

LARIMER COUNTY | ENVIRONMENTAL AND 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: May 10th, 2022

Time: 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Location: Rm. 150 Carter Lake, 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	X	John Kefalas*		
Daniel Beveridge		Shelley Bayard de Volo [¥]	X	
John Bleem	X	Heidi Pruess [§]		
Jim Gerek - Chair	X			
Ted Hendrickx	X			
David Lehman	X			
Allyson Little	X			
Kirk Longstein– Vice-Chair	X			
Kaitlin Rainsberger	X			
George Rinker	X			
Travis Rounsaville	X			
Shelby Sommer	X			
Catriona Smith	X			
Katrina Winborn-Miller	X			
Chris Wood				

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

§ = Environmental and Sustainability Program; ¨ = Fleet

Call to Order: 6:10 p.m.

1. **Amendments or additions to the agenda** – There will be no Commissioner's Update.
2. **Introduction of members, staff, and guests** – The members introduced themselves
3. **Public Comment** – No public comment.
4. **Discussion Items**
 - Coronavirus 'Pandemic' 2020 (Covid-19): Topics in Scientific Challenges and Opportunities – David spoke about the scientific, technological, and social aspects of the Coronavirus. The





pandemic has revealed some aspects in our society in terms of how the population believes in, and responds to, science. David focused his talk on the following topics –

- Immune system: Steady ↑ in Science
- Vaccines: Applied Science ↑
- Clinical: Long Covid
- Masking
- ‘Snake Oil’ Infodemic

David discussed the Coronavirus’ biological data, including its genetic profile, ancestry, and disease in other species. He explained how the immune system responds to Coronavirus in terms of cytokines and other immune system components. He discussed the research and diagnostic strategies that scientists have taken to better understand how the immune system responds. David then discussed current vaccines and the need for a variety of drugs and new vaccines that will continue to work as the virus mutates into new variants. He also discussed the successes and challenges in vaccine development. The speed in which the Covid vaccine was developed was facilitated by previous work in mRNA vaccines. Some issues included public hesitancy, the FDA’s emergency authorization, and the small risk from allergic reactions. Next David discussed Long Covid (PASC = Post-Acute Sequelae of SCV); the difficulties with establishing consistent diagnostic methods since the disease is variable in terms of onset, duration, and symptoms. He also discussed long Covid in the context of other infections having similar long-term (life-long) effects (e.g., polio, tuberculosis, chickenpox/shingles, rheumatic fever, and mumps). Some effects are neurological involving infection through nociceptors thru nasal passages that ultimately make its way to the brain and neural system. Discussed mask mandates and the impact they had on hospitalization rates in counties with and without the requirement. There was some discussion on the co-benefits of masking in terms of preventing the spread of other colds and viruses, as well the impacts of climate on the spread of Coronavirus. David noted the benefit for research of having big data sets (i.e., national level). Discussed the impacts of politicizing mask use and requirements. When a segment of the population blatantly ignores a public health order, it is now precedent for doing so in the future, which might have real negative impacts. David ended his talk by discussing the pseudoscience ‘snake oil’ that is out there for public consumption, including treatments having no scientific basis.

- Electric Vehicles and the Role of Larimer County – Kirk raised the question of what should be the County’s role in facilitating the transition to use of electric vehicles (EVs), and what should be the role of the ESAB within that space – produce comments and/or recommendations? Kirk discussed the County’s demographics and driving habits by various categories. He noted by 2030, nationwide, ~30% of new car sales will be EVs (full electric or hybrid). In Colorado, we have an EV Roadmap produced by the Colorado Energy Office. Last fall the sales for new car sales were 9% EV, and as of today it is increased to 13%. He continued looking at EV use based on different demographic parameters.

Larimer County’s Comprehensive Plan notes some goals that align with the use of EVs. In the Community Connectivity section there are statements like “developing innovative ways to commute using emerging technologies”, and “reducing motor vehicle emissions and trips”. In the Infrastructure section statements like “plan for technological innovations, changing travel preferences” and “utilize carbon-free energy”. Larimer County recently adopted land-use code revisions that include requirements for EV parking spaces. New single-family housing requires



parking to be EV-ready while multi-family housing with >10 parking spaces requires EV-capable. The North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO) is the regional entity that provides planning services and access to Federal FAST Act dollars. Their 2045 regional transportation plan notes the designation of alternative fuel corridors, which is a statewide network of alternative fuel (CNG, EV and H) “stations” that can be used by the driving public. In Larimer County the plan includes I-25, US Hwy 34, and US Hwy 36. What is lacking in the plan is US Hwy 287 between Fort Collins and Laramie Wyoming, and other rural parts of the County like Hwy 14. If the County wanted to switch a portion of its fleet to EVs, there would need to be more EV charging infrastructure available in the northwest part of the county.

In terms of funding opportunities, the State provides funds, and the NFRMPO provides planning services. There will be large funding opportunities coming through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act disbursements later this year. Municipalities are providing local programming, like group buys for EVs, but those opportunities are diminishing as dealers have enough demand without those incentives. There is also the need to address who will pay for the electricity when EV charging stations are located at a local business. And because charging an EV takes longer than fueling up, people need to rethink how they might use the time while their EVs charge. Utilities are providing rebates for installation of in-home EV chargers, including things like 50% of total equipment costs and electric service costs rebated to the customer.

The roles that the County can play/should play as stated in the County Comprehensive Plan includes acting as a regional convener. The specific issue is “Rapid technological change and infrastructure challenged areas create geographic separation and lack of access to basic services leading to social and economic disadvantages for rural residents.”. Providing infrastructure and capital improvement planning (i.e., public charging), setting regulations as through the Land Use Code and using its taxing authority to provide tax abatement, and tax credits are also key roles.

The discussion ended with comments by the members including Travis noting that the nice thing about charging for fleet vehicles is that they go back to their fleet parking at the end of the day where there can be EV charging stations available. Shelby noted that early adoption by County and City fleets provides a re-sale market for secondary ownership. Jim noted that the Fleet Director Heidi Vilhauer had provided an update via email on the County’s progress toward adopting more EVs into the fleet. Heidi noted that they are creating a sustainability workgroup, whose main objective is to create a roadmap for Larimer County’s transition toward alternative fuel vehicles. As well, they have been coordinating with Diego Lopez at Northern Colorado Clean Cities to discuss various strategies, including where and when to install charging stations, fleet composite and funding opportunities. Once they have the comprehensive analysis back, they will look to share it with the ESAB. As well they will work with County departments to seek representatives to sit on the workgroup and will request that the ESAB also provide a representative that can collaborate on various topics. There was discussion of the need to provide charging in rural areas for those that recreate. Shelby noted that based on her knowledge from working in other Counties and knowing what others in the State are doing, Larimer County is way behind. There is significant funding coming soon, if not already here now. The County needs to act as a convener, working with the NFRMPO and local utilities, for not only passenger EVs but also for electric heavy equipment, forklifts, refuse trucks, and micro-mobility options. These are multi-year conversations that need to happen soon, and technology is sure to improve.



5. **Approval of Minutes** – John moved to approve the draft April minutes, and George seconded. The April minutes were approved by acclamation.

6. **Updates and Round Table**

- Commissioner's Update – Not in Attendance.
- Potential Rooftop Solar at the New County Fleet Campus – This is a follow-up to some *ad hoc* questions raised by Commissioner Kefalas in his update last month. Shelby noted that she and John received some information from Facilities on the proposed solar array at the new Fleet campus, but the information was limited, and it raised more questions that could not be answered without having more conversations. For example, who would be the utility provider? Knowing that is important as it influences costs. Shelby and John were not able to provide strategic advice, but rather provided a list of questions back to Facilities that should be addressed before they could provide recommendations. For example, what is the primary goal for including roof top solar? What would be the projected electrical load? Knowing answers to such questions will help to inform the costs for demand which might differ depending on the utility provider. Without more detailed information, Shelby/John could not really provide a cost equation necessary for a recommendation. They had only received a quote from a single contractor, so Shelby and John recommend getting multiple quotes. And Facilities should look at several different financing options, not just the option for outright purchase. John noted that the costs were quite high compared to what he has seen in his work. The plan thus far seems undeveloped and cursory – the thought is that Facilities may just be early in the design process. They also brought up the fact that the design of the building should include energy efficiencies, which they did not see. John and Shelby noted that for them to really be able to provide feedback, they would need to have a conversation with Facilities to glean more information. Jim noted that Commissioner Kefalas expressed his gratitude for this quick review.
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- CSLC Outreach – Shelby provided an update from the last CSLC meeting that involved both the internal and external task forces. They reviewed and discussed the preliminary recommendations, which had been updated based on previous community engagement sessions. From this process there will be a recommendation report that should be finished in the next month or so. Once that is finished, Phase 3 will begin, which will involve more community engagement.
- Update on Air Quality Monitoring – Rodger noted that there is a lot going on at the State level. Since the Commissioner is not in attendance tonight, Rodger elected to hold his update for next month, when hopefully the Commissioner is present.
- Larimer County Water Open House on May 11 – Jim sent via email to the members the announcement for the open house that Planning was hosting on Regional Water Planning. There is a report and questionnaire online which Jim encouraged ESAB members to review and complete.
- City of Fort Collins "Bag Ban" – Kirk noted that the City's Bag ban is now in effect. It aligns with the State's statute that will be in effect next year. David asked about the relative benefits to the environment of paper vs plastic. There was some discussion of the types of recycling locally available. Here watershed protection was an important consideration – keeping plastic bags out of rivers and microplastics out of the environment.



- Environmental Stewardship Awards – Shelley noted that the Award letters were going out this week, and the plaques would be ordered. Jim noted that the BoCC confirmed the ESAB recommendations for this year's awards which will be publicly presented on June 27.
 - ESAB Team Building at CSU Nursery Follow-up- The April 30 event was a success, with about half the members participating. It was interesting to learn about the CSU tree nursery, and what they do there. Kirk noted that it would be great to do another event before the end of the year.
 - Roundtable – Jim noted that there is one upcoming seat open on the ESAB and the application period closes April 21st. He encouraged ESAB members talk this up within their networks.
7. **Issue Index** – Was updated with tonight's discussion
 8. **Agenda Topics for Next Meeting** – Next regular meeting will be June 14th, 2022. Discussion items TBD.
 9. **Adjourn** – George moved, and Rodger seconded. The meeting ended at 9:10 PM.