



Date: February 7, 2023
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		Chris Fleming	I	Tara Piper (BOR)
Jill Wuertz		Daylan Figgs	I	
Kathy Maher	V	Dan Rieves	I	
Kristina Kachur	I	Cindy Claggett	I	
Adam Crossan		*John Kefalas	V	
Pete Blume	I	Andrea Weber (minutes)	I	
Robert Harris		Korrie Johnston	I	
Ruthie Rollins	I	Steve Gibson	I	
Scott Murray	I			
Phil Stout	I			

V = virtual attendee

I = in-person attendee

*commissioner

Call to Order – 5:32 pm

Public Comment

Todd and Matthew Massy live north of Lory State Park. They frequent Satanka Cove for jet skiing. They were in attendance to listen in and to provide comment about allowing jet skis to have an area on Horsetooth exclusive of boats to improve safety for the skiers.

Agenda Review

Review and Approval of Last Minutes

Scott moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Pete 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.

October 2022 Open Space Tax Distribution Letter

November 2022 Open Space Tax Distribution Letter

Dan Rieves Retirement

- Chris announced Dan Rieves, Horsetooth District Manager, is retiring after 30 years being a park ranger. He will no longer attend PAB meetings as a staff member.
- Daylan said this was hard news to hear but is grateful to have had him in the department for so long.

- Dan expressed gratitude for all he has been able to accomplish with DNR. He moved to Colorado in 1989 and graduated with a degree in Wildlife Biology from CSU. He worked for DNR for 7 summers as a seasonal and worked the winters at Lory State Park. He had a few 1-year contracts with Larimer County and then worked for Colorado State Parks in 1999 for 5 years. He first met and worked with Chris in 1995 at Horsetooth and met Cindy at a CSU career fair. He has been “back” with Larimer County since 2004, celebrating 19 years with DNR the week of February 7th, 2023. He is proud to have helped build a great program with DNR and its staff. He will continue to help aid and contribute to the Ranger Excellence School.
- He expressed gratitude to the PAB members and acknowledged the great deal of time and the financial commitment they volunteer to be a part of the board. It has been extremely helpful to DNR and to Larimer County. He really appreciates the PAB’s ability to be broad and provide a shared perspective. With PAB to support DNR, the department is able to get things done. The board provides DNR with courage to step out of its comfort zone and make management decisions that are needed.
- Chris said she is so thankful for Dan’s personal mentorship over the last 25-years.
- Commissioner Kefalas thanked Dan for his service and good work.
- Ruthie thanked Dan on behalf of the PAB.
 - Scott said he was able to work with Dan on a Horsetooth swim event and he is grateful to have had the opportunity.
 - Daylan said Dan’s influence extends far. Dan is a visionary, thoughtful and explorative and always encouraged DNR to be the best there is. This culture to be better grew within DNR and he has extended that torch to others in the department.

Update and Reports

Commissioner Update

- Commissioner Kefalas said during the Admin Matters meeting on February 7th, with Dan and Meegan in attendance, Larimer County received the Starburst Award from GOCO for the Skyview Campground.
- BOCC approved a non-binding MOU with Republic Services regarding the solid waste management program.
 - Larimer County (LC) put out an RFP in March and the county’s valuation committee reviewed the 3 applicants. They provided recommendation and the BOCC agreed Republic was the preferred vendor.
 - Republic will be responsible for building, operating, and paying expenses for the new landfill which will be on county property in Wellington. They must also build and operate a central transfer station where the current landfill is. LC will be paying half the cost, Republic paying the other half, to update and improve the recycle center. It is expected to take 4-6 months for contract negotiations. The goal is to begin construction on the new landfill this year as there are time stresses with the current landfill reaching capacity in 2 years.
- LC and BOCC are considering updates to the regulations and policies of short-term rentals. The goal is to strike a balance. In March, regulations will come from the planning commission to the BOCC to identify the adoption and implementation process.
- BOCC will hold a retreat February 8th, 2023, to discuss individual and collective goals and evaluate what has been accomplished separate from the BOCC 5-year strategic plan but in line with plan.
- County Commissioners are looking at the remaining \$6 million ARPA funds that have not been allocated yet and determining where these dollars will go.
- During a Land Use hearing, a special event permit application for a 3-day festival at Sunrise Ranch in August was denied. The application did not meet review criteria or Emergency Services evacuation plan requirement in the event of an emergency such as a wildfire.

Park District Updates – Dan/Cindy/Steve

- Cindy
 - Cindy said she and other DNR staff have been working on seasonal hiring and participating in career fairs.
 - Temperatures at Carter have been cold, but things are thawing and melting.

Horsetooth Management Transition Plan - Dan

- Dan said Steve Gibson has been based out of Horsetooth for a long time. He has had his boots on the ground in the area. There is a small gap in knowledge of reservoir specific things as he is more adept to open spaces. Steve has been working hard to learn all he can from Dan. Dan is excited that staff get to have the fresh eyes of Steve. Horsetooth is a well-oiled machine with many moving parts.
- Steve said he has been with DNR for 17 years. He started as a seasonal and was promoted into a park manager (now known as District Manager) position for open space areas many years ago. In 2022, he was District Manager for Blue Sky. He is looking forward to learning about the reservoirs and experiencing a new area of management.

New District Boundaries Update

- Dan said DNR's areas were once broken up into 4 districts until Chris Fleming was promoted, leaving a District Manager (DM) vacancy. Instead of filling the position, DNR condensed the districts into three. DNR is once again adjusting, but this time with the district boundaries. The new districts will be as follows: Carter (will remain the same as before with the addition of Chimney Hollow), Big Thompson, also known as Big T (Hermit, all canyon properties, smaller open spaces, Devils Backbone and River Bluffs), and Horsetooth (Red Mountain Open Space, Horsetooth Mountain Open Space, Eagles Nest and Horsetooth Reservoir). The new district boundaries make more sense geographically than the previous districts.
- DNR has had, and currently houses a district with both an open space as well as a reservoir, Carter District with Carter Lake and Ramsay Shockey Open Space. This requires the DM to keep track of multiple budgets.
- Reorganization of the districts
 - Chris will be filling in for the Big T DM position until it has been filled.
 - Scott asked for a diagram of the districts or an organizational chart of who is where within DNR and specifically the districts. Daylan said staff will provide a map and organizational chart to the board of who is in what area. He explained DNR is building the car as it goes and evolving in real time.
 - Dan said Heaven's Door will likely be in the Big T District, Chimney Hollow in Carter District and the future Glade Reservoir will probably initiate the creation of four districts.
 - Phil asked if there would be an open space in addition to the reservoir at Glade. Dan said on the west side of the future reservoir is a trail owned by CPW (state land). There is a significant number of things to be worked through, but there will be a variety of recreation opportunities.

Marina Concession Process

- Chris reported DNR and the core team is under way with the marina process. The RFI closed a few weeks earlier. Two had been received, one is a current marina vendor and the other interested in bidding. The core team received good ideas but none outside standard marina operations. The core team plans to move forward with the concessions RFP. DNR has launched a platform to engage the public perspective for the process.

Marina Engagement Platform – Korrie Johnston DNR Communications Supervisor

- Korrie said there has been a large gap of time since DNR has had different marina operators. The same two concession vendors have been working Carter and Horsetooth for 20-30 years. This seemed like a good time and opportunity for DNR to reach out to the community to see what they would like to have offered at the reservoirs.
- In 2020, DNR launched this engagement tool. It is used for many topics and includes tools such as, surveys, mapping tools, and idea boards. DNR uses it to call out to the community for ideas.
- The Marina Engagement Platform was launched on February 1st and will be closed on February 22nd.

- The platform is a webpage which provides background on what the department is looking for from the community. It gives a project timeline and shares some history of what the marina space has had in the past.
- This provides a good opportunity for public to speak out about general topics and provide feedback on what they would like to see for recreational options at the reservoirs.
- Once the platform is closed, she will provide feedback to the core team to build community input into the RFP.
- She continued, on the backside of the platform she can see how many people: enter the site, add comments, where they are coming from, and create tagged words for categorization.
- Ruthie asked for the link to be sent to the board members.
 - Daylan asked if one must register to use the platform? Korrie said the community member will use an email for confirmation, but they do not need to register (no phone number or name required). Scott asked if there was any way to add one's name to help better the depth of conversation? Korrie said absolutely.
- Commissioner Kefalas asked how DNR was marketing this platform. Korrie said she launched with a press release website, uses social media, electronic newsletters and has re-posted them over the weeks. Commissioner Kefalas asked if there was any intentional targeted outreach to unrepresented groups. Daylan said DNR will reach out to the equity board to have them push it out through their channels.
- Kristina asked what role the board plays in reviewing the comments and what will ultimately go into the RFP? Chris said the core team will be working on the comments and will bring highlights and a draft RFP to the board. It will be March or April.
 - Dan said the core team has a few ideas that were most conducive from the RFI. They will also go through the previous RFPs to select hard set items DNR would like to see in the new RFP. One RFP is being sent out to include both marinas. A vendor can bid for both marinas, or just one.
 - Chris said the RFP building process is flexible in that the core team can include absolute requirements, preferred requirements, and add in things that will better serve underrepresented community members.
 - Core team members include Les Brown from Purchasing and BOR representative, Tara Piper. This is a robust and thorough process.
 - After the RFP has been sent out, DNR will let it soak for 5-6 weeks. The department also intends to have interested vendors visit the marinas to see current operations.
 - Scott asked if DNR owned the RFP process and received input from Purchasing (versus purchasing owning the process)? Chris said Purchasing runs the RFP process for DNR, but the departments input is what fills it in. Daylan further explained that Purchasing's involvement is to make sure the RFP follows policy, is legally defensible, and fair and equitable. DNR's role is to advertise for the type of marina the department needs and to act as technical experts.
- Kristina is hoping the process is well vetted, ensuring the reservoirs are not left without a concession.
 - Chris said Purchasing is taking this very seriously. There are strict financial requirements to ensure the vendor can build and maintain their own docks. They must provide business plans and a solid financial background.
 - Scott asked if there was an "out" clause if DNR wanted to fire/close the vendor contract? Chris replied, yes. Dan said these contracts are very protective of Larimer County and its best interest.
- Ruthie asked if there was any way the board could have a draft of the RFP with highlights from the core team including items the team is most interested in, excluding the legal aspects.
 - Chris said this would not be suitable at this time. As soon as it's brought to the board it becomes public information and she does not want some vendors to have an advantage over others.
 - Cindy recommended releasing the old RFP, as it is public knowledge.

- Ruthie asked if the board could bring the RFP into executive session? Dan said yes. He suggested the board hold a standing agenda item for executive session from now until the end of the process. Daylan said by 2/3's vote, PAB can enter in executive session.

Review of 25-year financial model process - Daylan

- Daylan said, in 2019, DNR created its current 25-year model to look forward in the future at how funds are utilized. Revenue from the reservoirs stays in the reservoirs and the Help Preserve Open Space sales tax goes toward open spaces, however, 15% of the tax goes towards the reservoirs. DNR also receives lottery funds on an annual basis predominately used in the reservoir parks system.
- The model allows DNR to ensure it maintains a cash flow positive position in the reservoir parks.
 - For 2023, the operating revenues are projected to be \$7 million, and \$6 million in operating costs. It's important to manage these funds appropriately to remain positive, adjusting along the way. The excess \$1 million goes into the capital improvement project (CIP) fund for building new things. One key adjustment is the new master plan for the reservoir parks. This process will begin in 2023. Master plans are redone every 10 years and the reservoir plan is a combined agreement with the BOR on how DNR can and will manage the reservoirs.
 - The financial model, revenue generated, and excess expenses that go into the capital side is a key driver in the master plan for new and revisited projects. The model is important in knowing what funds DNR has available for the reservoirs. It asks the question how DNR ought to manage the funds to meet the requirements and needs of its master plans.
 - Within the reservoir system, DNR's big build phase is coming to an end. DNR is transitioning to the phase of going back and redoing other things and building different features. This implies there will not be a lot of new things, instead the department will focus on renovating, renewing, altering infrastructure, and changing recreational plans.
- Creating the financial model is step 1, providing DNR with details of what funds it has to work with. The master plan is step 3, providing details of what the department would like to do and accomplish. Step 2 is another project DNR will kick off in the reservoir park system and that is how the department wants to manage the reservoirs for recreation. This step is the visitor use component.
 - With an increase in visitation and change in visitor use, DNR is going through a public process in 2024 or 2025 to understand what recreation might look like over the next 10 years, what ideas are out there and how the department can reach more communities that are underrepresented.
 - DNR will ask the board for feedback about the assumptions inserted into the model and ask what the community want to see/experience. DNR will integrate these ideas into the process.
 - The master plan process will take roughly a year and is done in collaboration with the BOR. DNR will make standing items for the board and touch base regularly.
- Scott asked about inflations impact on project costs, and if DNR adds a multiplier to everything? Daylan said yes. DNR will look at an economics studies from 2018, growth in revenue and growth in costs. Long-term growth for projected cost is also utilized for CIP projects. One reason the model is being redone this year is input of new data. Many internal county operating expenses have increased as well.
- The department revisits this model every 3-5 years. Last time the model was redone, DNR could meet the master plan as it was then and meet a second plan if it were built in the same way. A plan can be built to be less dollar heavy and focus more on reservoir management that enhances community experience. With the current plan, DNR has been able to touch on most projects and components with the funds available.
- Dan said current projections are done every year, not just every 25. Revenues will be projected in April when the department begins its 2024 budget process. The previous year's revenues will be compared to the projections given to see if they were met. This process allows DNR to see where funds are okay and where there may be inefficiencies.
 - DNR has projects (not fun or exciting) that are more difficult to get grant funding for. These are usually the things visitors don't always think they need to have. However, reinvesting and enhance the visitor experience is important. New visuals encourage people to come back.

- Daylan said DNR is committed to following through with its master plans. It's not always possible to get everything done, but the department enters the process with full intent to do so and provide the community with the things it would like. The master plan process opens communication between DNR and the community to make sure both are working together to achieve goals.
- Ruthie asked if DNR can use visitor email addresses provided when purchasing an annual permit for outreach and engagement purposes? Chris said this is something DNR tries not to do.
 - Daylan continued, DNR is trying to create a new permit system that is more modern with the use of new technology, which could capture other visitor data that can be used for marketing.
 - Ruthie asked about the texts message alerts. Dan explained DNR made a deal with visitors that messages sent would only be regarding closures.
 - Korrie said the goal is to not desensitize people to receiving the messages.
 - Phil said when it's important, people will pay attention. It often depends on the timing of messaging.
 - Dan said it is possible to engage an opt in email at the point of sale when a visitor purchases a permit. Unfortunately, the gatehouses would not have the time to do this.
 - Ruthie feels like people would be interested in the survey and other public outreach information being texted to them. Daylan said many of the visitors that are signed up for the texts are also on DNR's social media or website, thus they are exposed to these opportunities.
- Kristina asked if DNR expects the new state parks pass to impact the budget?
 - Daylan thinks it will exasperate capacity for DNR as well as for the state parks. He continued; it is uncertain to what extent this will have impacts, but it will likely change patterns.
 - Kristina shared her concerns about visitors not knowing that Horsetooth and Carter are not state park areas.
 - Dan said visitors that enter and park without purchasing a parking permit will receive a ticket.
 - Daylan noted the state parks pass program hit about 1/3 of what they needed for registrations.
 - Chris said the pass puts DNR in a weird spot. The department has always followed suit to keep similar prices, but this creates a situation in which DNR is now charging more.
 - Daylan would like to see the state market these passes for state and NOT county parks.

Discussion Items

Board By-Laws Review

- Daylan said the current by-laws were drafted in 2008. The content is good, but some references and county language has changed.
- The plan is to have staff and the county attorney clean them up to bring back to the board for recommendation to the BOCC for adoption. Not much is expected to change, mostly verbiage updates.
- Commissioner Kefalas requested a change in Section 2, the county vision, from "citizens" to "residents". Daylan said this change will be made. There is a need to update the overall county language of the document.
- Daylan said one of the big items in the document is the "Conflict of Interest". Many board members are on the PAB because they hold a specific interest in the topic. From time to time there will be a topic that requires a vote which will conflict with a personal or professional interest of a member. He asked members to be aware of these situations and to self-identify and omit themselves from voting when appropriate. As a board, the level of conflict can be discussed and decided if that individual should refrain from voting or not. DNR will look to the County Attorney for guidance on conflict of interest, gains from votes, and how to avoid these situations. DNR would like to continue to conduct business in the best way it can.

Action Items

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Update

- Tara announced the BOR has a new Division Resources Chief, Traci Robb. She was previously the lead Natural Resources Specialist and has been in her new position since early November 2022.
 - She continued that Traci has made a lot of positive changes; looking at 3-year planning, managing partners and focusing in on aligning bigger projects that are out there. There may be some money out there to share with managing partners. This will be a continued conversation with DNR.
- BOR has reviewed and approved trail and fencing work at Sunrise Bay. The CEC must be approved by BOR and LC staff. DNR has been cleared to start this project.
- The bureau is working to approve the annual work plan with a focus on operations and maintenance. There are plans to adjust vegetation management practices to “clear” larger areas. The goal is to have vegetation management approval front loaded so DNR does not need to approach the BOR for every individual tree planting request.
- Tara thanked Dan on behalf of the BOR. She noted the many positive changes that Dan helped facilitate within the partnership which remain instilled within.
- Dan asked if there was any news on the plans for the allosaurus? Tara said not yet, but Beth is working on it. Dan explained there is a limited window of opportunity with rising water levels. A bone found in the reservoir led to an excavation in the lakebed. It is very likely that of an allosaurus, similar to a small t-rex. There was a window in time to do more exhuming of the site, however BOR uses a specific contractor for these projects and there are differences in paleontology, geology, and archeology. The dinosaur is safe to remain where it is until decisions are made.
- Daylan said Traci is a great selection and he is looking forward to the department working with her. Dan said the work Tara does is a real art. She straddles the line of bureaucracy, teaching the department how to integrate with the BOR system. She is great at putting tough words and concepts into things that are easily understood and digestible.

Board Member Reports

Director’s Report – Daylan Figgs

- Daylan announced a change in Larimer County’s Service Area Director. Laurie Kadrich, the previous Service Area Director, moved into the Assistant County Manager position. On February 7th, LC hired a new Community Planning Infrastructure and Resource Service Area Director, Lesli Ellis. DNR has worked with her many times in the past on land use matters. She will be invited to a future meeting.
- There are a few items on the books that are being set in motion. DNR is revisiting it’s 25-year Financial Model and permit system.
 - The current permit system is very labor and resource intensive. DNR is looking at having a new system by 2024-2025 and hoping to have something more technologically driven. The goal is to find a better system to: reduce costs, reduce number of hours staff is working with them, and increase overall customer experience. The PAB will be involved in this process. All things DNR does, is done with the understanding of the return on investment.

Next Meeting Scheduled

March 7, 2023 – at Horsetooth Area Information Center: 4200 W. County Rd. 38 E Fort Collins, CO 80526
Mountain Lion 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 – 7:11 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.