



# OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD (OLAB)

## Meeting Minutes

**Thursday, June 26, 2014**

5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Loveland Public Library • Gertrude Scott Room • 300 N Adams Av, 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.*

<b>Members Present</b>	
Carl Sorrentino	At-large
Ladonna Lee	At-large
Mary Banken	At-large
Peter Kast	At-large
Steve Vessey	At-Large
Suzan Fritchel	At-large
Trudy Haines	At-large
Gerry Horak	City of Fort Collins
Hugh McKean	City of Loveland
Nancy Wallace	Planning Commission
Paul Alaback	Town of Berthoud
Ward Nelson	Town of Estes Park
<b>Members Absent</b>	

<b>Staff Present</b>
Gary Buffington, Natural Resources Director
Kerri Rollins, Open Lands Program Manager
Charlie Johnson, Senior Land Agent
Alex Castino, Land Agent
Meegan Flenniken, Resource Program Manager
Sandy Werkmeister, Department Specialist
Travis Rollins, Open Space Operations Manager
<b>Guests</b>

**1) CALL TO ORDER**

Peter Kast called the meeting to order.

**2) PUBLIC COMMENT**

Kelly Ohlson introduced himself to make public comment regarding the Help Preserve Open Space (HPOS) tax. He noted that while the Open Lands Advisory Board (Board), Larimer County staff & Commissioners and the cities are going to play a key part in formulating what the HPOS proposal will be, he reminded the Board that the first two ballot measures that made the HPOS possible were citizen initiatives. He and Linda Stanley are here representing the citizen's initiative group (Group.)

Regarding the proposed tax scenarios, Mr. Ohlson reported that the Group will support the shift of 35% for acquisition if development (parking lots & trailheads) is moved into long-term management (at 50%.) Restoration can move from long-term management into the acquisition category. He summarized it this way: 35% for Land Conservation (acquisition, easements & restoration), 50% for operations, maintenance & development and 15% floating, to be used for either.

Regarding moving the County split from 42% to 50%, Mr. Olson said that at the beginning, to obtain city support the County took the lower number. After almost 20 years, it is time to move it back to a 50/50 share and that is the scenario they support. However, if the split becomes something a little different from 50/50, they will not oppose.

Linda Stanley added that the citizen initiatives, particularly the one of 1995, were written by the citizens, expressing what they wanted from the program. The County has done an excellent job of implementing the citizen's language, but it is not a County-owned program and conserving property must always be a priority. Therefore, she hopes the

Board will support the scenario (#2) the Group recommends, to change the percentage requirements and increasing the split to the County.

3) AGENDA REVIEW

We are having an Executive Session

4) REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES: May 22, 2014

Motion by Carl Sorrentino and second by Trudy Haines to approve the minutes of May 22, 2014 as written. Motion carried unanimously.

5) INTRODUCTIONS

Charlie Johnson introduced the newest land agent at Larimer County, Alex Castino. Alex comes from Vermont Law School with a law degree and masters in environmental law. The Board members introduced themselves and their representation.

- Nancy Wallace – liaison from the Planning Commission – out of northern Fort Collins/Waverly community.
- Trudy Haines – member at-large – also a City of Fort Collins Natural Areas board member
- Carl Sorrentino – member at-large – out of Windsor
- Paul Alaback – trustee from Town of Berthoud
- Peter Kast – member at-large – out of Fort Collins
- Mary Banken – member at-large – out of Estes Park
- Suzan Fritchel – member at-large - out of Fort Collins
- Ward Nelson – member at-large – Trustee from Estes Park
- Gerry Horak – Fort Collins City Council member

6) INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Reminder about a special OLAB meeting scheduled for July 16 at 5:30 p.m. to review and discuss municipal feedback to the Help Preserve Open Spaces financial options. Ideally, we will make a recommendation to the Commissioners of a final scenario. The meeting will be in the Lake Estes Room of the County Courthouse Offices in Fort Collins (200 W Oak Street.)
- B. Larimer County and partners hosted National Get Outdoors Day at Fort Collins City Park on June 14. Approximately 1,500-2,000 people (lots of kids!) attended and enjoyed demonstrations, activities and booths designed to give families ideas for getting outdoors, even at home! Rob Novak led the effort, with lots of help from Heather Young and Pam Mayhew.
- C. Zac Wiebe wrote a mini-grant to Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) for environmental education improvements at Pinewood reservoir. The grant was awarded \$34,000 GOCO for a natural "playscape" and an Osprey viewing station.
- D. Loveland Natural Areas has a contract on the 86-acre 57th Street property and intends to close on August 14. It is the northeast corner of 57th and Taft/Shields that will help connect regional trails between Fort Collins and Loveland using the western edge of Long View Farm. Congratulations to Loveland!
- E. During a focus group with the Ag Advisory Board and discussion around conserving working farms and ranches there was discussion around those that would like to farm the land but cannot afford the land and were not born into a family that owns land. The Boulder County Open Space model does some purchase of active farmland that they lease back. We will schedule a date for late summer for some board members from OLAB and the Agricultural Advisory Board to take a tour. It would probably be during the workday.
- F. Open Lands Master Plan open house will be at the Loveland Library in the Gertrude Scott Room, July 9 at 5:30 p.m.
- G. July 24 OLAB meeting – Kerri will be out at a Regional Government Council meeting in Estes Park. Gary, Meegan Flenniken, and Chris Fleming will be here to talk about Hermit Park and review the master plan currently in place.

- H. Report from the Open Space Operations Manager – by last report the little boy with the rattle snack bite is doing okay and the press focus has remained on the bicyclists’ that ran him in.
- I. Sales Tax Report from prior month – no questions.
- J. We are going back to the Council Chambers Room, for the interim, beginning at the regular July 24 meeting and for the rest of the year unless we find a better location.

7) DISCUSSION & UPDATES

- A. Weed Management at our parks and open spaces. – Casey Cisneros

Casey Cisneros presented an excellent stewardship update of our open lands, including:

- Weed management
- Restoration and revegetation
- Horsetooth Reservoir Russian-olive removal – done!
- Received a 50:50 matching grant from Bureau of Reclamations
- Removed 66 Russian-olive trees from South Bay and Inlet Bay Campgrounds
- Planted 17 replacement trees: Hackberry, Box elder and Austrian Pine
- Education and outreach
- Monitoring

The full presentation is available by request to the Open Lands Program.

- B. Help Preserve Open Space sales tax discussion continued...

Kerri informed the Board that based on feedback from the tax committee, re-running some numbers and recognizing the need to add more historical components, she has a new, fresh PowerPoint presentation. She has sent this latest presentation to the municipalities to use for their own presentations if they would like. Trudy Haines asked Kerri to share the presentation with this Board also. Kerri presented the new PowerPoint and reviewed the three different scenarios and their impact to the municipalities. Trudy asked why the scenarios cannot show increased revenue based on population growth? She feels all of the scenarios are overly conservative. Sales tax sub-committee member Nancy Wallace responded that they did not increase the revenue based on potential grant revenue (from GOCO) or joint acquisitions either. The sub-committee only based the revenue on known sales tax numbers. Citizen group member K-Lynn Cameron, added that there are more impacts than just increased revenue with population growth, such as an increase in land values, which would still impact how much the program could purchase.

Another proposed change is the makeup of this Board. The rationale is that Johnstown and Windsor have grown into our County and there is Timnath and Wellington, none of which has representation on the Board. Second, this Board exists to expend the County’s dollars and is no longer a “budding” program and oversight from the cities is not as relevant as it once was. The proposed language would be that the Commissioners appoint an Open Lands Advisory Board based on interest, geography and population.

Lastly, Kerri went over the timeline of the sales tax initiative project. Hugh McKean asked that the PowerPoint slide showing the assumptions be added back in, since they have such an impact on the length of the scenarios. Hugh also asked how significantly the language can be changed in an extension to which Kerri responded that the Trust for Public Land as well as our County Attorney are confident that we are well within our boundary of allowable changes.

The Board and members from the citizen group held discussion for 45 minutes about the tax extension and the scenarios. Following discussion, a straw poll indicated strongest support for Scenario 2 for 25 years, as suggested by the citizen committee (rather than 20.)

- C. Longview Farm and corridor properties – introduction to discussion about split ownerships, management, and conservation easement holding requirements by Great Outdoors Colorado.

Kerri shared a handout showing properties that we jointly own. At the beginning of the program, using Long View Farm as an example, 50% is owned by the County, 33% by the City of Fort Collins and 17% by the City of Loveland and Legacy Land Trust has a covenant over the property. This was because the property was purchased with Get Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) dollars and they required joint ownerships to ensure that conservation was ongoing and that one entity couldn't change their mind about selling a property, etc. The updated methodology, to ensure the conservation into the future, is to have a lead on the project, and if GOCO funding is acquired, a partner holds the conservation easement. This method is working really well, and Kerri would like to clean-up some of our older properties to the new method. This will make it much easier to update things like management plans of a property.

8) ACTION ITEMS – none

9) EXECUTIVE SESSION: Nancy Wallace moved that the Board move into Executive Session pursuant to (24-6-402(4)(a) C.R.S. Purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of any real or personal property interest

10) OTHER BUSINESS – none