



PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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CITY OF LOVELAND OPEN LANDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes – January 9, 2019

Parks & Recreation Conference Room, 500 E. 3rd St., Loveland, CO 80537

Commissioners Present: Gale Bernhardt, Rick Brent, Mike Hinterberg, Scott James, Ross Livingston, Darren Pape, Jim Roode, Jean Whittaker, Bill Zawacki, Cindy Ticer (alternate), Don Overcash (City Council Liaison).

Commissioners Absent: None.

Staff Present: Brian Hayes, Marilyn Hilgenberg, Debbie Eley, Bryan Harding.

Guests: David Vornholt, Nan Daniels, Curt Cole.

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

Approval of November 14, 2018 Meeting Minutes. Jim Roode made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Jean Whittaker seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Comment. None.

City Council Liaison Report: Don Overcash reported that: 1) Council held a study session on a potential sales tax for items outside the normal budget, such as underpasses and other infrastructure and community needs; 2) Community broadband service is on track, with construction bonds to be issued in February; 3) A regional police training facility is planned for the Boyd Lake area, including trail connections to the city's trail system; 4) The new Foundry building is 100% leased for residential units, and the plaza, movie theater and hotel are still under construction; 5) A future study session will be planned for open lands and trails to discuss funding mechanisms; 6) County commissioners are open to collaborating with Loveland to keep the Devil's Backbone Open Space free.

OLAB Liaison Report: Marilyn Hilgenberg reported that: 1) OLAB recommended a \$6 entrance fee for Devil's Backbone, and the county commissioners passed all other fees changes except this one; 2) Daylan Figgs has been selected as the county's new Natural Resources Director; 3) A representative from OLAB/LCDNR to OLAC will be discussed with staff; 4) OLAB representation changed on January 1 with implementation of the new ballot language. The board will likely change as terms expire. OLAC would prefer to have staff representation on OLAB, or an OLAC member who is familiar with Loveland issues and concerns. The county commissioners will make the decision about appointments to OLAB.

Discussion/Action:

1. Election of Officers. The commission elected Gale Bernhardt as Chair, with a motion by Darren Pape seconded by Bill Zawacki. The commission elected Jim Roode as Vice Chair, with a motion by Darren Pape seconded by Rick Brent.

Reports/Correspondence:

2. Review of Handbook for Boards and Commissions. The Open Lands Advisory Commission is guided by the City of Loveland Handbook for Boards and Commissions (rev. Sept. 2017). Board

member expectations regarding attendance and board responsibilities were reviewed, including an expectation for at least 70% attendance and participation in meetings and other events. Staff relies on commission input, questions and feedback in the decision-making process.

3. Review of 2019 Capital Projects. Marilyn provided an update on planned projects and acquisitions for 2019, including river restoration projects with Big Thompson Watershed Coalition, new trails, connections and opportunities to access open lands throughout the community, acquisitions in the Big Thompson River corridor, trail easements for future connections, management plans including opportunities for public input, and site improvement projects.

4. Property Acquisition Updates. Brian reported that the Wagner and Bonser properties in the east Big Thompson River corridor are scheduled to close by the end of the week.

5. Open Lands Projects Report. Staff provided the following project updates.

Properties/Facilities/Projects/Maintenance/Operations

Boise Bend Natural Area, 1225 S Boise Avenue, is open for public access. This small open land parcel on the south side of the Big Thompson River has a 0.25-mile soft-surface trail and Big Thompson River access including fishing. Volunteers cleaned up the site of significant flood debris and constructed the soft-surface trail. A new kiosk displays a map of the area and rules and regulations.

Partnerships, Planning and Grants

The Loveland birding community, including several Open Lands volunteers, once again participated in the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count on Jan. 1, recording a total of 100 species throughout the 15-mile diameter “count circle.” Volunteers counted birds at open and closed Open Land properties, parks, golf courses, and private properties during the 24-hour count. Unusual sightings included a gyrfalcon and northern mockingbird. High counts were noted for wild turkeys, song sparrows, and brown creepers.

Work has begun on both river restoration projects along the Big Thompson River corridor. The projects will have significant positive impacts on two reaches of the river from the Glade Rd. area to Wilson Ave. including work on the Wild property, Oxbow Natural Area, Medina’s Crossing, and Namaqua Park and Natural Area. The projects are being funded by grant funding and address several implementation projects identified in the Big Thompson River Master Plan. Additionally, the Coalition and City have received restoration funding from Great Outdoors Colorado (\$84K), Colorado Water Conservation Board (\$10K), and Northern Water (\$50K). Temporary trail closures are currently in place at Oxbow for construction of a new overflow channel. In addition, cones have been placed in several osprey nests within the project area, to prevent nesting during the construction projects and avoid possible nest abandonment or failure due to the projects. Active nests could cause the projects to be delayed, jeopardizing more than \$4M of grant funding.

The City of Loveland was granted GOCO funding for 2 weeks of Larimer County Youth Corps saw crew time to help remove invasive species from Willow Bend Natural Area next summer.

5. Trail Updates. Staff provided the following trail updates.

The unpaved trail section between Namaqua and Wilson Ave. has been graded and improved with crusher fine materials to level the surface and increase safety of this section for trail users.

Seeding of the Long View Trail Corridor has been completed and stormwater monitoring of the project is now underway.

A new trail signage program is underway to improve the signs on Loveland’s trails and provide better information for users. The improved signage will provide more consistent information and a better trail

experience for citizens and visitors. Ten new kiosks have been ordered to provide communications and wayfinding signs will be added to better guide users.

In order to comply with ADA regulations, sections of the paved trail are being replaced where cracks and dips exceed required measurements. Accessible surfacing material is also being added around all trash cans to meet ADA requirements.

Commission Member Discussion Topics: None.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

/s/ Ross Livingston, Chair