



## PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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### CITY OF LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes – October 8, 2014

Parks & Recreation Conference Room, 500 E. Third Street, Loveland, CO 80537

**Commissioners Present:** Lori Bell, Gale Bernhardt, Rick Brent, Andy Hawbaker, Jim Roode, Ross Livingston, Ted Mioduski, Bill Zawacki, Hugh McKean (City Council Liaison), Kerri Rollins (Larimer County Liaison).

**Commissioners Absent:** Darren Pape.

**Staff Present:** Keven Aggers, Rick Anderson, Brian Hayes, Scott Sinn, Debbie Eley.

**The public meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm.**

#### **Public Comment:**

1. Cheryl and Jim Siegrist were present.
2. Kathy Hartman, coordinator of the Loveland Help Preserve Open Spaces sales tax extension campaign, offered support, yard signs, etc. Many local groups and clubs have expressed support for the tax and are optimistic that the 25-year extension will pass.

**Approval of September 10, 2014 Meeting Minutes:** Rick Brent made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Bill Zawacki seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Report.** Kerri Rollins reported that: 1) The Larimer County Open Lands Master Plan Draft will be available soon for public review. Staff will forward the link for commission members to review/comment. Plan priorities are generally rivers, agricultural lands, water, and foothills. 2) Larimer County hosted the NOCO Nature Fest (formerly the NOCO Birding Fair) on September 27, partnering with many different entities. Attendance doubled this year to over 800 participants. 3) The annual Regional Open Lands Boards Meeting will be held on Nov. 12.

#### **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

**1. Devil's Backbone Open Space Management Plan Update Presentation.** Jeffrey Boring, Larimer County Open Lands Resource Specialist, updated the commission on the progress of the management plan for this Loveland partnership property. The site receives 75,000 visitors per year and is experiencing trail and trailhead issues associated with its growing popularity. A resource inventory was conducted by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program in spring/summer 2014, and a Technical Advisory Group was formed to provide additional input. Two concepts were presented, both expanding parking capacity from 65 to 99 parking spaces, and creating a new multi-use trail through Hidden Valley and converting the existing Wild Loop Trail to foot traffic only. Public support for both concepts has been

high, with a preference for the more compact trailhead design. The county will also continue to explore options for a future western trail access. The draft plan is scheduled to be completed in November, with final plan approval expected in early 2015.

## **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE:**

**2. River's Edge Design Update.** Scott Sinn, temporary Park Planner, has been working with Ayres Associates on the floodplain engineering and scour analysis for the redesign of the parking lot and core area. Plans are expected to be complete in November, submitted for approval, and bid in December or January. Construction could begin in March and last about 3 months. In the current design, the parking lot has been moved to higher ground, with accessible trails to the restroom and shelters. Hardened edges on the parking lot will protect it from flooding/scouring. The boardwalk will be rebuilt on the existing piers, and the amphitheater will be moved to the hillside above the boardwalk. New "beach" areas created by the flood will be left as is, to provide additional access to the water's edge for fishing and float tube access. Created wetlands will be replanted, with adjustments based on existing conditions. Some areas will be fenced off during construction, but a full site closure is not anticipated. The public will be notified via the City website, social media, and media releases.

**3. Financial Report.** A financial summary was distributed for the Open Lands Fund and Capital Expansion Fund, covering the period from January 1 to September 30, 2014. Approximately \$10M is earmarked for acquisitions. Approximately \$350K held by the High Plains Foundation can be applied towards acquisitions in the GMA. This item will be added to future financial reports. The value of water shares could also be added, but would be considered an asset similar to real property, rather than a potential investment. Acquisitions are based on the 2014 Parks & Recreation Master Plan and the 2008 Natural Areas Sites report.

## **4. Open Lands Projects Report.**

57<sup>th</sup> & Taft Property. Proposed names for this property are being accepted until November 15, 2014. An online form is available: <http://www.cityofloveland.org/index.aspx?recordid=165&page=2209>. Loveland is working with Larimer County and Fort Collins on several trail grants for this area, as well as the Front Range Trail connection north of Boyd Lake. A media tour is scheduled for October 24 to raise public awareness and support for the trail grants.

Open Space Signage. Signage has been installed to identify fee simple-owned open space properties preserved using Loveland Open Space Sales Tax Revenue, including the new 57<sup>th</sup> & Taft property.

Big Thompson Canyon Recreation and Conservation Assessment Plan. Staff is participating with the county on this plan to evaluate potential conservation and recreation opportunities in the Big Thompson canyon. The plan will incorporate data and results from the Big Thompson River Restoration Master Plan.

Environmental Education Program. School programs and new Saturday morning public programs will be offered this fall at Namaqua Park. More info: <http://www.cityofloveland.org/index.aspx?page=225>.

Front Range Community College Russian Olive Removal. The FRCC Exotic Species Elimination Project is continuing this fall at Jayhawker Ponds.

Schedule for Property Site Tour. An online poll will be sent to commission members, with weekday and Saturday dates available.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Gale Bernhardt made a motion to convene Executive Session for the purpose of information or discussion of the purchase or acquisition of real property, in accordance with (24-6-402(4)(a) C.R.S.) . Bill Zawacki seconded the motion and Executive Session convened at 7:15 pm. Executive Session ended at 8:35 pm and the regular session reconvened.

**COMMISSION MEMBER DISCUSSION TOPICS:**

1. Keven Aggers noted that Rick Anderson received the Blue Grama Award for Outstanding Achievement by an Individual, at the annual Colorado Open Space Alliance conference.
2. Keven also noted that the Parks & Recreation Director position is open until October 16. OLAC will be represented on the interview panels.
3. Commission members whose terms expire on December 31 are encouraged to reapply.
4. Gale Bernhardt asked if the commission is in favor of submitting a letter to the editor of the Reporter-Herald newspaper in support of the Open Space sales tax extension. Members were in favor.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.