



## LARIMER COUNTY OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 9, 2011, 8:00 - 9:00 p.m., Larimer County Courthouse, 200 W. Oak, Ft. Collins, 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:

Patricia Brennan	At-large	Peter Kast	At-large
Nancy Wallace	Planning Commission	Mary Banken	At-large
Suzan Fritchel	At-large	Trudy Haines	At-Large
John Ericson	Town of Estes Park	Jeff Hindman	Town of Berthoud
Hugh McKean	City of Loveland		

Staff Present:

Kerri Rollins	Open Lands Program Manager	Gary Buffington	Director
Charlie Johnson	Land Agent	Travis Rollins	Open Lands Operations Manager
Zac Wiebe	Natural Resource Technician	Kat Parker	Ranger
Sue Burke	Executive Assistant	Lori Smith	Senior Accountant

Absent:

Gerry Horak	City of Fort Collins	Don Griffith	At-large
Steve Vessey	At-large		

Peter called the meeting to order at 5:09 pm.

**REGULAR MEETING**

- Approval of the meeting minutes for October 27, 2010. **Mary motioned to approve the minutes, Hugh seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**
- Review Agenda and enclosures

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** No public comment

**INFORMATION:**

- The November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting has been cancelled
- Natural Resource Boards Holiday party is scheduled for December 8, 6-9pm, at Grimms Brothers Brewery. Please RSVP by 11/29 to Zac.
- There will be no December OLAB meeting. OLAB meetings schedule for 2012 – handout
- Five public meetings for the Plug In To Nature project took place November 3-5. The project is now moving into a focus group stage.
- A Colorado State Trails grant was submitted to fund the Kruger Rock trailhead and connector trails at Hermit Park Open Space.
- Larimer County was awarded a \$10,000 grant from Roundup Riders of the Rockies to contribute to the Kruger Rock trailhead and equine campground projects at Hermit Park Open Space.



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- An orientation tour of the Poudre River project is scheduled for November 14 leaving the Courthouse at 1pm and returning by 4:30 or 5:00 pm. Please let us know if you plan to attend.
- Natural Resource Events for November. See website <http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources>

### FINANCIAL REPORT:

- Update: Natural Resources Capital Development and Acquisition Summary 2010 - 2012. Kerri pointed out the changes; \$70k for Heron Lakes moves to next year, the same for Poudre River regional trail & acquisition in the amount of \$145k. Kerri would like to add another \$100k for acquisition in 2013 for a total of \$345k towards our match in the GOCO river corridors initiative. John pointed out the mistake in the 2012 column. **John moved to approve the changes, Hugh seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

### ACTION:

- Final Review for open space acquisition – Heron Lakes Phase I. Kerri reminded the board about the Heron Lakes project, a partnership with Loveland and the Town of Berthoud to acquire approximately 40 acres west of Berthoud. Charlie reviewed the final review for Heron Lakes for 43.27 acres and pointed out the land on the map, the peninsula, osprey nest, a heron rookery with 52 nesting pairs, and a 30ft. wide 3 acre fee simple purchase that will be a future trail. Peter clarified that this is a part of phase one. Charlie pointed out the connected public rights of way. This may not be developed for a while and it's a major priority to have connectivity. It will eventually have 500+ homes. This project will eliminate 116 homes and shift 9 holes of the planned golf course. If the deal isn't kept on track it could fall apart. The recommendation is conditional, based on the resolution of an access issue. The Handy ditch company will grant an easement to Berthoud for a public right of way, which is required by Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO). DNR staff is confident that the access issue will be resolved. Hugh asked about the timeline. Charlie commented that it will be within weeks. Jeff commented that the issue will be resolved one way or another. Kerri mentioned that there is a meeting on Monday that will be important. Charlie also mentioned that the severed mineral rights issues are also being resolved.

The appraised value has been reviewed and scrutinized by GOCO. The partners are GOCO, the Town of Berthoud, Larimer County and the City of Loveland. The City of Loveland and Larimer County will hold the conservation easement, which is required by GOCO. The landowner will be donating \$78k, the total value is \$1,478,000, and the price per acre is \$32,355.

John asked for clarification on the mineral rights situation. Charlie explained that the rights have been severed and GOCO requires that they be intact. The \$1.4 million figure is a value of the property as it is today. It's now the landowner's responsibility to acquire the mineral rights. John clarified the breakdown of funding sources as \$100k this year, and potentially \$300k in the future. Hugh thinks that phase 1 stands alone as a good purchase but has a concern about phase 2 and what DNR may pay. Charlie commented that it's not an easement, it's a fee simple purchase of an approved plat which costs more, and the owners are giving up development rights. Charlie commented that staff insisted that each phase stand alone and GOCO shares that opinion. Peter clarified that this project could eventually connect to a Loveland trail system. Charlie commented that there is a conservation easement across the road that has a trail easement. Hugh likes the wildlife values and connectivity of the project. Kerri gives credit to Mike Hart for his work on the project, everyone has been at the same table. **Hugh motioned to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that DNR spend \$100k contingent upon the review as outlined for the Heron Lakes project, John seconded and the motion passed.** Suzan recused herself from the vote.



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### **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

- Regional Open Space Study and Larimer County Open Lands Master Plan discussion continued. Kerri solicited feedback on the regional meeting held prior. Hugh commented that it was great, the whole Loveland Open Lands Advisory Commission attended except for one member. He thinks people were interested and engaged. Peter liked the interaction and thinks all the boards have to work together from a regional perspective. Hugh asked if Larimer County, Ft. Collins and Poudre schools district have begun to talk about shared resources. Loveland has begun similar talks with Big Thompson school district, sharing resources would save costs. Kerri commented that the idea has been discussed and some are more willing than others to have that discussion.

John commented that the first public hearing in Estes Park about the budget was held and Johanna Darden attended and made a presentation. She's taken her issue a step further and is now asking that all of the money that has come from the open lands sales tax and spent on Bond Park be returned. Two weeks from now will be the final vote. Kerri will solicit the county attorney's opinion. She would also like a copy of the Estes Park opinion.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Items not on the agenda**

Regarding the failed jail tax, in 2013 the general fund will be short \$7-10 million. It will be painful for the County and there will likely be office closures and layoffs. Hugh commented that the smaller towns are on the low end of jail capacity and there will be no place to put people. Charlie commented that the road and bridge department is entirely funded by general fund. Hugh commented on the Colorado Non-profit Association opinion that statewide infrastructure will take the biggest hit when it needs it most, 128 bridges are considered impassable and 70% are in fair.

**Suzan motioned to move into executive session, Jeff seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** (24-6-402(4)(a) C.R.S. Purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of any real or personal property interest.

**Peter adjourned the meeting at 8:38**

*Next regular meeting: Thursday, January 26, 2012; Loveland Council Chambers, 500 E. Third St., Loveland*