



LARIMER COUNTY OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

Thursday, February 28, 2013

5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Loveland Council Chambers, 500 E. Third St., Loveland

The mission of the Larimer County Open Lands Program is to preserve and protect significant open space, natural areas, wildlife habitat, and develop parks and trails for present and future generations. These open lands provide opportunities for leisure, human renewal and protection of our natural and cultural resources.

Present:

John Phipps	Town of Estes Park	Paul Alaback	Town of Berthoud
Peter Kast	At-large	Nancy Wallace	Planning Commission
Mary Banken	At-large	Suzan Fritchel	At-large
Carl Sorrentino	At-large	Steve Vessey	At-large

Staff Present:

Kerri Rollins	Open Lands Program Manager	Meegan Flenniken	Resource Program Manager
Gary Buffington	Director	Heather Young	Education Program Assistant
Zac Wiebe	Fund Devel. & Special Proj. Specialist	Rob Novak	Community Relations Specialist
Charlie Johnson	Land Agent	Travis Rollins	Open Lands Operations Manager
Jeffrey Boring	Resource Specialist	Tim Meyer	Land Agent

Absent:

Hugh McKean	City of Loveland	Trudy Haines	At-large
Ladonna Lee	At-large	Gerry Horak	City of Fort Collins

Peter called the meeting to order at 5:10 pm.

REGULAR MEETING:

- Approval of the meeting minutes for January 24, 2013. **Carl motioned to approve the minutes, Mary seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.**
- Review Agenda and enclosures

PUBLIC COMMENT: Items not on the agenda. No additional public comment

INTRODUCTIONS:

- Tim Meyer, new part time land agent. Tim will work 20 hours a week for both Engineering and Open Lands. Tim introduced himself and gave a little background. He has about 35 years of experience in land management, mostly with the federal government in different agencies. He's happy to be here to help Charlie. The board and staff also introduced themselves.

INFORMATION:

- Several staff will be attending the annual CCLT conference March 11-12. It's a great conference, the Center of Excellence is on the agenda.
- Energy By Design plan was adopted by the State Land Board – yeah! – in February. The full document will be available on our website soon at www.larimer.org/openlands. Call Meegan if there are any questions. The next step is for the State Land Board to put together a lease package, mostly for Meadow Springs, some on Soapstone Natural Area, but nothing on Red Mountain Open Space. Staff will pay particular attention to



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the surface use agreement that is developed. Charlie noted that Meegan should be commended for the many hours spent on this project.

- Charlie Johnson has joined the board of Estes Valley Land Trust – congrats to Charlie...and to Mary! Mary commented that they are thrilled to have Charlie for his insight on acquisitions. Charlie is excited for the experience and thinks it will help with partnerships in the future.
- Report from the Open Lands Operations Manager - See enclosure
- *Our Lands-Our Future* public event to be held on March 6 from 5:30-8:30 p.m., at the Backbone Grill in Loveland. The event will be sponsored by Grimm Bros. Brewery and seeks public feedback on the second citizen survey and online mapping tool. Come one, come all, it's going to be a great time!
- The State of the Resource 2012 report. See handout. Jeffrey highlighted major accomplishments. This report compiles several reports. The conservation easement stewardship program saves the county money by ensuring there are no violations and corresponding legal fees, it also saves money by using volunteers and utilizing partnerships. The newest partnership is with the Colorado State Forest work. Another example is the good science received through partnering with the Colorado Natural Heritage Program. These projects have been behind the scenes in the past but Jeffrey plans to highlight them more to increase awareness. Charlie asked if most of the Russian olive was removed from the Three Bells easement. Jeffrey answered that there are probably 1000 or more trees and the recent project removed 30 or so. Paul likes the format of the report, it gives a good overview. He'd like to see it on the web and would like to know more. Jeffrey plans to put it on the department website.
- Eagle nest at Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space. Meegan commented that it was discovered by Ft. Collins. Jeffrey pointed out a Heron rookery to the north. Carl commented that Great-horned owls have been nesting there and swapping with Red tail hawks.
- To sign up for Parks Advisory Board minutes go to <http://larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm> put in your email and click 'subscribe', then check "Parks Advisory Board" box
- Natural Resource Events for November. See website <http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources>

ACTION:

- Small Grants for Community Partnering – presentation and subcommittee recommendation
Trudy, Gerry, Nancy and Sue reviewed 17 applications requesting ~\$28,000; two didn't meet minimum qualifications, see presentation. Steve asked what an insulated high tunnel was. Sue clarified and discussed why it wasn't recommended for funding. The project was a private CSA and didn't have as much community involvement compared to other gardening projects. Paul wondered how the subcommittee evaluates the projects, are there goals for types of projects? He imagined a challenge with evaluating research proposals. Nancy commented that if there were more projects that had merit, they'd ask for more money. Zac reminded Paul that there are lengthy criteria for the program available on the website. **Steve motioned to approve the subcommittee's recommendations, Suzan seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.**

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- Roberts Ranch follow up – brief audio recording of summation remarks from February 4 County Commissioner Hearing

Kerri: there are no updates about the project. Gary thanked the board for their resilience and deliberative efforts. Staff has learned a lot about agriculture and ranching. Kerri commented that there has never been a more controversial project and echoed Gary's sentiments. Nancy commented that the commissioners' comments affirm the board's efforts. A recording of the meeting is on www.fc.gov.com at channel 14. The public testimony was very much the same as previous meetings. Paul appreciated the way the commissioners looked at it in a broader perspective, we need to think strategically about how we promote agriculture and education. Gary: it's also opened our eyes to opportunities with existing properties. Paul commented that this is a new,



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exciting arena that has tremendous value. Kerri mentioned that staff hasn't been able to share any more info with Catherine.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

- Update: Natural Resources Capital Development and Acquisition Summary 2011 – 2013
No major updates, some funds are moving from 2012 to 2013. Gary commented that the bottom line is larger than it has been in several years.

PRESENTATIONS:

- Outreach, Education and Volunteer program - 2012 report – Rob Novak, Heather Young
See presentation. Paul asked about considering program quality vs. attendees or quantity. Rob commented that they are focusing on the types of programs that generate more attendance, not having attendance as the goal. They are trying to create factors for success to get a better result from the public and volunteers. Paul asked what kind of feedback they get from the schools. Generally they work with the same schools and same teachers. If a school stops participating, it's usually because the teachers aren't there or budgets have been cut. Heather: the feedback from teachers has been overwhelmingly positive. Kerri: we provide funding for transportation. Rob: staff is looking at changing that too to help promote more funding for transportation. Heather commented that transportation is one of the barriers that came from the Plug In To Nature study. Peter likes the use of social media by field staff.
- Our Lands, Our Future – update presentation – Zac showed the board the most recent product of the study, an online, interactive mapping tool, and asked the board to share the information.

BOARD COMMENT: Items not on the agenda Carl asked if Rangers get any help from the Audubon society for raptor monitoring. There are volunteer raptor monitors and staff. Carl will ask the Rangers what they're doing at Fossil Creek, he lives nearby, will keep a log and report at next meeting. Nancy asked if anyone monitors Bald eagles in the northern part of the County. It's likely the Audubon Society. Paul recommends checking with Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Items not on the agenda

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (24-6-402(4)(a) C.R.S. Purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of any real or personal property interest. No executive session was held.

Next regular meeting: Thursday, March 28, 2013; Loveland Council Chambers, 500 E. Third St., Loveland