



Date: August 2, 2022
Time: 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Location: Larimer County Natural Resources Administrative Offices: 1800 South County Road 31, Loveland, CO 80537, Bison Room & Zoom Webinar

PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

MEMBERS		STAFF		GUESTS
Jill Wuertz	I	Chris Fleming	I	Tara Piper (BOR) – I
Kathy Maher	V	Daylan Figgs	I	Jeff Stahla (Northern) – I
Kristina Kachur	V	Dan Rieves	V	
Pete Blume	I	Cindy Claggett	I	
Robert Harris	V	*John Kefalas		
Ruthie Rollins	I	Jordan Williams	V	
Scott Murray		Andrea Weber (minutes)	I	
Bill Prater				

V = virtual attendee

I = in-person attendee

*commissioner

Call to Order - 5:32 PM

Public Comment

Closed – No comment

Agenda Review

Page 5 of June 23, 2022, minutes have a typo. Carter was misspelled Larker.

Board requested to have the CIP document sent to them from June meeting.

October's meeting has been requested to be moved to Horsetooth and have hybrid option available.

Review and Approval of Last Minutes

Ron 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

May 2022 Tax Distribution Letter

- Daylan said the sales tax visitation numbers are down.

Larimer County awarded Colorado Lottery Starburst Award – Loveland Reporter Herald

- Daylan mentioned the Colorado Starburst Award for Skyview and expressed his gratitude to have received this award. He stated that campers really seem to be enjoying the campground.

Action Items

Board Elections – Daylan Figgs, LCDNR Director

- Board elections began with the Chair election first. Kristina ran the election of the chair and called for nominations. Jill nominated Ruthie. Kathy nominated Ruthie. Ruthie accepted the nomination. Ruthie informed the board that she will be missing 2 meetings due to conflicts. After a unanimous vote by board members, Ruthie once again accepted the Chair position.
- Ruthie opened the floor for vice chair calling for nominations. Pete nominated Kristina, Jill and Kathy seconded. All board members voted yes for Kristina for vice chair.

Update and Reports

Park District updates

- Cindy Claggett provided an update for Carter Lake stating that rangers in the Carter District have been responding to many fires and floods. There was a fire incident off park property the previous week which required the use of a helicopter. The helicopter was able to use water from Carter Lake to assist in extinguishing the fire quickly.
 - Pete asked about the safety procedures when firefighters dip into Carter Lake to take water. Cindy said they have boat rangers on the water to make sure public boaters are out of harm's way. Kathy asked what the fire was caused by. Cindy responded that this fire was caused by transformers on the homeowner's property.
- The department continues to hire for rangers, maintenance, and Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Inspectors outside of the typical hiring window. Seasonal staff have been leaving for other jobs and school.
- Cindy said Jen Murray with LCDNR ANS reported that boat inspections have increased 6% in the Carter District and 5% at Horsetooth.
 - Day use visitation at the reservoirs is lower than normal.
 - For the year, 7 boats carrying Zebra Mussels have been reported.
- Rangers responded to an incident involving an intoxicated individual causing a disturbance at the Swimbeach. The family of the intoxicated individual interjected themselves while rangers were conducting the suspect interview. The suspect was uncooperative and taken to the ground by Rangers. While on the ground, the rangers were attacked by the family. Ultimately, everyone from both parties was okay and unharmed. Rangers had to call a code 6 (emergency assistance). Jill asked if these people are banned from the property. Cindy said to be able to ban someone from the property, DNR must go through a court process. The department plans to proceed forward with court action.
- [Capacity Issues and Experimental Solutions](#) – Dan Rieves, Horsetooth Reservoir District Manager
- Dan provided an update on the current capacity issues and solutions at Horsetooth Reservoir. New measures were put in place starting around the July 4th weekend.
 - When the park is at capacity, staff use a series of parking lot closures and openings.
 - Once the park is at capacity, the entrances to Satanka Bay, South Bay and Inlet Bay are closed. Dan and Luke decided to continue the capacity control until 2 pm. At 2 pm, the lots reopen and allow new visitors to come in and out. This method has been working well. Staff inform visitors via the new text message system that the lot is at capacity and will reopen at 2 pm. During this experimental solution, after reopening at 2 pm, parking lots did not refill with boats, but have refilled with day use.

- Dan said that there are times when the lots will be considered “at capacity” but have a few spots open. He would like to avoid opening and closing the parking lot to fill a single parking space.
 - Dan and Chris said they have received positive feedback from both staff and visitors. This has been less labor intensive overall.
- Jill provided feedback on the process. She said because she knows this process is occurring, she no longer visits the area on Saturdays. She asked if the visitation patterns were similar on Sundays.
 - She expressed that the process is slightly confusing for a visitor to Inlet Bay. People are turned away for capacity while there remains an empty lot in view. Jill said that she knows this empty lot is used for camping overflow, but other visitors may not know that and leave frustrated. Dan agreed that the overflow parking area is confusing, and his staff will work on creating a sign to better inform visitors of its use.
 - Jill asked about reserving these extra spots for boat parking and campers. Dan said at this time there is no plan to change these areas into day use parking. These large areas are very helpful for turning around big camping and boating rigs.
- Jill mentioned that the Blue-Sky trailhead’s mixed “horse” and “day use” parking is working well. She thought the shared parking spaces system was also being done at Soderberg, but it is not.
 - Daylan explained the mixed parking at Soderberg is included in the Horsetooth Mountain Plan but has not been implemented yet.
- Dan gave an update on the SMS messages. He noted the impact they have had on the weekends with slowing overall traffic.
 - Rob asked about the SMS information being shared in live time and using a different platform. Dan said anyone can join and unjoin from the text messages at any time.
 - Board members inquired about an “all-clear text”. They also stated that they would like more detail within the messages themselves. Rob shared that he is concerned about receiving a large number of texts. Dan said there are only 4-5 in a weekend, and they are typically sent close together. Jill mentioned that one can sign up for emails instead of texts.
 - Cindy said the SMS text messages for Carter are making an impact in that they are not seeing the typical rush of people when Horsetooth hits capacity. She speculates that the lower water levels and fewer boats are allowing for more available day parking.
 - Dan said DNR will continue with the current messaging system and look at the data in the wintertime.
- Dan talked about the mobile message board he has been using at the reservoirs. The board was used at Carter to inform visitors and direct traffic around ongoing events, such as swim races. The message board uses an app to display messages on the board. Dan thinks it could be used for bigger events to direct people to parking.

Discussion Items

Carter Dump Station – Cindy Claggett, Carter Lake District Manager

- The vendor that provided Carter District with dumping services had his truck break down. He then abandoned his contract. The dump station at Carter is being used by people who are visitors of Carter Lake, as well as those who are not. The gate attendants are unable to enforce or regulate who is using the station.
 - DNR is looking for a long-term solution as dumping services are expensive.
 - Short term options may include adding locks or having visitors see the gate house attendant for a key.

- Daylan noted that DNR plans to make changes to the dump station within the Capital Plan. With fiber optic cables being put in, better technology and more options will become available. He discussed possibly having a charge for using the dump station.
- Ruthie suggested the dump station require a code to use it.

Marina Concession Process (Core Team Nominees) – Chris Fleming, LCDNR Visitor Services Manager

- Chris gave a brief update on the status of the Marina concessions at Horsetooth and Carter Lake. She said the department has extended both contracts through 2023. Chris is interested in building a core team comprised of Tara, Dan, Cindy, Chris, someone from purchasing, and one or two board members. She is looking at different concession options and contracts. This is a nationwide search for contracts competing for concessions and DNR will send out an RFP in May. The RFP will be closed in early fall to select a vendor.
- Pete and Jill stated that they would like to sit on the core team. Jill asked what the major goals of the core team were. Chris responded that the team would focus on topics such as designated parking for the marinas and what the marinas are paying back to the county. Chris is interested in exploring what options there are and what other reservoirs are doing. Pete said the core team would be a good place to bring forward ideas and work through them together. Rob said he is interested in being on the core team. Ruthie asked about coordinating the people who are interested in sitting on the board. Chris has noted those who are interested and will decide who will be on the core team.
- Ruthie suggested that the team could reach out to a vendor, one that is not interested in setting up at Horsetooth or Carter, to advise and provide input. This could bring forward alternate views and ideas. Jill said there are design firms that specialize in marinas, and they would be able to provide support to LCDNR. Kristina asked if the paddle board concession is part of the marina. Chris said they are two separate businesses.

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Update

- Tara provided an update from the Bureau of Reclamation. She said her office was contacted by the Washington office, reiterating the importance that reclamation has recreation incentive. The Bureau has requested that a survey be conducted at different Bureau owned parks. This survey is intended to identify if visitors are happy with the current recreation opportunities offered. The Washington office is interested in conducting the survey at Horsetooth Reservoir. They plan to do 200 surveys at each location within the Horsetooth area. This includes boat ramps, camping sites, trails, and day use areas. They would use local staff to assist with surveying. Tara said she will let the board and DNR know if Horsetooth is chosen for the survey location. Ruthie asked if the Bureau is planning to conduct these surveys around the country. Tara said they are doing them in this region and the questions will all be the same.
- There are some other ongoing trail projects and proposals that are still in progress. This includes a few trails with the City of Fort Collins. Tara will provide a further update in a future meeting.

Board Member Reports

- Daylan thanked Jeff from Northern Water for the Chimney Hollow Tour provided last meeting.
- Jeff said that Northern Water is getting ready for the Fall outage. They will begin plumbing at the top of the penstocks. A decision from the Army Corps of Engineers about the marina for Chimney Hollow will be made and an update will be provided at the next meeting.
- Jeff said that there is some dispute in the Southwest regarding the Colorado River. He is planning, over the winter months, to have a Northern Water representative provide some insight to the board about these problems.

Director's Report – Daylan Figgs

- Daylan said that the department will be holding interviews for PAB members. There are currently 20 people interested in joining the board and they are expected to be chosen and appointed by October. He asked Ruthie to join the interview process.
- The 2023 budget will be submitted in the next few weeks and should be approved by the end of the year.
 - Some of the big changes in the budget include 6 new staff positions. The new positions are: 4 new hires and 2 part-time to full-time transitions. The 2 part-time transition positions would be budgeted by adjusting dollars internally instead of increasing the budget.
 - Sales tax and fees are doing well. Visitation to the parks and open spaces has been picking back up. Some of the costs that are non-negotiable, such as credit card fees and utilities are high.
 - Daylan said that DNR plans to reassess the financial models at the end of this year. The Reservoir Parks Master Plan is scheduled to be renewed in 2027, and Open Spaces in 2025. Daylan would like to see the two plans combined.
- The department is rethinking the processes around concessions and special events. A possible solution to the large number of special events inquiries, received year-round, would be to create a window of time where special use requests can be made. Currently, there are some issues with special events that the department would like to resolve, for example, double booking.
 - Jill and Tara asked what kind of events Daylan was referring to and how the time window would work.
 - Chris said that the department would like to be invited and involved in more conversations about big events, like bicycle races for the County processes. There are some events that do not have a direct impact on the parks or open spaces. In these instances, the department is not included in the approval process/discussion. Larimer County approves the event, however, LCDNR does not have an opportunity to provide input on what impact the event will indirectly have on Parks and Open Spaces, i.e., traffic. Chris would like to see more transparency when it comes to big events held in the parks and open space areas and roadways. Daylan said the best approach would be to better define the rules and to improve communication around all Larimer County events.

Next Meeting Scheduled

October 4, 2022 -- Larimer County Horsetooth Area Information Center: 4200 W. County Road 38E, 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 - 7:00 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.