



Date: September 5, 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
Jill Wuertz	I	Daylan Figgs	I	Les Brown
Kathy Maher	V	Steve Gibson	I	Lesli Ellis
Kristina Kachur	I	Cindy Claggett	I	Heidi Pruess
Adam Crossan	I	*John Kefalas	V	
Pete Blume		Andrea Weber (minutes)	I	
Robert Harris	V	Jennifer Almstead	I	
Ruthie Rollins	I			
Scott Murray	I			
Phil Stout				
Geoff Townsend	I			

V = virtual attendee

I = in-person attendee

*commissioner

Call to Order – 5:34 pm

Public Comment

None

Agenda Review

Review and Approval of Last Minutes

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

June 2023 Open Space Tax Distribution Letter

Small Grants Available for Community Projects – Reporter Herald

- Jenn introduced herself as the Small Grants Program Coordinator.
- The program is entering its 26th year.
 - Applicants from non-profits, K-12 schools or community based organizations can request up to \$3,500 and applications are due mid-October.
 - Accepted projects are nature based, research focused and/or address accessibility for community members experiencing hardship.
 - The organization does not have to be within Larimer County (LC); however, the project beneficiary must be in LC and have a community benefit.
 - She hosted a webinar which can be found [here](#).
- Daylan said the [online platform](#) is a good place to get information and see the distribution of the various projects from the last 25 years.

Update and Reports

Park District updates – Steve/Cindy

- Steve
 - Noted it has been a busy summer. With high water levels, he anticipates a continuation of visitation through the fall.
 - Many seasonal staff are returning to school, causing shortages.
 - The maintenance crew continues to mow down vegetation.
 - Projects have been put on hold to keep up with day-to-day tasks. The ANS Shelter is pending.
 - DNR is in the hiring process for a Maintenance Tech II position at Horsetooth and a few seasonal ranger positions for Horsetooth and Big Thompson.
 - Horsetooth has reached 14 Boating Under the Influence (BUIs) this year, a record number.
 - Rangers have responded to numerous heat exhaustion and smash and grab calls at Horsetooth Mountain Open Space.
- Chris
 - Chris announced Jen Murray, DNR's ANS Program Coordinator, has accepted a job with CPW to build their roadside ANS program which will focus on a pilot program at the port of entries.
 - The ANS coordinator position is open.
 - ANS inspectors have stopped 22 mussel boats between Carter and Horsetooth. Most have been from Lake Powell and out of state. One decontamination (decon) took 3 days to do.
 - Rob asked if it was possible for DNR to charge for boat decons. Chris said not with the contract DNR has with CPW. DNR receives some funding for the program as a whole. The state prefers boaters to be deconned at the location they are boating at. It is possible to send them to a private marina, but that would require a ranger escort and end up costing more on the back end in staff time.
 - There is a crunch on the ANS budget, leading to a reduction in ramp and boating hours. The changes have been announced and visitors should be advised.
 - Scott asked if there is an interim ANS Supervisor. Chris said she will be taking over until someone is hired but has a long-term seasonal who has stepped up to help in the meantime.

Board of County Commissioner Update

- Commissioner Kefalas said he participated in a ride-along with Horsetooth District Manager Steve Gibson. He was able to experience the infamous "Party Cove" at Satanka Bay. He said the ride was enlightening and Steve provided good updates and information.
- He attended a DNR All Staff Summer BBQ event at Spring Creek Park in Fort Collins.
- Noted Proposition HH will be on the November 23rd ballot. It is a proposed statutory change and if it passes will provide tax relief for citizens but will also impact the county's budget.

Our Lands, Our Future Regional Study Update – Jenn Almstead

- Jenn said the Our Lands, Our Future (OLOF) survey was first conducted in 2012 and is being revamped this year. The survey is done in partnership with DNR and the municipalities of LC. She asked PAB members to identify any gaps in the draft survey.
- Purpose

- The previous survey is now 10 years old.
- Gather important and relevant insights about constituents.
- Statistically valid survey results help guide and inform work such as management plan updates, sales tax renewals, and other planning efforts.
- Objectives
 - Refresh understanding of community preferences (within allowable uses of the HPOS sales tax). Questions will be directed around: land conservation, outdoor recreation, funding preferences, crowding/conflict and public access barriers and opportunities.
- Survey Design
 - Recreation Preferences: activity location, familiarity, frequency and satisfaction, outdoor access barriers, and outdoor issues/concerns. What might prevent someone from accessing parks and open spaces; transportation, not feeling welcome, etc.
 - Land conservation preferences: priorities, funding allocations, current and future sales tax renewals.
 - Demographics: census data and zip code.
- Methodology
 - Hired RRC Associates consultant.
 - County-wide mailing (stratified by community)
 - 10,000 surveys to county residents (randomly selected)
 - Online or paper
 - Multiple languages offered
 - Reminder postcards
 - Weighing by census demographics to balance representation
 - Kristina asked if the survey will be sent to renters as well as homeowners. Jenn confirmed.
- Timeline
 - Summer 2023: hire consultant, survey design, update BOCC and Advisory Boards.
 - Fall 2023: Mailed surveys distributed (statistically valid), public open link (2-3 weeks after for anyone to take – not statistically valid), questionnaire returns and data entry, data analysis.
 - Winter 2023-2024: final report and presentation.
- Feedback/Discussion:
 - Ruthie asked if trails questions were specific to those in LC or if they included the Poudre River Trail. Jenn said it is both and noted the “trails” questions include paved and unpaved trails.
 - Kristina noted, for a question regarding most frequented spaces, she would have a difficult time differentiating between Lory State Park and Horsetooth. Daylan explained it is okay if survey responders note visitation to an area that is outside of the survey partners locations.
 - Rob asked if reservoirs are included in the survey questions as water activities are included in some of the questions. Jenn said the survey does include reservoirs. There is a challenge to find terminology that includes natural spaces without going outside of the HPOS tax language.
 - Jill inquired about having a list of properties that could be selected from. Daylan said a list would include all municipalities, so having a property list would be difficult and a heavy lift.
 - Ruthie asked if the survey would include terms such as, “bodies of water” or “reservoirs”. Daylan said another survey can be conducted to look specifically at the reservoirs. The OLOF survey is a high level feel across the county regarding the HPOS tax.
 - Kathy suggested in the “PLEASE NOTE” section, to use quotation marks instead of capitalizing Open Space and Trails.
 - Jill asked why paddleboarding was separated from non-motorized sports within the survey. Jenn explained paddleboarding has become very popular and the partners wanted to bring more attention to it. Chris added paddleboards have had an enormous impact on the reservoirs.
 - Jill and Ruthie noted many municipalities are experiencing an increase in crime and vandalism and suggested adding specific verbiage to the “issues experienced” section.
 - Board members suggested the survey be mobile friendly.

Discussion Items

County Climate, Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability Policy - Heidi Pruess, Climate Smart Program

- Heidi said in January 2023, the BOCC adopted the County Climate Policy.
- The county is a part of the Colorado Communities for Climate Action (CC4CA) coalition. CC4CA is a statewide coalition and includes over 50 counties and cities. They provide recommendations and guidance on legislation and state rule making decisions.
 - Scott asked if there was a membership fee associated, and if LC received advocacy from the coalition. Heidi confirmed and noted membership allows LC to participate in certain things and gives the county the ability to weigh in on the rule making process.
- The CC4CA policy is being provided to the LC staff and advisory boards as a frame of reference to make recommendation to the BOCC to update the county policy.
- The county will use the County Climate Policy to further inform what goals staff are working towards, patch missing communication gaps and inform legislation.
- Her goal is to have a final recommendation to the BOCC in November.
- Jill asked for clarification on what the board members needed to do. Heidi said she is looking for feedback on the current LC Climate Policy using the CC4CA policy as a frame of reference for informing the new county policy, i.e., "Does the LC policy fit the direction the county needs to go?".
- Daylan said board members should email their feedback to Andrea, she will compile it and bring it to the next meeting for discussion.
- Heidi noted [Climate Smart and Future Ready](#) will be implemented in Spring 2024. It will include a Social Pinpoint platform to accept questions.

Action Items

None

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Update

- Tara said she and the BOR are starting work on the annual work plan. An email will be sent out to remind partners to submit their safety and improvement projects for 2024 by October 1st.
- BOR must approve projects through an environmental checklist, categorical exclusion checklist and Cultural Resources consultation with the state. The plans provide a list of projects that can happen without approval and identify big projects that need reviewed and approved. The annual work plans help to streamline the process.
- Ruthie asked if tree planting would be included. Tara said vegetation areas are included in the new work plan. If the county wants to do a ground disturbing activity, it must be cleared by multiple entities such as Cultural Resources and the state. BOR had an archeologist clear the campground areas in LCDNR areas to preapprove tree plantings before any plans come through. This is/can be done on an annual basis. However, it is specific to highly disturbed areas. Planting on trails would need further consideration within the process.
- Kristina asked if the future Bay-to-Bay trail went through categorical exclusion. Tara said partially, it has been cleared through the Cultural Resources survey. There is still planning to be done for signage, trail placement, general impacts, and accessibility.
- Chris noted it is a heavy lift for the BOR to make the annual work plan. Tara has been working closely with DNR staff on day-to-day things and helping to streamline processes.

Board Member Reports

- Scott said he is on the committee for the Horsetooth Open Water Swim. The event will take place over the September 9th weekend. There will be free entry for county staff. He thanked DNR for helping with the special events process.

Director's Report – Daylan Figgs

- Daylan announced DNR submitted its budget to the BOCC for review. There is much uncertainty with Proposition HH. The department is waiting until November/December to identify any last minute

adjustments. The budget was submitted with anticipation of having no general fund dollars from the county, however, have a budget on standby which includes preservation of general fund dollars.

- Commissioner Kefalas added, the BOCC will be holding a budget retreat on September 20th to review LC department budgets. The draft county budget will be submitted on October 15th and approved in December. The county plans to host various town hall and community meetings along the way.

Next Meeting Scheduled

October 3rd, 2023 - Larimer County Loveland Campus Building: 200 Peridot Avenue, Loveland, CO 80537
Poudre River 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 – 8:30 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.