

LARIMER COUNTY PARKS 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: February 2, 2021

Time: 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom Webinar

Contact: Please contact Sidney at smichl@larimer.org or 970-619-4462 if you are unable to attend.

Members		Staff		Guests
Deborah Shulman	x	Daylan Figgs	x	Jeff Stahla (Northern Water)
Jill Wuertz	x	Chris Fleming	x	
Kristina Kachur	x	Dan Rieves	x	
Mandy Peters	x	Mark Caughlan	x	
Pete Blume	x	*John Kefalas	x	
Robert Harris	x	Lori Smith	x	
Russell Fruits	x	Sidney Michl (minutes)	x	
Ruthie Rollins	x			
Spencer Clark	x			
Steve Ambrose	x			

x = present

***commissioner**

1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS – 5:32 p.m.
 - a. Welcomed Commissioner John Kefalas.
2. PUBLIC COMMENT – none
3. AGENDA REVIEW
4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES
 - a. Ruthie moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Rob seconded, motion passed unanimously.

5. INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Natural Resource events for this month: larimer.org/naturalresources.
- b. To sign up for Parks Advisory Board updates, go to apps.larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm, enter your email, click “Subscribe,” and check the “Parks Advisory Board” box.

6. UPDATES & REPORTS

- a. Park District updates – Dan/Mark
 - i. Dan – summer positions are posted and beginning to interview. New water tank is getting installed at the Carter Lake filter plant below dam 1, utility work is contracted through Connell. Some park areas are closed for construction work but will reopen soon. The Sail Club has been painting docks and preparing for spring, boating opens April 1st. A moratorium was placed on new projects on USBR properties with a minimum 60-day notice to proceed which will delay some projects. Ranger staff is full for first time in three years.
 - ii. Mark – in the process of hiring a new ranger, it takes about one year from the time of interview to full commission. Met with USBR and Northern Water today, the Sail and Saddle Club is in flux and we hope to receive more info this summer. Finished up water and powerlines at Inlet Bay, currently working on infrastructure for future flush toilet. ANS inspection stations will be installed next week, boating opens April 1st. The ANS supervisor position is posted for a full-time, 2-year contract. Rangers remain busy with visitation and completed ice training last week. Sold 7 cabins for ~\$42k and looking forward to getting new cabins in this summer.
 - iii. Jill asked how increased visitation affected staffing and resources. Daylan said leftover funds were reallocated for 2021 for additional staff and hardened infrastructure. While 2020 was unexpected, it allowed the department an opportunity to prepare for future visitation rates. Another plan for 2021 is to develop a staffing model tied to increased visitation, boat launches, camping nights, etc. The challenge is finding a balance between operational changes and maintaining quality visitor experience. Dan added there were 54,142 camping nights in 2020 (with spring closures), up from 52,089 camping nights in 2019. Discussed capacity issues and facilities remaining busy year-round. The department continues to work on our staffing model and seek out inefficiencies (trash contract example). Mark added Horsetooth had 58,000 boat inspections in 2020, up from 36,000 in 2019. Carter had 31,000 boat inspections in 2020 and 20,000 in 2019.
 - iv. Commissioner Kefalas asked about [NoCoPLACES 2050](#) and how it might be applied to county parks and open spaces. Daylan explained NoCo 2050 is a collaboration among Front Range stakeholders including Jefferson, Clear Creek, Gilpin, Larimer, and Boulder Counties, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the US Forest Service, and the National Park Service that formed in response to Colorado’s increasing population and its strain on public lands. The regional planning effort seeks ways to conserve natural resources while providing equitable access and quality recreation experiences. A few takeaway topics

from the group: adaptive response/coordination, new technology to manage visitation, carrying capacity, and forest health and climate change. Daylan said ideas from NoCo 2050 will be brought back to PAB as they develop.

- v. Kristina said she'd be interested to learn more about adaptive management technologies and mentioned Jefferson County's Lot Spot app. Daylan said new cameras were installed at HTMOS and DBBOS and IT contracts with a company to use the images to determine parking lot capacity. The challenge is connectivity and cell phone coverage. The department is currently considering a vendor to help with parking issues and ticket processing. Mark added some visitors ignore social media updates or "closed" signs.
 - vi. Deborah asked if neighboring cities/counties will be adding parks and open spaces. State demographer data shows significant growth in Larimer County in coming years and many DBBOS visitors are residents of Weld County, for example. Daylan said Greeley and Windsor went through a strategic planning process to hopefully secure open space sales tax/funding sources in the future. Further discussion of emerging technologies and reservation/permitting systems.
 - vii. Mark thanked the board for their questions and support.
- b. CIP project updates
 - c. Water projections update
 - i. Dan updated that water levels are good, Carter Lake is expected to be full in 4-6 weeks and then Horsetooth fill will increase and be close to full by the end of June. The forecast for the 2021 recreation season looks very similar to last year at Carter and more robust at Horsetooth now that the outlet project is complete. Mark added the critical time for reservoir water movement is summertime and projections are subject to change.
 - ii. Deb asked about silt from the East Troublesome Fire and how water levels might affect the Horsetooth Swims in September. Mark said much is unknown but the reservoirs will be full before runoff. Jeff added below average snowpack this year will create less debris and allow crews to install silt traps this spring. Runoff will have a greater impact on 2022 water levels.
 - d. Grand Lake Clarity update
 - i. Mark explained the Grand Lake Clarity study originates from Senate Document #80 and he sits on two different stakeholder committees. Daylan added water clarity is a long-term issue with the potential to affect the timing of water deliveries and therefore recreation. In addition to the clarity study, the department contracted Earth Economics in 2019 to determine the economic value of both reservoirs to Larimer County. Study findings will be presented to the board at a future meeting.
 - e. 2020 Quarter 4 Board Report
 - i. Daylan highlighted a few stories:
 - 1. Sky View Campground received \$475k in grant funding from GOCO. Construction for the group campground will begin this year.

2. Additional YTD Operating Expenses category added to Financial Summary.
 - a. Lori explained a board member requested to add Parks, Open Lands, and Weed District operating expenses to the financial summary. Because the operating expenses were selected from key indicators and are not representative of department-wide expenses, the title will be edited to reflect “key” or “major” operating expenses.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. ACTION ITEMS

9. US BUREAU OF RECLAMATION UPDATE – Jeff Stahla

- a. Jeff announced Green Mountain Reservoir tested negative for ANS for 3 consecutive years, declaring Colorado ANS-free statewide.

10. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

- a. Russell said the Environmental Science Advisory Board will be addressing wildfire impacts on the Poudre River watershed on Feb. 9th, he will share meeting details with those interested. Commissioner Kefalas added there will be an update about the Cameron Peak Fire recovery at the BOCC Work Session on Feb. 3rd.

11. DIRECTOR’S REPORT: Daylan Figgs

- a. Given increased use, the department is working on a messaging strategy to improve communication about capital improvement projects, land stewardship, trail safety and etiquette, etc. More to come this spring. The CIP budget will also be adjusted to meet our 25-year financial projections.

12. NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED: 3/2/2021 via Zoom Webinar

13. 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.

14. ADJOURN – 6:50 p.m.