



Date: October 1, 2024
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
Bill Prater	V	Chris Fleming	I	Jeff Stahla (Northern Water)
Jill Wuertz	A	Daylan Figgs	A	Tara Piper (BOR)
Kathy Maher	I	Steve Gibson	I	Kyle Whitaker (Northern Water)
Kristina Kachur-Webb	I	Cindy Claggett	I	
Adam Crossan	I	*John Kefalas	V	
Pete Blume	A	Andrea Weber (minutes)	I	
Robert Harris	I			
Ruthie Rollins	A			
Jeannie Mounts	I			
Phil Stout	I			
Joe Bakel	I			

V = virtual attendee

I = in-person attendee

A = Absent

*commissioner

Call to Order – 5:31 pm

Public Comment

Agenda Review

Review and Approval of Last Minutes

Rob moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Phil 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 2024 Tax Distribution Letter

Update and Reports

Park District Updates – Steve/Cindy

- Steve said the tap-to-pay, no-touch RV dump station has been implemented to streamline use and recoup costs for waste management. Users have one minute to complete the dump after payment.
 - Phil noted issues with community members leaving the hose in the dump station, enabling unpaid use by others, and questioned potential misuse.

- Steve acknowledged this as a transitional period for the public and expressed the need for patience as users adapt.
- The Satanka Bay ANS Shelter is currently under construction, the shelter will include a solar panel array and a permanent fence. Expected opening is within the next week.
- South Bay Decontamination Station and bathroom includes a drinking fountain, flush toilets, and a water drainage pad beneath the station for wastewater management.
- A special event triathlon race had participation of approximately 350, which included 150-200 volunteers and spectators.
- Various incidents, including vehicle and boat accidents, fires, and a recent suicide attempt at Rotary Park. Rangers involved received a meritorious award for lifesaving efforts.
- Concessionaire Violations
- HT Depo boat rentals faced safety concerns with unlicensed operation, unsafe boats, and several boats sinking. The business was done and operated on private property but conducted unauthorized activity on BOR managed land.
- Alexander Mountain Fire coordinated efforts involved rangers, the Sheriff's Office, and first responders to evacuate residents and temporarily close reservoirs for firefighting operations. Increased reliance on reservoir resources for firefighting may continue in future years.
 - Chris reported that the Alexander Fire had up to 22 air assets deployed simultaneously.
 - Kristina asked about the impact on water allocation; Kyle explained the water usage for firefighting had minimal long-term impact.
- Rangers received arrest and defense tactic training on the shoreline and on boats to enhance safety protocols.
- All rangers are certified in Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) procedures, improving response capabilities during high-demand periods.
- Cindy noted the text-to-pay station will be launched on the east side of Horsetooth Reservoir (HT) in November, allowing visitors to use QR/text-to-pay. If successful, the system will be implemented countywide.
- Carter Maintenance has been working on projects, repairs and improvements including, multiple broken water lines, Lake Lite buoy issues, and a South Shore tree planting event.
- ANS inspection hours are being reduced, with a continued focus on managing invasive species while adjusting staffing needs.
- A recent event allowed residents to bring in slash to remove potential fire fuels from their properties using an air curtain burner. The burners efficiently contain smoke, offering a sustainable option for private landowners' fire mitigation efforts.
- Four planes were deployed sequentially to scoop water from Carter Lake for firefighting efforts on the Pearl Fire.
- Preparations are underway for the 2025 Carter Eastside projects/improvements. This includes the construction of a new parking lot, moving the swimming beach, and transitioning the Big Thompson campground to day-use only.
- The FLAP grant for paving in the Carter District is in the bid phase, with bids expected by November to allow for project scheduling.

Marina Concession Update – Steve/Cindy

- Carter Lake Marina Update – Cindy
 - Successes and Improvements:
 - A recent Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) inspection went well, with issues from last year resolved.
 - Improvements were made to shop building cleanliness and enhanced customer service, including routine checks on boats and customer assistance.
 - A juvenile trespassed on 16 boats and stole items, including alcohol. The suspect was identified by a ring camera and prior ranger contact. The case is pending further action.
 - Cooler/freezer condenser maintenance was handed over to marina staff.

- 48 overnight rentals were booked.
- Challenges:
 - The Alexander Mountain Fire impacted business operations.
 - The lottery system for slip allocation generally went well; however, some delays occurred due to applicant hesitations about costs or boat size suitability. Ultimately, 14 new slips were assigned.
- Future Plans:
 - Security cameras will be installed to enhance security.
 - Potential relocation of mooring balls is anticipated with upcoming eastside changes, aiming to accommodate non-motorized watercraft on the east side.
 - Firewood storage improvements are planned to optimize space and safety.
- Inlet Bay Marina Update – Steve
 - The lottery for slip assignments was generally positive, with effective communication and smooth transitions, despite minor adjustments needed in the process. Five new slips were assigned at Horsetooth Reservoir (HT).
 - Improved communication is needed for timely receipt of customer lists, as this year's list was delayed. The process is expected to be streamlined in the future.
 - Some challenges arose with managing overnight slip rentals, as these were sometimes arranged independently without notifying Steve.
 - Initial adjustments to increased patrols by rangers and staff led to some resistance, but customer feedback on having visible patrols was overwhelmingly positive.
 - Security cameras helped monitor activity and investigate boat accidents.
 - Dock maintenance is required, including repairs for broken boards to address tripping hazards and better concession organization.
 - The marina hosted several special events, learning to navigate county requirements and processes for event approvals. Some events required adjustments due to SE process adherence.
 - The Alexander Mountain Fire and fluctuating water levels required dock adjustments and evacuation measures, impacting overall operations.

Short-Term Concession Operations – Chris

- Concession Application Process:
 - A written proposal with a detailed business plan.
 - Submission of a completed application and license, along with a \$500 application fee.
 - Review and discussion by management to evaluate the potential impact and benefit.
 - Insurance requirements.
 - A fee structure where concessionaires pay 5% of gross revenue if they earn over \$10,000.
 - Discussions with district managers (DMs) to assess the concession's alignment with property goals, which involves iterative discussions before final approval.
- Typical short-term concessions include activities like fishing and climbing guides, scuba lessons, vending, outdoor education (especially for children), fly fishing, firewood vending, and sailing lessons.
- Non-revenue-generating educational events and larger single-day events follow a separate process.
- In 2020, there were 7 short-term concessions, generating approximately \$18,000 in revenue. In 2023, there were 17 concessions, with revenue of around \$9,762, reflecting an increase in smaller-scale, lower-revenue operations.
- Short-term concessions provide diverse engagement opportunities for the public on county properties.
- Concession operators are required to follow the same rules and regulations as other visitors, even during times of high capacity.
- Key factors reviewed include: The appropriateness of fees, limits on the number or type of concession applicants (especially relevant for fishing guides), separate processes and fees for commercial photography, which also require insurance.
- Questions:

- Kathy inquired about whether city employees running programs need to follow the same process. Chris said programs run by city employees generally go through the education division. If a program involves payment, subcontractors are required to go through the formal process; for partners (usually non-profits), the county collaborates with them directly.

Board of County Commissioners Update

- During an Administrative Matters meeting Amendment #1 of the Windy Gap Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was approved. This amendment focuses on collaborative efforts for forest management and source water protection as part of watershed protection initiatives.
- Lori Hodges from the Office of Emergency Management received a certificate of congressional recognition for the response to the Alexander Mountain Fire. The recognition was acknowledged on the floor of the U.S. Congress.
- A recipient has been selected for the Ranger Brendan Unitt Service Award. The award ceremony is scheduled for December 17th, from 4-6 pm, and will be held in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.
- The County is in the midst of its budget process. A proposed budget will be submitted for approval on October 15th.
- A property tax bill is under discussion in a special session, while a recently passed bill will reduce property tax revenue for the County.
- November 5th Ballot Information:
 - The Clerk and Recorder will mail ballots in the coming weeks. The ballot will include two pages with 14 statewide measures.
 - In late August, the BOCC approved the use of transportation sales tax revenue to be directed toward transportation funding.

Discussion Items

Action Items

PAB Bylaws

- Chris said a change to the recently adopted bylaws was recommended, changing the word "citizens" to "residents".
- Kristina asked for a motion.
- Kathy motioned to recommend the update to the PAB Bylaws to the BOCC for adoption. Rob seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Update

- Tara noted concession inspections went well this summer.

Northern Water Conservancy District Update

- Jeff noted the construction/installation of a new generator and storage tank (for fuel) on the south end of Carter near the outlet.
- Concluded season with Communications team for Chimney Hollow visitation days. 15-20 people visited Flatiron every 4th Tuesday for a few weeks.
- Chimney Hollow Update: doing inner-connection work, which connects Chimney to Carter Lake. Turning off water flow into Carter for a few months. Water levels will be going down a normal amount.
- Carter is about 2/3 full and HT is about ¾ full.

Colorado River Presentation – Kyle Whitaker

- Kyle noted recent fires are not expected to impact reservoir levels or the Colorado River's overall water availability.
- Operational Changes in Key Reservoirs
 - Operations at Lake Mead (Lower Basin) and Lake Powell (Upper Basin) are being adjusted, but no other significant changes are occurring.
- Historical Context and Challenges

- The Colorado River was once uncontrolled, often flooding and depositing sediment, which led to destruction.
- Today, it is managed as a critical resource, especially for irrigated agriculture, and will be fully utilized to support western U.S. growth.
- Colorado River Compact (1922)
 - Upper and Lower Basins each receive 7.5 million acre-feet per year, with an additional 1 million acre-feet allocated to the Lower Basin, if there is surplus.
 - Upper Basin is required to maintain river flow not to fall below 75,000,000 acre-feet over any period of 10 consecutive years at Lee Ferry, and existing water rights are protected.
- Key Legislative Actions and Agreements
 - 1928: Boulder Canyon Project Act established Lower Basin state allocations, leading to Hoover Dam and Lake Mead's construction.
 - 1944: Treaty with Mexico allocated 1.5 million acre-feet to Mexico.
 - 1948: Upper Colorado Basin Compact established.
- Current Water Use and Demand Challenges
 - Water use is divided among irrigated agriculture, municipal/domestic use, recreation, and environmental needs.
 - South Platte Basin and Arkansas Basin both draw significant resources from the Colorado River Basin.
- Lake Powell Operations and Flow Management
 - Flow volumes at Lee Ferry have declined to around 7.48 million acre-feet, meeting compact commitments but reducing surplus flow.
 - Arizona's water orders in Lake Mead aimed to recharge aquifers, though this strategy is under review for future negotiations (set for 2025).
- Long-Term Supply-Demand Mismatch
 - Basin usage averages 14 million acre-feet, yet natural supply is approximately 13.3 million acre-feet, leading to reservoir depletion.
 - Population growth and environmental factors contribute to this supply-demand gap.
- Lake Powell Levels and Energy Implications
 - Power generation from Lake Powell has driven water transfers from Colorado reservoirs, with recent efforts providing temporary gains in lake levels.

Board Member Reports

Director's Report – Provided by Chris on behalf of Daylan Figgs

- The accounting team is preparing 25-year financial projections, which will soon be presented to the board.
- Heaven's Door Ranch was renamed Canyon Edge.
- Directors and senior staff are participating in regular collaborative meetings with Northern Water and BOR. These meetings have been beneficial for joint projects and fostering cooperative efforts.
- Chaplain Rick Christopherson, who has volunteered for decades with local fire departments and anti-human trafficking efforts through churches, was nominated by Zach Cook for the Brendan Unitt Service Award and was selected to receive the award.
- Chris noted issues with the AO Bison Room as a meeting venue, mentioning that the Open Lands Advisory Board (OLAB) has agreed to move their meetings to the Horsetooth Area Information Center (HAIC). Members appreciated the option of using HAIC as an alternate location but requested to continue alternating between locations.

Next Meeting Scheduled

November 5th 2024 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 – 8:02 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.