



Date: March 5, 2024
Time: 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Location: Horsetooth Area Information Center (HAIC) at 4200 W. County Rd. 38E, Fort Collins CO 80526 - Mountain Lion Room & Zoom Webinar

PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

MEMBERS		STAFF		GUESTS
Bill Prater	I	Chris Fleming	I	Tara Piper
Jill Wuertz	I	Daylan Figgs	I	Jeff Stahla
Kathy Maher	V	Steve Gibson	I	
Kristina Kachur	I	Cindy Claggett	I	
Adam Crossan	I	*John Kefalas	A	
Pete Blume	A	Andrea Weber (minutes)	I	
Robert Harris	V	Sarah Watson	I	
Ruthie Rollins	A	Korrie Johnston	I	
Scott Murray	I	Lesli Ellis	V	
Phil Stout	A	Zach Cook	I	
Geoff Townsend	A			

V = virtual attendee

I = in-person attendee

A = Absent

*commissioner

Call to Order – 5:34 pm

Public Comment

Agenda Review

Review and Approval of Last Minutes

Adam moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Bill seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Information and Announcements

Natural Resources events for this month: <https://larimer.org/naturalresources>.

To sign up for Parks Advisory Board updates, go to <https://apps.larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm>, enter your email, click “Subscribe,” and check the “Parks Advisory Board” box.

December 2023 Open Space Sales Tax Distribution Letter

Updates and Reports

Visitor Service Manager Updates - Steve/Cindy

- Zach Cook is the district manager for the Big Thompson District.
- Cindy attended the Park Law Enforcement Association conference in Alabama. The conference covered a variety of topics centered around rangers, law enforcement and enhancing visitor experience.
- She noted above and beyond service provided by Carter Lake maintenance supervisor Brette Southworth. A visitor was in mental distress and Brette talked them down and assisted them, ensuring they were able to get what they needed to have a great experience.
- Steve said he and other DNR staff participated in a volunteer day with Habitat for Humanity.
- Staff continue to clean up the shoreline trees.
- Held an instructor level ice rescue training for staff, received certifications.
- Horsetooth Reservoir thawed quickly, initiating the opening of trailheads, South Bay, and the east side for fishing access.
- Red Mountain opens March 1st, and the hunting draw will take place March 6th for elk and deer.
- The Satanka ANS shelter concrete has been poured. Waiting for Conex.
- Horsetooth boat ramps will open April 1st.
- Chris and other staff visited Waukesha County in Wisconsin to learn about the license plate reader system. DNR staff received information and guidance on how Waukesha County implemented their system, which system they chose, and how the public interacts with the system.

FY2023 Annual Financial Summary – Sarah Watson

- 2023 Department Revenues:
 - Total: \$23,138,072
 - Breakdown: **Sales Tax** (51%), **Service Based** (28%), **Misc** (7%) **Conservation Trust/Lottery** (5%), **Intergovernmental** (4%), **Property Tax and Specific Ownership Taxes** (4%), **General Fund** (1%)
- 2022 Department Revenues (for comparison):
 - Total: \$24,919,557
 - Breakdown: **Sales Tax** (52%), **Service Based** (30%), **Misc** (6%), **Conservation Trust/Lottery** (4%), **Intergovernmental** (11%), **Property Tax and Specific Ownership Taxes** (4%), **General Fund** (1%)
 - *Funding breakdown from 2022 compared to 2023 is similar, as the business model is the same.
- 2023 Operating Expenses - Budget to Actual:
 - Open Spaces was 4% over budget.
 - Reservoir Parks was 13% under budget.
 - Land Stewardship was 4% under budget.
- Open Spaces 5-Year Revenue and Expense Trends:
 - Sales tax revenue in 2023 was slightly lower than 2022.
 - Service based fees were relatively similar from 2021-2023.
 - Operating expenses slightly higher than 2022.
 - Project/Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) expenses were lower than 2022. *CIP expenses in 2022 were high due to the acquisition of Heaven's Door Ranch.
- Reservoir Parks 5-Year Revenue and Expense Trends:
 - Service based fees were roughly \$500,000 lower in 2023 than in 2022.
 - Operating expenses were slightly higher than in 2022.
 - Project/CIP expenses were lower than in 2022. *CIP expenses in 2021 were high due to the building of Skyview campground.
 - Permits sold were down 5% in revenue, with 16,000 fewer dailies sold in 2023.
 - Camping decreased by 50,000 overall.
- Land Stewardship 5-Year Revenue and Expense Trends:
 - Property & Specific Ownership Tax Revenue was slightly higher than 2022.
 - Operating expenses increased gradually since 2020.

- Project/CIP increased drastically in 2023. *Increase due to \$2.2 million spent to build new Land Stewardship facility.
- Using various funding sources and covering multiple projects, the following is budgeted for 2024:
 - Land Acquisitions: **\$2,714,550**
 - Replacement of Buildings/Structures/Grounds: **\$365,000**
 - New Capital Improvements (Buildings/Structures/Grounds): **\$300,000**
 - New Capital Improvements (Restoration): **\$152,380**
 - Capital Renewal: **\$215,660**
 - *Capital renewal versus capital replacement: renewal is updating existing infrastructure (ex. overlay of asphalt) versus building new.
- Feedback/Questions:
 - Kristina asked if permit sales were expected to continue declining. Sarah noted 2023 experienced significant rain events, especially over the weekends when visitation is typically higher. Chris added, the automatic pay stations also experienced issues, as well as reduced hours in the gatehouses, kept DNR from capturing some revenue.

Rate Your Day Results Update – Korrie Johnston

- **Goals:** Measure visitor satisfaction across entire DNR system – needed metric beyond “reach”, coined as “pulse check” pilot, simple star measure (1-minute response), repeatable campaign, identify barriers of access and improvement, July-October 2023, utilized public engagement platform and survey.
- **What Activated This:** Request for quantifiable metric of visitor satisfaction per BOCC and division leadership and a direct result of Compass Strategic Goal - Nature Opportunities for all.
- **2023 Results:**
 - 761 total responses (goal was 1,000).
 - 4.5 visitor satisfaction rating (on scale of 1 to 5, 5 being very satisfied).
 - 94% reported feeling welcome and safe at parks.
 - 8 of 10 responses were people from Colorado.
 - 32 of 50 states participated via zip code. About 80% of people entered their zip code (optional question).
 - 64% reported a 5-star “Very Satisfied” rating.
 - 100% response rate - all property locations (13) represented.
 - 63% reservoir visitors, 37% open space visitors.
 - 67% or 510 total respondents provided an optional comment.
- **Marketing Tactics:** All in-house campaign, low cost, QR code driven, used posters flyers, business cards, social media, e-newsletter, the website, and staff support. The survey was designed to be short and simple.
 - *Lesson learned:* direct monthly email to campers requesting feedback was the most effective return response tool.
- **Challenges:** Pilot – never done before, difficult to get people to act as they come off an outdoor experience, did not do due diligence during the season to monitor feedback, not statistically valid, remind staff of goals (this is a pulse check), volume of comments, adjusting perspective A- to A, environmental challenges DNR can’t control (weather, road conditions, rain, etc.), measures the satisfaction of who was there - not the gap in community representation.
- **What now?**
 - Release results to public – Q1 to complete feedback loop.
 - Core staff team to ID trending areas of service improvements.
 - Great source of qualitative feedback for staff and volunteers.
 - Will repeat in Summer 2024. Time window to be determined.

2023 Q4 Board Report

- Daylan noted a few highlights including a conservation project with Colorado Cattleman’s, rezoning of LC properties to NR-zone, kiosk updates and DNR’s participation in the Mow Down Pollution program.

Discussion Items

Review of Larimer County Guiding Boards and Commissions Documents – Daylan Figgs

- LC updated their policy and code of conduct for boards and commissions. The policy focuses on the function and purpose of the boards. DNR will update the PAB bylaws to align with the new county policy and code of conduct.

Action Items

Horsetooth Reservoir (Inlet Bay) Marina Contract

- Steve said the previous marina contract was 25-years old. The new contract will be for 10 years with two 5-year renewal options.
- If there is violation of the contract, there may be a penalty fee on monthly revenue instead of termination of the contract.
- An annual maintenance and operation plan will be provided to DNR by the marina vendor.
- Gross revenue license fee will be renegotiated after each term. It will be 6% for the first 5 years.
- There are currently 301 mooring/slips provided by the marina. DNR requested 3 boat slips (2 for law enforcement boats, 1 for a maintenance boat) and 1 mooring for emergency/towed vessels.
- The marina vendors will be required to post hours and rates for public viewing to increase transparency.
- Lottery System:
 - The 2023 waitlist for slips and moorings will be applied and have preference points, including LC residents. All slips and moorings will be filled by the marina vendor, and any remaining will enter the lottery.
 - The marina will vet each application and ensure the boat fits in the spaces available. Board members requested a map of the marina's slips/mooring with accepted boat sizes be provided to the public to be better informed of options when applying for the lottery.
 - Steve said there is no transfer of slips and moorings as they are tied only to the person and vessel in the slip.
 - The lottery will be refreshed each year, with no waitlist.
- Short Term Rentals:
 - If a slip/mooring customer leaves temporarily their slip/mooring may be leased out as a short term rental.
- Marina staff will provide towing services to visitors at Horsetooth Reservoir for a fee.
- No sale of boats by customers on the reservoir/BOR property.
- Chris noted the marina vendors own the buildings and infrastructure at Inlet Bay.
- Board Votes:
 - Kristina, on behalf of Ruthie, shared concerns around preservation of natural and cultural history of the Inlet Bay area.
 - Jill voiced concern with visitors living on their boats, as there are different rules and do not follow the 14-day camping rule. Steve clarified, because the slips/moorings are privately rented through the marina, the 14-day camping rule does not apply. Staff will follow up and investigate rules and rental tax codes for accommodations.
 - Daylan said staff will provide an annual marina update.
 - Rob inquired about slip/mooring turnover. The marina vendors noted 5-10%.
- Kristina asked for a motion to recommend to the BOCC the approval of the Horsetooth Reservoir (Inlet Bay) Marina contract.
 - Bill made a motion that the PAB recommends to the BOCC the approval of the Horsetooth Reservoir (Inlet Bay) Marina contract. Adam seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Update

- Tara said BOR will begin to release water from the Olympus Dam into the Big Thompson River. This water will be moved to Horsetooth Reservoir, making room for spring runoff on the Western Slope. She

cautioned river users to be aware the river will be higher than usual. Flow rates will start at 40 cubic feet per second and increase over time.

- Jeff said Northern Water will be taking lead on any conditions of concern regarding the movement of water into the Big Thompson River and into Horsetooth Reservoir. The movement of water will impact ice cover.
- Daylan mentioned the Pole Hill station is still non-operational. Tara said it is in repair and work should be complete by the beginning of April.
- BOR is holding off on approving Title 28 projects as Congress has not accepted BOR's spending bill yet. Each year BOR works with its managing partners to identify projects the partners need assistance funding.

Northern Water Conservancy District Update

- Jeff noted the primary dam at Chimney Hollow will reach its halfway mark of 175 feet by the week of March 11th.
 - A pair of nesting Golden Eagles have returned to their cliff side nest.
 - There will be a joint OLAB and PAB board tour on July 25th.
 - New construction videos made by *Build Witt*.
- The annual Water Symposium will be held on April 2nd at the Embassy Suites in Loveland.
- Northern Water will be hosting public bus tours of the Front Range on May 21st and June 11th, and a Western Slope bus tour on August 27th.
- Northern is under litigation for the proposed Glade Reservoir. The project is currently on hold.

Board Members Reports

Director's Report - Daylan Figgs

- Daylan thanked Scott Murray for his service on the Parks Advisory Board and wished him well.
- Highlighted the new permitting system for 2025, emphasizing the expected simplification of how DNR sells permits and visitors purchase them.

Next Meeting Scheduled

April 2, 2024 @ Larimer County Natural Resources Administrative Offices (AO): 1800 South County Road 31, Loveland, CO 80537, Bison Room & Zoom Webinar.

Executive Session

Pursuant to C.R.S. (24-6-402(4)(a)) for discussion pertaining to the purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of any real, personal or other property interest.

Adjournment – 7:32 pm

Per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Larimer County will provide a reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with a disability who need assistance. Services can be arranged with at least seven (7) business days' notice. Please email us at weberan@co.larimer.co.us, or call (970) 498-7719 or Relay Colorado 711. "Walk-in" requests for auxiliary aids and services will be honored to the extent possible but may be unavailable if advance notice is not provided.