



PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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CITY OF LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes – January 8, 2014

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

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

Commissioners Absent: Andy Hawbaker.

Staff Present: Rob Burdine, Brian Hayes, Debbie Eley.

The public meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

Approval of the July 10, 2013 Commission Meeting Minutes: Rick Brent made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Bill Zawacki seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approval of the November 13, 2013 Commission Meeting Minutes: Bill Zawacki made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Lori Bell seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

City Council Liaison Report: Hugh McKean showed a video of power poles being installed by helicopter in the Cedar Cove area of the Big Thompson Canyon, and a brief presentation on the history of the water pipeline from Idylwilde Dam to Viestenz-Smith Mountain Park.

Larimer County Open Lands Advisory Board Report: Kerri Rollins reported on several items: 1) The county continues to discuss the open space tax renewal, including projections and needs, and pros and cons of several scenarios. The tax renewal is anticipated to be on the 2014 ballot. 2) The county has contracted with Logan Simpson Design to update its Open Lands Master Plan. The process is expected to take about 6 months and will incorporate input from each municipality. 3) The county will be pursuing a GOCO Flood Recovery grant for a conservation and recreation assessment of the Big Thompson Canyon. The City of Loveland will be asked to be a project partner.

New Members: Interviews were held on January 7 for two vacancies on the commission. Rick Brent will be recommended for reappointment and Jim Roode will be recommended for appointment as a regular member. Appointments by City Council are scheduled for the 2/4/14 meeting.

Discussion/Action:

1. Boards & Commissions Summit. The City's annual Boards and Commissions Summit will be held on February 27. Two members from each board and commission are invited to attend. The following OLAC goals and accomplishments were presented for review and discussion. 2013 Accomplishments:

1) Develop River's Edge Natural Area for public access; 2) Acquisition of the Ward Trust Property adjacent to Morey Wildlife Reserve; and 3) Regional Open Space Study completion. 2014 Goals: 1) Reconstruct River's Edge Natural Area and open for public access; 2) Update Morey Wildlife Reserve Management Plan; 3) Update the 2003 *Open Lands Plan* as a component of the *Parks & Recreation Master Plan*; and 4) Acquire property with connectivity to existing open lands. OLAC is scheduled to present their 2013 accomplishments at the summit. Jim Roode and Andy Hawbaker will attend to represent OLAC.

Commission members requested a list of prioritized properties for the February meeting, that fit the feedback received from the Regional Study and Parks & Rec Master Plan surveys. There are unique opportunities for partnerships and collaboration that should be pursued now, based on available properties and post-flood conditions. If properties that OLAC has recommended for preservation are not pursued, OLAC would like to know why. Members also requested information regarding the budget impact of the flood on Open Lands.

Reports/Correspondence:

2. Regional Study – *Our Lands-Our Future* Final Report. The final report was published in November and is available online: <http://larimer.org/naturalresources/regionalstudy>. Executive Summaries were distributed; full reports are available for checkout from staff. The Economic Benefits section may be helpful for justifying Parks, Trails, and Open Lands CEFs to City Council. Staff has been working with the Parks & Recreation Master Plan committee to determine which components to incorporate into the Master Plan update. Staff has utilized the study's GIS mapping tool to develop maps identifying open lands opportunities in urban and foothills areas, for the Needs Assessment and Key Findings sections of the Master Plan. The Colorado Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects awarded *Our Lands-Our Future* the Land Stewardship Award, which recognizes projects that exemplify stewardship of the landscape and its sustainability.

3. Open Lands Projects Report. Staff reported on the following items:

Status of flood recovery on Open Lands properties. Staff continues to research insurance coverage at River's Edge, with assistance from Risk Management staff and the City Attorney's Office. The Loveland Fishing Club submitted a Colorado Parks & Wildlife grant on behalf of the City for River's Edge. The request included reconstruction of three belly boat access points, wetland restoration efforts, and interpretive signage for the site. At Morey Wildlife Reserve, Anderson Consulting Engineers have been contracted to provide short-term (Phase 1) and long-term (Phase 2) solutions for the site and adjacent Mariana Butte Golf Course. Phase 1 (underway) consists of dredging the river channel 3-5 feet deep along the golf course to accommodate spring run-off. Phase 2 (scope and timeline TBD) will consist of long-term restoration scenarios for flood protection and re-establishment of public access to the site. At Namaqua Natural Area (and Namaqua Park), the Environmental Education Program will offer an Urban Wilderness Program to local schools this spring, in place of the Wildlife Program previously offered at Viestenz-Smith Mountain Park. Temporary, portable learning stations will enable the program to be utilized at other sites. Volunteers are eager to help with Environmental Education programs again. The EE Coordinator also managed a project to rescue approximately 70,000 honeybees from the barn at Swartz Farmstead, with assistance from the Northern Colorado Beekeepers Association.

Great Outdoors Colorado Grant Application. GOCO is offering a Flood Recovery Initiative this spring, allocating up to \$5M for flood-related expenses to address park, trail and open space damage. Loveland plans to apply for funding to help rebuild trails at River's Edge, the recreation trail from Wilson to Taft, and the trail underpass at Hwy 287.

Swartz Farmstead Demolition. The demolition bid has been awarded to All Demolition Excavating. Cost will be \$50-60K, depending on any hazardous waste removal required. Large cottonwood trees in the farmstead area will be protected as much as feasible during demolition.

Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update. Staff has been refining the Needs Assessment and Key Findings portions of the Master Plan and creating maps of opportunity areas. A special OLAC meeting with MIG will be held in February to discuss the Key Findings.

Update on Priority Properties. Staff gave a verbal update on several properties under consideration near River's Edge Natural Area and Morey Wildlife Reserve.

Commission Member Discussion Topics:

1. Bill Zawacki noted that he was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the Big Thompson Conservation District. The Little Thompson River Restoration Coalition will hold a public meeting on 1/18, to begin to develop an exigency plan and management plan for recovery of the Little Thompson River.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.