

## LARIMER COUNTY OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD

*The mission of Larimer County Department of Natural Resources is to establish, protect and manage significant regional parks and open lands providing quality outdoor recreational opportunities and stewardship of natural resource values. We are committed to fostering a sense of community and appreciation for the natural and agricultural heritage of Larimer County for present and future generations.*

### MINUTES

**Date:** October 24, 2019

**Time:** 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**Location:** Larimer County Loveland Campus Building, 200 Peridot Avenue, Loveland, CO 80537, Poudre River Room

**Contact:** Please contact Sidney at [smichl@larimer.org](mailto:smichl@larimer.org) or 970-619-4462 if you are unable to attend

Members		Staff		Guests
Bob Hewson		Daylan Figgs	x	
David Marvin		Meegan Flenniken	x	
Jason Brothers		Zac Wiebe	x	
K-Lynn Cameron	x	Charlie Johnson	x	
Ken Zornes	x	Justin Core	x	
Linda Stanley	x	Chris Fleming	x	
Mark DeGregorio		*Thomas Donnelly	x	
Nancy Wallace	x	Sidney Michl (minutes)	x	
Peter Kelly	x			
Rick Brent	x			
Sherri Valentine	x			
Tom Shoemaker	x			

x = present

\*commissioner

1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS – 5:06 p.m.
2. PUBLIC COMMENT – none
3. AGENDA REVIEW
  - a. Added Oil and Gas Task Force update to Information & Announcements.

4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES
  - a. Sherri motioned to approve last meeting minutes, K-Lynn seconded, motion passed unanimously.
  
5. INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS
  - a. Natural Resources events for this month: See <http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources>.
  - b. To sign up for Open Lands Advisory Board minutes, go to <http://larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm>, enter your email, click 'Subscribe,' and then check the 'Open Lands Advisory' box.
  - c. Poudre River corridor updates: Received \$2M grant from GOCO to construct the remaining gaps to fully complete the Poudre River Trail. Larimer County closed on the Graves trail easement (the key piece launching the project) – Meegan/Charlie
    - i. Thanks to Zac Wiebe and Jenn Almstead for coordinating and working with partners and to Charlie for closing on the Graves trail easement. Charlie updated we received signatures from Mike and Dino Ditullio today for over a mile of trail easement, trail connection will be complete once we receive agreement with ditch company.
  - d. Closed on the Weis Property adjacent to Forks Park in the Big Thompson Canyon – Justin
    - i. Meeting with contractor next week to set up mobile home removal and restoration plans.
  - e. Big T. Canyon parks are closed for the season but will reopen April 1<sup>st</sup> (weather dependent) including Forks Park. Meeting with Loveland to debrief first year of assisting with management of Viestenz-Smith Park – Chris Fleming
    - i. K-Lynn asked about partnership with Loveland at V-Smith, Chris clarified we have a MOU, LC performs daily grounds/restroom cleaning and patrol and Loveland runs education program and manages large maintenance issues. Sherri asked about new statuary, Chris said Loveland contracted a new sculpture for the property. Linda asked about trail capacity issues, Chris said visitation ebbs and flows with weather and that DBBOS and HTMOS have opposite busy times than RMOS.
  - f. County Oil & Gas Task Force update – Meegan/Sherri
    - i. The next Task Force meeting is October 30<sup>th</sup>.
    - ii. Meegan presented Energy By Design (EBD) as an approach the County will use for surface impact issues on conserved land when surface use is the only viable alternative. EBD was applied as a tool at Red Mountain Open Space and Soapstone Prairie Natural Area in 2013, a similar process of resource mapping and defining surface occupancy zones would likely be replicated for future use. Overview of best management practices.
    - iii. Next step is to take EBD presentation to Task Force meeting on 10/30 and to city partners for feedback. Daylan reiterated the key takeaway of EBD is to guide and maintain property conservation values. Tom asked about public involvement in the process, Daylan said it's yet to be seen, Sherri said the Task Force meeting next week will determine more for the next public hearing.

Meegan said that oil and gas proposals are envisioned to follow the county special review process which generally takes around 9 months.

- iv. Linda asked if the EBD process will change from 2013 based on current state legislation, Daylan said the basic tenant should stay the same.
- v. Tom Shoemaker asked about criteria for determining feasibility, Daylan agreed it needs to be defined. Meegan said we'll be working closely with staff as they develop regulations and best management practices.

## 6. UPDATES & REPORTS

- a. Tom Shoemaker commented the Reporter Herald article featuring the Pittington conservation easement was very positive and well-written.
- b. Meegan mentioned the Big Thompson Recreation and Conservation Assessment from the 2014 flood and gave an update that Forks Park, Cedar Cove, Sleepy Hollow, and Glade Park have been re-built according to plan. River restoration was performed on priority segments of the Big T as well. The full assessment can be found online at: <https://www.larimer.org/naturalresources/plans-reports-advisory-boards>.

## 7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Regional planning efforts – NOCO 2050 and Fort Collins/Loveland partners – Daylan
  - i. Daylan explained Larimer County's role with NOCO 2050 as a regional planning effort to anticipate changes in population and recreation management. The partnership includes Boulder, Clear Creek, Gilpin, and Jefferson Counties, CPW, USFS, NPS, and the outdoor industry. Looking forward, internal plans include restoration and agricultural strategies. More regional issues (e-bikes, land conservation, carrying capacity, etc.) will be discussed at the joint board retreat. NOCO 2050's website should be live in 2020 or 2021.
  - ii. Nancy asked about federal involvement, Daylan said the Arapahoe and Roosevelt National Forests are hugely involved and see the effort leading directly into their forest plan update.
- b. Regional Trail opportunities and priorities – Zac Wiebe
  - i. The 2015 Open Lands Master Plan identified 18 regional trails where Larimer County Department of Natural Resources might focus its efforts, with regional trails matching regional and partner priority segments. LC's role in regional trail management is outside city GMA's , and focused on connecting communities to other communities and out to recreation sites.
  - ii. Key gaps where LC would lead to meet Master Plan goals:
    - 1. Dry Creek to connect Fort Collins to Wellington
    - 2. Box Elder area to connect Wellington to Timnath's existing GMA
  - iii. Gaps where LC would provide support:
    - 1. Trail system in unincorporated Larimer County to connect Loveland to Berthoud
    - 2. Trail along the south boundary of Fossil Creek Reservoir to connect Windsor to Loveland

3. Big Thompson River Trail to connect Town of Estes to Rocky Mountain National Park
4. Underpass at I-25 in unincorporated Larimer County to connect Berthoud to Johnstown
- iv. Zac noted we are in consistent communication with our partners and regularly attend NoCo Bike and Ped Collaborative meetings to discuss non-motorized pedestrian trail issues across the region. Given the high-cost and long-term nature of developing trails, this next iteration of priority trails will be long-term and focused on those key trails that meet the goals of the master plan.
- v. Linda asked if any of the segments would be eligible for GOCO funding, Zac affirmed trails continue to be their funding priority. Daylan mentioned other funding sources (CDOT, sales tax, etc.) are also available.
- vi. Nancy suggested we prioritize a variety of trails, particularly rural trails. Tom Donnelly asked about the viability of developing a trail north to Cheyenne, Meegan said a trail of that nature is contemplated in the master plan as more of a historic/scenic byway appropriate for CDOT or as a Rails to Trails.
- vii. Linda suggested a concentration on paved, urban trails to take pressure off other areas and to serve as commuter routes. K-Lynn said a trail connection to Wellington would be beneficial.

8. ACTION ITEMS

9. OTHER BUSINESS

10. NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED: November 14, 2019 at the Larimer County Loveland Campus Building, 200 Peridot Avenue, Loveland, CO 80537, Poudre River Room

11. 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. Linda moved to enter Executive Session, Tom seconded, motion passed unanimously at 6:26 p.m.

12. ADJOURN – 6:53 p.m.