

LARIMER COUNTY LAND STEWARDSHIP 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: May 20, 2021

Time: 5:00 – 6:30 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
Bryan Kraft	x	Casey Cisneros	x	1 member of the public
Ed Redente	x	Lori Smith	x	
Josh Wenz	x	Jody Shadduck-McNally*	x	
Kraig Peel		Sidney Michl (minutes)	x	
Richard (Hitch) McCulloch				
Ronald Harris	x			
Tasha Carr	x			

x = present

*commissioner

1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS – 5:03 p.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - a. A community member asked about additional parking and access at Satanka Bay, it was noted more information will be provided at the Horsetooth Reservoir Community Forum scheduled for May 20th. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally encouraged them to attend/provide comment.

3. AGENDA REVIEW

4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES
 - a. Ron moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Josh seconded, motion passed unanimously.

5. INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Natural Resources events for this month: larimer.org/naturalresources.
- b. To sign up for Land Stewardship Advisory Board updates, go to apps.larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm, enter your email, click "Subscribe," and check the "Land Stewardship Advisory Board" box.
- c. Cost-share Mailer
 - i. The [cost-share program](#) expanded in 2019 to include reimbursements for contractor labor. A mailer with this updated information was recently sent to contacts within the Weed District.

6. UPDATES/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. 2021 Quarter 1 Board Report
 - i. A few highlights:
 1. Trail realignments at Red Mountain Open Space
 2. New webcams at Horsetooth Mountain and Devil's Backbone open spaces to report parking capacities
 3. New ag conservation easement secured north of Wellington
 4. Cameron Peak Fire recovery efforts
 - ii. Ed asked if federal government stimulus funds are available for restoration in Cameron Peak burn areas, it was noted there are funds from the NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection Program. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally said the BOCC also budgeted for recovery efforts including sandbagging, planting, mulching, etc.
- b. 2020/2021 Annual Department Financial Review – Lori Smith
 1. 2020 department revenue was \$20,542,000 (2019 department revenue was \$17,898,000)
 - a. Sales tax: 44%
 - b. Permits and camping: 29%
 - c. Intergovernmental (GOCO, Bureau, Lottery, and weed grants): 16%
 - d. Charges for services (concessions, tickets, weed services, rentals and resale): 4%
 - e. Property and specific ownership: 4%
 - f. General Fund: 2%
 - g. Interest and misc. revenue: 1%
 2. LCDNR-managed Bureau of Reclamation-owned reservoir parks
 - a. Overview of 2011-2020 revenue and expenses
 - b. Capital improvement project (CIP) sources for 2011-2020 totaled \$10,547,000
 - i. Help Preserve Open Space Sales Tax: 30%
 - ii. Park fee revenues: 26%
 - iii. Conservation Trust (Lottery): 25%
 - iv. Bureau of Reclamation: 11%
 - v. Other sources: 6%

- vi. Great Outdoors Colorado grant: 2%
 - c. CIP projects for 2021-2025 (budget submittal \$16M)
 - i. Parking and access improvements
 - ii. Carter Lake – Sky View Campground
 - iii. Horsetooth Reservoir – camper cabin replacements
 - 3. Open spaces
 - a. Overview of 2011-2020 revenue and expenses
 - b. Extension of Help Preserve Open Space Sales Tax 2019-2043 total projected revenues of \$370M
 - i. In 2020, maintenance and Capital Improvements Fund splits were:
 - 1. Management/maintenance of open spaces: 49%
 - 2. Capital improvements on open spaces: 13%
 - 3. Capital improvements on reservoir parks: 3%
 - ii. Land acquisition and habitat restoration fund was 35% of tax revenues
 - 4. Land Stewardship
 - a. Overview of 2011-2020 revenue and expenses
 - 5. Future growth and level of service per capita
 - a. Larimer County population
 - i. 2020: 345,000 people
 - ii. 2043: 495,000 people (150,000 projected)
 - b. Acres conserved
 - i. 2020: 53,000 acres
 - ii. 2043: 77,000 acres (24,000 added)
 - c. Miles of trails
 - i. 2020: 98 miles
 - ii. 2043: 142 miles (44 added)
 - d. Trailhead parking spaces
 - i. 2020: 665 parking spaces
 - ii. 2043: 965 parking spaces (300 added)
 - ii. Casey asked if any COVID expenses can be reimbursed, Lori explained some state and federal funds are available and the Budget team is currently working with Central Services to determine reimbursements.
 - iii. Ron asked if the department is budgeting for increased expenses for fire restoration/recovery, Lori said Casey submitted his 2022 budget for review but the departmentwide budget is not due until August. Casey said he anticipates increased need for weed management services.
- c. Financial Sustainability
 - i. Lori explained financial decisions are based on a 25-year funding model developed by a collaborative BOCC/department board. Funds are allocated from the gap between operating expenses (~\$15M in 2020) and revenues (~\$20.5M

in 2020) to support both the CIP and land acquisitions. Fees are a critical component to bridging the gap, delivering quality service, and meeting long-term maintenance/population demands.

- ii. Opportunities offered to underserved groups to visit LCDNR properties:
 - a. Bison pass low-income permit
 - b. Small Grants for Community Partnering program
 - c. Busing subsidy for title I schools
 - d. Sales tax share and trail connections with cities
 - e. Discover Pack library loan program
 - iii. Casey asked if a fee increase is planned for 2022 following the last fee increase in 2019, Lori affirmed the department is working on a plan to recommend a fee increase to the BOCC to be implemented in 2022.
 - iv. Ed asked how Larimer County residents might learn about the mentioned opportunities/programs, it was noted opportunities are communicated through DNR's social media, press releases, local newspapers, education and volunteer outreach, etc.
- d. 2022 Budget Approach
- i. Considerations for the 2022 budget approach:
 - 1. Consumer price index: 1.91% change between 2019-2020
 - 2. Minimum wage: \$12.32 in 2021
 - 3. Prior years' trends:
 - a. Reservoir park management (revenues and expenses increased in 2020)
 - b. Open space management (similar increase in 2020, gap covered by sales tax)
 - c. Land stewardship (Weed District) management
 - 4. 25-year projections 2021-2043 (assumes fees increase every 3 years):
 - a. Overview of reservoir park operating expenses and revenues
 - b. Overview of open space operating expenses and fee based earned revenues
 - c. Land stewardship (Weed District) projected property tax increases (10% by 2026)
 - 5. Summary:
 - a. Scale of mandated to discretionary items:
 - i. Regular wages and benefits increases: TBD
 - ii. Central Services increases: TBD
 - iii. Temporary and seasonal staff increases: 3%
 - iv. Operational base increases: 2%
 - v. Additional increase in base budget: \$75k
 - vi. One-time project budget: \$216k
 - b. It was noted the Land Stewardship Program produced more revenue than in the past due to increased demand for services.

e. Weed and Pest Plan Updates

- i. Casey explained the Noxious Weed Management Plan is intended to be a living document and this is the first update it will receive since it was adopted by the BOCC in 2018. Administrative updates include:
 1. Update fact sheets beginning on page 2.
 2. Include maps with distribution data.
 3. Add fact sheet and distribution map for List A Knotweed species.
 4. Alphabetize weed species by common name.
- ii. The group discussed and agreed to additional updates:
 1. Add plumeless thistle to the list following its discovery on Storm Mountain. Josh suggested adding a description of its spread on the website.
 2. Add all List A noxious weed species to the management plan to increase EDRR and public awareness.
 3. Amend compliance procedures to reflect staff “make every intent to find other contact information for a landowner” if the responsible party does not respond to their certified enforcement letter.

7. ACTION ITEMS

8. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Ed announced his term expires at the end of June and this will be his last meeting serving on the board. Ron will chair the next two meetings and election of officers will occur at the November meeting.

9. NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED: 8/19/2021 at Larimer County Courthouse, 200 W. Oak St., Fort Collins, CO, 2nd Floor, Lake Loveland Room.

10. 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.

11. ADJOURN – 6:31 p.m.