



# OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD (OLAB) Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 25, 2016

5:00- 8:00 PM

Civic Center Municipal Bldg • Council Chambers • 500 E 3<sup>rd</sup> St., 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>	
Paul Alaback	Town of Berthoud
Mary Banken	At-large
Suzan Fritchel	At-large
Trudy Haines	At-large
Gerry Horak	City of Fort Collins
Pete Kelly	At-large
David Marvin	At-large
Ward Nelson	Town of Estes Park
Carl Sorrentino	At-large
Nancy Wallace	Planning Commission

<b>Staff Present</b>
Gary Buffington, Natural Resources Director
Kerri Rollins, Open Lands Program Manager
Charlie Johnson, Senior Land Agent
Alex Castina, Land Agent
Meegan Flenniken, Resource Program Manager
Sandy Werkmeister, Department Specialist
Chris Fleming, Open Space Operations Manager
Jenny Miller, Accountant
Lori Smith, Senior Accountant
Timothy Meyer, Land Agent
Zac Wiebe, Special Projects
Commissioner Tom Donnelly
Commissioner Steve Johnson

<b>Members Absent</b>	
Hugh McKean	City of Loveland
Jason Brothers	At-large

## 1. CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Nancy called the meeting to order. Jenny Miller, a new accountant with the department, introduced herself.

## 3. AGENDA REVIEW

Nancy informed the Board we would be doing things a bit out of order to accommodate the schedules of our Small Grants awardees and the sun for outdoor photos.

## 4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Suzan Fritchel and second by Pete Kelly to approve the *January 28, 2016 meeting minutes* as submitted in this month's packet. Motion carried unanimously.

## 5. INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Meegan reported that the Visual Artist of the Year reception was held on February 10 to unveil a painting of Horsetooth Reservoir by Alison Dickson, which will hang in the County Commissioner's office for the year. She also reported we received seven applicants for next year and that Teddy Parker-Renga is running the program now. Dave Marvin and Gerry Horak are serving on the committee this year.
- b. The Devil's Backbone parking lot reconfiguration (adding about 35 spaces) is underway and expected to re-open early March. The new trail and some of the education pieces will open later.
- c. A \$5000 grant has been submitted to Overland Mountain Bike Club for new trail construction at Devil's Backbone Open Space.
- d. The Lions Open Space parking area and trailhead will close on February 22 for bank stabilization work along the Poudre River. It is expected to re-open in April. The Pleasant Valley Trail will remain open but will be temporarily rerouted away from the river.
- e. Staff attended GOCO Inspire Initiative Kickoff workshop in Denver. Senator Kefalas, Representatives Buck and Ginal joined to learn about the project. We received dollars for a planning grant to work with the Boys and Girls Club, City of Fort Collins and Loveland and the Poudre and Thompson School

Districts to identify and eliminate the barriers that prevent kids and families from getting into the outdoors. An RFP for the project will be announced soon.

- f. Zac submitted a concept paper to GOCO for the Protect initiative (recall GOCOs Strategic Plan is Connect, Protect & Inspire.) for projects in the foothills around Horsetooth
- g. The landowner information packet and associated website were updated; view the info at [Landowner Conservation Information](#).
- h. A new wedding advertisement for the Hermit Park pavilion has been developed.
- i. A new kiosk template is under development to incorporate into department design standards
- j. The Land Stewardship Manager, Tim D'Amato, is retiring after 8 years. Meegan said he has moved the program away from a heavy-handed enforcement angle to more education and partnering with landowners, sometimes with cost sharing. Staff is currently reviewing applications for his replacement.
- k. The Colorado Front Range Trail/Poudre River Trail Segment was recognized by the Governor as one of his 16 for 16 projects. This designation helps raise the Poudre River Trail's profile, assists with grant funding and may be useful in our negotiations with CDOT to get the trail across I-25.
- l. Colorado's application for National Disaster Relief Competition funds was denied. A new Poudre River/I-25 Bridge and trail underpass were listed as a project priority in the application.
- m. A new fish passage structure was installed on the Poudre River at the Fossil Creek Reservoir diversion structure. It is considered a model for a new structure downstream at River Bluffs.
- n. Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado project at Hermit Park will take place Oct.14-16 to build approximately 1 mile of trail for the HPOS master plan implementation.
- o. Open Space Operations District Reports (see attached)
- p. Sales Tax Report from prior month (see attached)

## 7. DISCUSSION & UPDATES

- a. Photos were taken of the Small Grant for Community Partnering awardees and the members of the Open Lands Advisory Board.
- b. **Small Grants for Community Partnering Awards Ceremony – County Commissioners**
  - Zac – Thanked all of the Small Grant recipients for coming, and thanked the OLAB committee members—Carl, Mary & Dave—for their work this year.
  - Commissioner Donnelly reminded everyone that this program has been going on since 1996 and is funded by the Help Preserve Open Space tax, which the voters overwhelmingly extended for 25 years in 2014. He further said this ceremony is one of the most fun things the Commissioners get to do. Commissioner Johnson added that since most of the Open Space tax dollars go to large projects, he really appreciates that this gets the sales tax money into the community via small projects.
  - Each Small grant awardees gave a 5-minute overview of their project and received their award check from Commissioner Donnelly & Commissioner Johnson. Awardees are attached to these minutes.

## 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Peggy Malchow Sass spoke about Malchow Farm, sharing some history about the property and about her parents, who were both interested and involved with historical preservation. She wanted to report to the Board that she believes her parents would be so pleased to have their farm preserved as an open space. But with this being a family partnership entity, there are other members who would like their share of the money from the farm, so she hopes the County can move forward, and on schedule.
- b. Prioritization discussion and review

Kerri was pleased to share that we are very much working within our priorities, as set in the Boards 2012-prioritization exercise. She presented the priority map from the 2015 master plan and the results of the 2012 prioritization exercise.

She also presented a follow-up document from the Dec. 2015 staff retreat, which details the projects staff is working on in 2016.

The Board discussed the Laramie River Valley and our continued willingness help when opportunities arise. Paul also confirmed the new possibility of a trail between Berthoud and Loveland in the future, given recent land purchases.

c. Annual cash flow update (Acquisition & Development + Long Term Mgt)

Jenny Miller presented on cash flow. She introduced a new line to the AD&D spreadsheet that will show the spending limit for each year, based on the projections.

On the Sales Tax Distribution Amounts, the Board suggested moving the Debt Service column next to A&D.

The Board had many questions about Long Term Management and why it rises so dramatically 2014 forward. Gary said the revenues we collect do not pay for all of the expenses, only about 50-60%. Cash flow picks up the difference every year. A couple reasons in 2014 were a new district and new staff positions. Nancy asked when the Board gets a chance to weigh in on decisions that affect the sales tax balance. Gerry echoed that the graph does not show any explanation. Nancy feels the goal should not be to spend all of the LTM just because it is there. The Board is supposed to maximize acquisition and manage moderately. Gary responded more information would be forthcoming.

d. Introduction to potential internal loan for acquisition needs – Gary

Gary reminded the Board he mentioned last month that he would be bringing this subject to the Board.

Lori Smith went over the reasons (available properties and motivated landowners) that we would like to have additional money now, and showed the projections for paying it back and the impact it would have on future dollars.

Nancy reiterated again that there should not be a goal number attached to operation & maintenance. That goal should not be met/spent for the sake of hitting the number. She added that there is not a mechanism in place for the Board to learn about decisions that are going to affect the LTM numbers to such an extent. There was much discussion amongst the Board including Gerry wanting to know the opportunity cost of the loan, which was calculated out to be 1.6 million, Suzan seeing the projection numbers as safe (Lori projects conservatively) and Dave Marvin asking what the bylaws tell us about how far in the Board should dive regarding operation and management dollars. A *straw vote* was taken on whether the loan is a good idea, remembering the impact on the future.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Pete Kelly – yes for having the option | <input type="checkbox"/> Gerry – yes – but he wants a proper deliberative process. It’s a horrible process right now.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carl – abstain                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Dave – supports the borrowing concept, but not the amount, because he is not currently in full support of all properties in review. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ward – yes                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Nancy – supports the borrowing concept  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mary – yes                             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suzan – yes                            |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paul – yes                             |  |

Gary said he will be talking to the Commissioners about this loan topic on Tuesday, and will bring it back to the Board for a final recommendation next month.

e. Gary reminded the Board that the Horsetooth redevelopment complex bids have come in higher than anticipated. They are now at 5.4 million dollars, to be split evenly between three funds (Parks, lottery & sales tax.) An additional 700,000 is needed from each and this will be on next months agenda.

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402 (4)(a) for discussion regarding the purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer, or sale of any real, personal, or other property interest the Board moved into Executive Session at 7:40 p.m.

8. ADJOURN - The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.