

LARIMER COUNTY | ENVIRONMENTAL & SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD

P.O. Box 1190, Fort Collins, Colorado 80522-1190, 970.498.5738, Larimer.org

The role of the Advisory Board is to advise the Board of County Commissioners and appropriate departments on environmental and science-related issues that affect Larimer County.

MINUTES

Date: August 9th, 2022

Time: 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Location: Rm. 333 Lake Estes, 200 W. Oak Street, Fort Collins, CO and Virtual by Zoom

Contact: Shelley Bayard de Volo, sbayard@larimer.org or 970.498.5738

MEMBERS		STAFF		GUESTS
Rodger Ames		John Kefalas*		
Daniel Beveridge		Shelley Bayard de Volo [¥]	X	
John Bleem	X	Heidi Pruess [§]	X	
Tasha Carr	X			
Jim Gerek - Chair	X			
Ted Hendrickx	X			
Allyson Little	X			
Kirk Longstein– Vice-Chair	X			
Kaitlin Rainsberger	X			
George Rinker	X			
Travis Rounsaville	X			
Shelby Sommer	X			
Catriona Smith				
Katrina Winborn-Miller	X			
Chris Wood	X			

X = present; * = Commissioner Liaison; ‡ = Speaker; ¥ = ESAB Liaison; ° = Facilities;

§ = Environmental and Sustainability Program; ° = Fleet

Call to Order: 6:15 p.m.

- Amendments or additions to the agenda** – None
- Introduction of members, staff, and guests** – The members introduced themselves with an extended introduction by new member Tasha Carr
- Public Comment** – No public comment.
- Discussion Items**
 - Climate Smart and Future Ready update - Heidi Pruess shared a brief update on the Climate Smart and Future Ready (CSFR) process. She was not able to share much detail because of the currently open RFP and she directed members to take a look at that RFP if they are interested



to know more. They can access it the Bid.Net system. The RFP closes August 26th and they are hopeful to have a suite of great applicants. Timeline would hopefully be to award a contract by the end of September. Heidi is also actively working with the BOCC to develop invitations to community partners to participate in work groups as part of the Phase 3 process. Work group members will be those who can act on behalf of the community. There will also be a work group comprised of members from advisory boards, and there will be a separate invitation going out to advisory boards.

- EV Readiness for Community and the County's Role – Heidi Pruess indicated there has been a lot of dialog in the last few weeks regarding the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan (NEVI), which is funded through the Federal Jobs and Infrastructure Act. Most of the funding will come to the State through the State Energy Office, who will then distribute the funds through existing grant programs, like Charge Ahead Colorado. The Charge Ahead program is waiting for the plan to be approved later this month and will then determine how they will adjust their program to include the new criteria. It's unknown at this point who will receive the funding and what project types will be eligible. It's also unknown what role the County might have with regard to the rural corridors. Heidi intends to provide comments on the draft Plan and she encouraged Board members to do the same.

The State has identified several new EV Charging corridors, which cover rural areas of the State. In Larimer County that includes HWYs 287, 34 and 36. Charge Ahead Colorado has mostly worked with municipalities and identified places like hotels and gas stations to put EV chargers. When it comes to the more rural areas, it's a challenge to find a piece of ground every 50 miles where utility companies can install a charger.

Heidi is continuing to talk with the State and electric utilities to understand how implementation will proceed. Heidi also contacted the NFRMPO who indicated that they are not involved in implementing NEVI funds, however, they expressed interest. They will also be commenting on the Draft Plan. Heidi then opened it up for questions. Jim noted that the State plans to accept project ideas in November 2022. Jim asked if the County would be positioned to respond to the call for projects. Heidi noted that it's not clear what role the County might have, and that is why she is continues to talk with utility companies. Members discussed the fact that the installation and maintenance of infrastructure on private property is not something the County is likely to do. However, the County could take a convener role, but Heidi indicated CDOT is already doing that by bringing utilities together. In time, CDOT may reach out to the County if they identify a role the County should play. As of now the County has paved the path to increase EV charging infrastructure through enacting ordinances and including updated building and development codes.

Considerable discussion ensued of what other roles the County could have, including education about EVs, the tax credits and incentives and how they work - basic customer service education could go a long way. Also, identifying gaps in proposed EV charging routes. EV charging could be installed in parks and open spaces, or visitor centers. The Workforce Center is a place where people transitioning from the fossil fuel industry might go to gain skills to work in the renewable energy sector, including installing and maintaining EV charging infrastructure. The State has an Office of Just Transition that also might be a resource for the County.

- County Fleet Alternative Fuels Planning Roadmap and Sustainability Task Force – Heidi Pruess provided a quick update on the work that County Fleet is doing to develop an EV transition roadmap. She said that Heidi Vilhauer, the Fleet Director, is meeting with Diego Lopez weekly,

and they are hoping to have something in place by end of the month that would be available for review. They will also be looking to bring together a presentation and a set of questions that they will bring to a worksession with the BOCC.

- Review of BOCC Air Quality Worksession and Next Steps – Chris presented in lieu of Rodger, who could not attend tonight. The worksession started with background information on the EPA’s non-attainment status designation for ground level ozone pollution. The EPA is downgrading the region from “serious” to “severe”, which means that there will be additional permitting changes, one of which involves developing an updated State Implementation Plan (SIP). There will be requirements to reduce ozone pollution through actions that Larimer County has no control of - like requiring the use of reformulated gasoline. Tom Gonzales spoke at the worksession and noted that the LC Health Department has the duty to protect human health and comply with the State regulations. He asked his staff to develop ways to improve air quality as it pertains to ozone pollution. They came up with several actions that the County can do, as well as several actions to reduce emissions.
 - 1) Help fund the State’s effort to reduce emissions from lawn care equipment. A lawn mower running for an hour produces the same emissions as a car travelling 300 miles. The State’s Mow Down Pollution program is out of funding for 2022. Larimer County proposes to fund 250 additional residents to participate in the program.
 - 2) Supporting the oil and gas operator Plug and Abandon low-producing wells program that includes providing financial assurance for wells that are not plugged and abandoned.
 - 3) Create new air quality monitoring sites in the areas of west Loveland, Livermore and Bellvue.
 - 4) Acquiring an infrared optical gas imaging (IR) camera in partnership with City of Fort Collins.

Chris noted that the BOCC was supportive of these actions. Heidi noted that there is a partnership between the City of Fort Collins and Larimer County that is continuing to evolve. Tom Gonzales also talked about funding four EV chargers for County Fleet Services.

5. **Approval of Minutes** – Shelby moved to approve the revised draft June minutes, and Ted seconded. The June minutes were approved by acclamation.
6. **Updates and Round Table**
 - Commissioner’s Update – The Commissioner was not in attendance
 - Reservoir Projects Update – Travis provided an update on the major water storage projects happening around the county. He started by discussing the Halligan Water Supply Project. The City of Fort Collins is still engaged in the draft EIS process and hoping to get to 30% design plans in 2022. They have two alternatives, the first of which is to increase capacity by increasing the height of the existing dam. The second option is to build a replacement dam immediately downstream of the existing dam, which is the more likely alternative. Storage capacity is needed, and Fort Collins ranks at the bottom of per-capita storage capacity compared to other Front Range communities. The Halligan project could double current capacity, which is needed based on projected population growth within the City.

Primary impacts are inundation of Preble’s Meadow Jumping Mouse habitat, some wetlands and sections of the North Fork Poudre River. Benefits include winter release of flows to the

North Fork during a time when the river usually dries up. As well, they would have a summer low flow plan again maintaining flows year-round.

The timeline is to get a final EIS late this year or early 2023. They still must complete their Fish and Wildlife Mitigation Plan, go through the County's 1041 permitting process, and acquire a State 401 water quality permit. They hope to go to construction in 2026.

NISP's new Glade Reservoir reached several permitting milestones in 2021, including the issuance of the County's 1041 permit. The Record of Decision for the US Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit is expected sometime in 2022. It will include the Corps' decision on the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative and will outline criteria for mitigation. Kiewit was selected as the contractor, and they have started geotechnical assessments at the dam site.

Jim noted that the Chimney Hollow Reservoir is currently under construction just west of Carter Lake. This project is apparently the largest civil engineering project in North America right now. It's going to be an asphalt core dam, which is unique in North America.

- Draft Colorado Water Plan – Jim noted that he hoped the Commissioner would be in attendance tonight to provide direction on whether there was interest in an ESAB review of the State's Draft Water Plan. The Plan was first adopted in 2015 but is now being updated. The draft plan is open for comments, which are due by September 30, which fits well with being able to adopt comments and pass them onto the BOCC at the board's September meeting. There was then some discussion on the importance of the Plan. Jim noted that the ESAB can't just comment on plans like these on behalf of the County. Shelley noted that the Commissioner did provide a short email response just before the meeting saying that he would like to confer with Natural Resources and Community Development on how the ESAB can assist.

Shelley suggested that the Board select a subcommittee tonight to review the plan, and Jim can follow-up with the Commissioner in the next few days to confirm whether he, Natural Resources or Community Development would like that review. There was agreement to move forward with that plan, and Ted, Ally, Shelby, Travis, and Chris stepped up to serve of the subcommittee. They also agreed to limit the scope of their review to relevant parts of the Plan (i.e., chapter on Water Resource Protection, and the chapter focused on the South Platte Basin).

- Roundtable – Ally noted that internationally, the Monarch Butterfly was listed as endangered. Kirk noted that he is working on the City's 1041 regulations, and the City is currently taking comments on their draft regulations. The major area of interest is in water resources and transportation. He encouraged members to spread the word and provide comments.

7. **Issue Index** – Was updated with tonight's discussion
8. **Agenda Topics for Next Meeting** – Next regular meeting will be September 13th, 2022. Discussion items TBD.
9. **Adjourn** – Ally moved, and Ted seconded, to adjourn. The meeting ended at 8:40 PM.