Colorado Open Space Alliance (COSA) conference was held on 9/21-23 and several staff attended. Kerri reported that Larimer County sent about 20 staff. COSA hosted Peter Forbes from the Center for Whole Communities as a keynote speaker and about 220 people attended. We've heard that other similar conferences have had low numbers and were happy to have 220. Larimer County received two awards at the conference. COSA has the Blue Grama award and the Colorado Lottery has the Starburst Award. We received the Starburst acquisition award for the Hermit Park Open Space acquisition and K-Lynn accepted the Blue Grama lifetime achievement award from COSA amidst a standing ovation. Kerri asked if other staff had comments. Meegan mentioned some great sessions that were very applicable. Rob mentioned a great rattlesnake session and that he gained a lot from it. We can use it for our rattlesnake interpretation. Trudy asked if a healthy fear is a good thing. Rob mentioned that we would teach avoidance but dispel myths. Rob talked about some of the facts that he learned. Kerri concluded that this is a very inexpensive conference.
- The Laramie Foothills substitution parcels were approved by the BOCC. Kerri clarified that the total amount was \$88,036. Jerry missed the COSA conference because he is working so much on these parcels.
- Staff submitted an application to Volunteers of Outdoors Colorado for work on the Fawn Hollow Trail at Carter Lake. Meegan talked about the application and efforts to work with the rock climbing community. Projects will be granted by October and it will start in 2010.
- On 9/26 don't miss the 5th Annual Northern Colorado Birding Fair at Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space! This is a great free event for families and birders of all skill levels. Hourly presentations, as well as birding clinics, hikes and activity booths will be available. The Friends group will have a welcome booth and the Lyons Club will serve food. The event is scheduled from 7am – 1pm. Rob talked about the falconer, clinics on optics, etc. We expect a large attendance this year. Rob and Kerri encouraged the board to go.
- On 10/2 our Artist of the Year, Diane Findley, will be featuring her artwork of our open spaces at the Cache Bank & Trust in Fort Collins from 5-7pm. Meegan updated the board on the artist of the year. She will be displaying 12 paintings during the "1st Friday" art walk coming up. Meegan visited her studio. Trudy asked about her medium. Meegan answered that it is acrylic and she uses vibrant colors. Nancy asked if they would be displayed elsewhere or any other time. Meegan mentioned that she will be donating a piece that the public can vote on but they will be for sale. We will let everyone know about the upcoming reception.
- On 10/14 from 1pm – 5pm there will a tour to Hermit Park Open Space for new OLAB & PAB members. Everyone is welcome to attend. We will see the new Bobcat Camp Area (aka Camp Area 2). RSVPs will be taken closer to the date. Kerri asked for RSVPs now. Steve responded that he would attend.
- Colorado photographer John Fielder will present his new book *Ranches of Colorado* on Friday, November 20th at Everyday Joe's Coffee Shop from 5:00 – 7:00 PM. The book features working ranches throughout Colorado that have been protected with conservation tools. The event is sponsored by the Open Lands program, the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas and the Legacy Land Trust (LLT). Proceeds will benefit LLT. Meegan updated the board and mentioned that the Roberts ranch is in the book. Trudy asked when. Meegan answered the 20th. Kerri suggested that it might cost \$15.00.
- Kerri added that GOCO did one of their "15-15" strategic planning process in Fort Collins recently. A few staff, Nancy, Patricia, Steve Johnson, and Tom Donnelly all attended. It was very productive. Kerri



LARIMER COUNTY OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

discussed the new GOCO grant opportunity. The County requested that they increase the amount of money for community issues. Patricia asked when they were wrapping up. Kerri answered June. Rob said that they added more meetings. Nancy commented that it went well, they heard things they expected and things they didn't. The following barbeque was also good. Bob Streeter and two commissioners attended. Kerri asked about Christmas party dates. Gary wants to combine the boards' party to get everyone together. Kerri mentioned that the 17th (third week) is usually when we do them. Nancy said 10th or 17th would be best.

- Natural Resource Events for October. See website <http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources>

BOARD COMMENT: Items not on the agenda

John asked about GOCO and if it would be affected by the new gambling limits. It was pointed out that those are private and not lottery dollars. Steve said that the increase in gambling limits will go to fund education.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Hermit Park Open Space (HPOS) Education Plan – Rob Novak, Education Coordinator

Rob reminded the board that we are focusing on some non-personal interpretation in the building at HPOS. He is planning a kiosk and peak locator on the Kruger rock trail. The peak locator will end up on USFS property and he will work with them to approve the location and solicit funding to help pay for it. He will interpret Dutch Louie and his cabin and may put in a kiosk at Homestead Meadow and interpret hiking and camping in bear country as needed by the public. The overall theme of HPOS will focus on solitude and sanctuary. The second draft of the banner won't be shown because of the broken projector. Rob will e-mail it out to the board and present to the PAB. Rob asked for questions or comments. Brian complimented him on the real estate research. Rob asked for a recommendation for adoption of the plan and will request the same of the PAB. Nancy asked for a recommendation. **Bill recommended that the HPOS education plan be adopted, Steve seconded, and the recommendation was approved.**

- Red Mountain Open Space trails re-naming – subcommittee recommendation

Meegan presented a map of RMOS trails. The BOCC gave K-Lynn the right to choose her trail and she chose the Stone Circle trail. The board was concerned about cultural sensitivity so the subcommittee met again. They recommended that an interpretive loop would still be called Stone Circle but the one she chose will be renamed. Nancy commented that she doesn't see how we cannot honor K-Lynn's request and passed around a note that K-Lynn wrote. Trudy asked for clarification about the two loops. Rob answered that the bulk of interpretation will happen on the small loop. **Steve motioned to adopt the recommendations of the subcommittee, Trudy seconded, the recommendation passed unanimously.**

Nancy pointed out to the new Board members that voice votes are used if it's unanimous. If not unanimous, then roll call votes are used.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

- Kerri pointed out the updates discussed at the last meeting have been made. The sales tax looks better. Steve asked if we can end the year with a deficit. Kerri thought so because it is a projection. Lori will have to answer. Kerri thinks that we do have to balance at the end of the year. Nancy pointed out that it is just a projection. Kerri reminded the board that once a year Lori will bring the full spreadsheet. This will take place next month. Trudy asked about bringing in larger cities to talk about their budgets. Kerri thought we should wait until January so they can report on the full year. Trudy recommended that we have all cities come at once so everyone can hear. She also recommended that reports go back more than a year. Bill agreed that it's a good concept but is worried that we couldn't do it in one meeting. Nancy pointed out that a short presentation



LARIMER COUNTY OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

wouldn't have much benefit. Kerri asked what the board thinks the cities should present. Trudy mentioned that they should summarize their bigger projects. Meegan commented that the smaller towns may want to participate. Kerri mentioned that some communities were saving their money by postponing projects. Brian commented that Loveland has had to wait on some projects because of three non-selling landowners but the money will go there eventually. He also mentioned how expensive the land is in Loveland. Trudy suggested that we invite all cities but only have the big ones give presentations, the small ones can but don't have to. Kerri suggested we include the cities information in the packet before the meeting and that it be a standing item in January. Kerri mentioned that Peter suggested a month to month change but Gary thought he meant comparing same months of different years. Kerri asked if it would be helpful to have it month by month and include priorities on the spreadsheet. Nancy pointed out that three priorities are already present and we should add the other two. Trudy agreed that it would be helpful. Nancy pointed out that the debt service payment isn't on the sheet. Kerri will clarify with Lori about the debt service payment. Nancy asked about the sum of cash flow totals. Trudy said one is expenditures and one is revenue. There is some confusion on the spreadsheet and Kerri will clarify with Lori. Trudy thinks it's more helpful to compare same months of different years. John suggested a simple line graph to simplify. The board agreed that this is a good idea.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Whole Measures – discussion of outcomes from the 9/23 meeting with Peter Forbes.

Kerri passed around Whole Measures book and recommended reading the first eight pages. The department hosted a work session with Peter Forbes from the Center for Whole Communities. Several staff, Peter Kast, four members of the PAB and two from the weeds board attended. Kathay was there but no other commissioners. Peter talked about our community for a bit. There are 37 states in the nation that are fighting eminent domain on conservation easements because there are conflicting values. Also, in 2043 Caucasians will be the minority and we need to adapt with the times. Sometimes when things are well we forget to plan ahead. The best things to do to relate to people are food, and pointed out a food book, Omnivore's dilemma, as being a best seller. Second is children, and the third is faith, not necessarily religion. Trudy asked if he talked about what the eminent domain conflicts are. Peter suggested "googling" eminent domain to find examples. Meegan pointed out that he mentioned that our conservation has come from laws instead of values. Now that things are changing it won't work as well. We need to relate new demographic values to the land. Nancy said we need buy-in from the community and have to adapt to new demographic. Trudy asked if he talked about population. Kerri responded that regardless of the population, values are ever changing. Meegan pointed out that the population in Larimer County is down 7% in the Caucasian population but up 3% in the Hispanic population. A discussion ensued about population in this country and the change in values that it will bring. To be successful we need to pay attention to that. Trudy pointed out that without population control, conservation doesn't matter. Kerri said that communities control themselves. Nancy asked if he had other suggestions besides the aforementioned three. Kerri talked about the other 10 principles of whole measures and said that they evaluated Larimer County during the session for what might already fit into Whole Measures. They also talked about how we might proceed. We did come up with some ideas for proceeding and will decide with staff and then present to the Board. Bill asked if he addressed the economy and how it might change people's attitudes. Kerri answered that in cities where the demographic has already changed, they vote for conservation measures as long as they see themselves in the story. Travis provided an example of Glade Park as a highly visited park by the Hispanic community compared to the nearby DBOS. Kerri mentioned that an option is to do small open spaces or parks near communities. Examples show that it will be valued, used and maintained. Kerri is very excited about the process and how it will forge new partnerships and improve what we do and do well. Patricia gave an example of the harvest farm in Wellington. It's a pizza farm that brings kids to tour and teach them how your grow pizza ingredients. It's a good example of how it connects them to the land. Kerri pointed out that there are many



LARIMER COUNTY OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

different values and we have an opportunity to develop them. Trudy pointed out that partnerships with the cities are important and we need to get the kids outside to keep our current vision in mind. Kerri said that core competency will still exist but we can broaden it. Trudy said that we offer the other opportunities too. Kerri pointed out that we don't necessarily have to do these ourselves but can rely on our partnerships. We can still provide opportunities with our land. John asked if we are suggesting that we buy fewer parks and build more trails. Kerri responded that she isn't suggesting anything. It's just changing the way we tell the story. John clarified that we are talking about public relations instead of how we spend the dollars and we have until 2018. Kerri said that we'll go back to the voters much sooner. John clarified that we are changing our message. Nancy said that there needs to be a discussion about what the next tax is going to do. There has been discussion about potential changes and we need to really look at those changes. Trudy said it depends on what the BOCC wants to do. The partnership is important, it's all interconnected. We need to keep all things in mind before proceeding, what other groups are doing, what partners are doing. Trudy thinks we should aggressively look at acquiring land because of population growth. Trudy mentioned a 99% approval of parks. Steve claimed that building permits are down. Trudy really wants to not take money from open lands and give to parks. Nancy pointed out the movement towards lots of Whole Measures alternative things, local food, etc. It's good that the Open Lands program is participating in this alternative movement. Kerri gave an example of 17 landowners in Montana whose families were falling apart because they didn't have a school. Instead of spending \$43 million on conservation easements, they spent 10 million on the school and the landowners donated the easements. Rob videotaped Peter Forbes' talk at the conference and Kerri suggested showing it at an OLAB meeting. Brian asked how long we plan to continue with Whole Measures and what will it cost. Kerri responded that it cost about \$2000 for the initial program and \$1000 for yesterday's program. Peter F. will continue to advise at no cost. The program is up to us and we can go a long way with his free advice. Brian liked the ideas but is concerned about some of the political things on the website. Kerri talked about the justice section of the workbook and we should address them as we move forward with partnerships.

DIRECTORS REPORT: Gary wasn't present due to the hospitalization of his father and sends his apologies.

EXECUTIVE SESSION 8:10pm Pursuant to (24-6-402(4) (a) C.R.S. Purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of any real or personal property interest. **Steve motioned to enter into executive session. Bill seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

Patricia motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:28. Steve seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned by Nancy Wallace at 7:26 pm.