

## Land Conservation & Stewardship Board

### Regular Meeting

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July 11, 2018

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#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

5:30 p.m.

#### 2. ROLL CALL

- Board Members: David Tweedale, Edward Reifsnyder, Vicky McLane, Joseph Piesman, Andrea Elson, Kelly Ohlson, Marcia Patton-Mallory, Raymond Watts, Mike Weber
- Staff Members: Dan Gulley, Mark Sears, John Stokes, Daylan Figgs
- Guests: Jason Graham, Utilities Water Reclamation & Biosolids Division; Kristen Nelson, Helen Taylor, Sarah Witherell; Northern Colorado Prairie Dog Advocates, Cole Kramer

#### 3. AGENDA REVIEW

- Jason Graham will present on the history of Meadow Springs and biosolid application process
- Discussion of NISP/Transmission Line joint board meeting
- Public attendees

#### 4. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

- Helen Taylor spoke on behalf of the Northern Colorado Prairie Dog Coalition. The Coalition claimed that the NAD is using incorrect data to develop management guidelines that restrict dedicated acreage for prairie dog relocation on city owned open space. They would like the Board to recommend to City Council that a working group comprised of citizens and scientists review and amend the guidelines and that NAD make acquisition of additional prairie dog habitat a higher priority. The Coalition believes that NAD is using fumigation too liberally and is unwilling to relocate prairie dogs to Soapstone and other natural areas as an alternative to lethal control.
- Anna Davidson introduced herself as a scientist and faculty member at CSU. She has been studying prairie dogs over the last 25 years. Anna briefly described other relocation projects she has worked on in New Mexico. She believes the work she's done has provided a positive outcome for prairie dog relocation. Anna provided documents to the board describing the project in New Mexico. She offered her assistance to the Natural Areas Department as well as the Board to discuss any future prairie dog relocation efforts.

Discussion: Board members were interested in receiving a pdf copy of Ms. Davidson's report as well as her work in New Mexico.

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John pointed out the amount of time and public involvement that went into writing and developing the wildlife management plan, that includes prairie dog management. Although a task force is certainly not out of the questions, several groups, organizations, scientists as well as the public played a role in the development of the Plan.

Kelly suggested that the NCPDA put together some bullets about what specific issues they have with the plan and get that back to the Board.

Ray mentioned the limited staff within the department doesn't allow for metric measurement. He suggested that the management process be expanded to include more scientific research.

Joe reminded everyone of the prior prairie dog relocation to Cathy Fromme with mixed results. He also encouraged NAD staff to continue to work with interested groups to keep an open mind for perhaps another relocation effort.

## 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**RAY WATTS MADE A MOTION THAT THE MINUTES BE APPROVED AS AMENDED**

**ED SECONDED THE MOTION**

**THE MOTION WAS APPROVED 9 TO 0**

## 6. COMMUNICATION AND BOARD MATTERS

Marcia reported on the Bicycle Advisory Committee and the related topic of the e-bike pilot program. A proposed study outline for the pilot project was handed out at the last meeting and asked for feedback from the BAC to offer to the Transportation Board.

- The pilot will include Class I and II, not including scooter or skateboards
- The duration will be one year, commencing January through December 2019
- Data collection will be between May and September
- The scope includes trail education and etiquette, analyzing data, presenting the findings to City Council
- Pilot program will include ALL paved trails (limiting criteria should come out of pilot)



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#### DISCUSSION ITEM

##### **Meadow Springs Ranch overview and management**

**Jason Graham, Director of Plant Operations, f Utilities Water Reclamation & Biosolids Division** gave an overview of the history of Meadow Springs Ranch and the current biosolid process that is taking place there. Currently, Fort Collins Utilities applies 70 percent of its biosolids on 26,600 acres at Meadow Springs Ranch and 30 percent on private farm land.

The City produces approximately 2,355 metric dry tons of solids per year (more than 579 semi-truck loads). Four times per week, semi-trailers of biosolids are trucked from the Drake Water Reclamation facility to the ranch and spread on concrete pads for solar drying. The solids are solar dried from a consistency of wet earth to a dry dirt (25 percent to 90 percent total solids) and are applied to the rangeland at a rate of two dry tons per acre.

Utilities staff routinely sample soil and groundwater, using results to determine management practices on rangeland, and to comply with state and federal regulations.

Jason explained that ultimately the Water Board will make the recommendation to City Council regarding the transmission line because it's Wastewater/Utility property and then the final decision will be made by City Council. Regardless, the transmission line development will have no influence on the biosolid application.

##### **Discussion:**

Kelly discussed the grazing lease and asked if Utilities tried to manage the grazing to benefit the public that owns the land and not just the grazer, for both market rates and ecosystem. Jason wasn't sure about the competitiveness of the grazing bid but emphasized the intent to balance of the health of the ecosystem and the efforts to not overgraze. The goal is to limit the amount of cattle during times like droughts.

Kelly also asked about the grade of biosolids and why the biosolids weren't at a level "A", versus "B". Jason explained the process to get to level "A" can become very expensive to do on a consistent basis. The current acreage at Meadow Springs also lends itself to a very cost-effective process that Utilities is very comfortable with.

Ed asked at what capacity Utilities was. Jason explained the capacity to be 70% at the Drake facility and about 50% at the Mulberry facility. Capacity must exceed 80% for any plant expansion considerations. Ed asked about wildlife impact on the acreage that is currently being used. Jason didn't have any information about wildlife but was able to verify

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vegetation is quickly improved in those areas of application. He would hope that with improved vegetation comes wildlife improvement.

### Roundhouse Energy Transmission Line Update

**Daylan Figgs, Sr. Environmental Manager** provided an update on the on the evaluation of potential transmission line alignments across Meadow Springs.

Daylan reviewed the process and some of the determining factors used to evaluate various alignments for the transmission line. With three potential routes being considered for the alignment, NAD's priority will obviously be avoiding or minimize impacts to wildlife and vegetation. Daylan demonstrated on a map the location of resource values such as raptor nests and vegetation communities along the proposed alignments.

### Discussion:

Board members were concerned with the black footed ferrets at Meadow Springs and the effect on other wildlife with the transmission line. Daylan explained there were currently only two producing colonies in that specific area of Meadow Springs. Avoiding impacts to black-footed ferrets was a high priority.

Some asked if underground lines could be considered where there's a concentration of wildlife. Although underground lines are an option, they tend to be very expensive. Further discussion with CPW and Utilities will help identify options.

Daylan reported that a joint Board meeting has been scheduled on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, between LCSB, the NRAB and the Water Board to discuss NISP and the Roundhouse Energy Project transmission line easement request. In September/October Daylan plans to come back to the LCSB to provide an update on the project. Staff will seek a recommendation from the Water Board in October.

### August 22, 2018 NISP Joint Board Meeting

John reported that the public has the opportunity to comment on the NISP Environmental Impact Study. This allows for a 45-day public comment period; however, the City will ask for an extension but is uncertain what if any extension will be granted.

Joe asked what the Board's role will be. John didn't know if staff will have time to come back to the Boards, hence the joint board meeting in August. Jennifer Shanahan and Adam Jokerst will take the lead on briefing attendees of that meeting. The September LCSB meeting will be 8 days prior to the deadline.

# MINUTES

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Daylan will keep the Board posted on the logistics of the meeting.

#### 8. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

#### 9. OTHER BUSINESS

Kelly asked that John bring to the next Board meeting the City's work with Montava Development. Kelly hopes that we're not buying anything that's protected by the buffer regulations and if it's for a trail, the trail easement be part of the trail agreement. Kelly would like to have the Board be involved in any land purchase options.

#### 10. ADJOURNMENT

7:50 p.m.