

MINUTES

CITY OF FORT COLLINS • BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS



Land Conservation & Stewardship Board

Regular Meeting

March 17, 2019

1. CALL TO ORDER

5:30 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL:** David Tweedale, Vicky McLane, Joseph Piesman, Andrea Elson, Kelly Ohlson, Alycia Crall, Raymond Watts, Mike Weber, Edward Reifsnyder

3. **Excused:**

Unexcused:

NAD Staff: Barbara Brock, Rick Bachand, Mark Sears, John Stokes, Dave Myers

4. AGENDA REVIEW

5. **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:** Jake Young (CSU student), Mickey Willis (local resident)

6. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** Joe Piesman and Alycia Crall both had minimal meeting minute corrections. Changes were noted and made.

David Tweedale made a motion to approve the February LCSB meeting minutes as amended.

Mike Weber seconded the motion.

The motion was approved 9-0

7. COMMUNICATION AND BOARD MATTERS

John provided an update on the Foothills Management Plan Open House. Over 200 community members attended the Open House. The main interest came from the mountain bike community. They are interested in more trails, trail connections and crowding on our current trails. They also have a large interest in how we maintain our trails, as most of them are super knowledgeable about that since a lot of them volunteer their time to work on NA trails. The Management Plan can be found on our website for anyone unable to attend the Open House. In May Heidi Wagner, Senior Environmental Planner will attend the LCSB meeting to explain NAD's newly adopted Impact Decision Framework. The Framework is a process NAD has implemented when making decisions for new trails, natural area usage, restoration and more. Jennifer Roberts, NAD Environmental Planner, will attend the June Board meeting to provide another update on the Plan. The next Foothills Management Plan Open House will be April 30th, at the Northside Aztlan Community Center.

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Kelly thought it was important to remind Board members of the distinctive difference of natural areas and parks. Trails can have a negative impact on wildlife. He requested NAD staff to provide a handout for Board members describing the impacts of trails on wildlife.

Joe reported the Open House did a good job of demonstrating that issue specifically. There were several stations set up, within the Open House, that addressed things like fragmentation, natural resources and ecological. Wildlife habitat is certainly at the top of the list of considerations. NAD's mission statement as well as the ballot language for the Department clearly defines that.

John thought if there was enough time at next month's meeting Brian Meyer could do a short presentation on the tool he's using the do GIS trail analysis.

DISCUSSION ITEM:

Mark Sears, Natural Areas Department Manager updated Board members on the Montava Development and highlighted the memo given to the Board in March. The Natural Areas Department is proposing to partner with Montava Development to create an approximately 120-acre natural area along the eastern side of the development along the BNNR tracks. Montava Development is required to construct a drainage swale and a series of detention ponds in this general area to handle offsite and onsite drainage. Mark reported on the purchase price, conceptual costs, justification for the purchase and various options for the property.

Some Board members questioned the land purchase and partnership. Some felt there wasn't much wildlife value to the existing property and the natural resources are minimal. Mark explained that the site would be dramatically changed to improve habitat: topography by adding a drainage swale, detention ponds and berms; and vegetation by restoring with natives including upland grasses, forbes, shrubs, cottonwoods and wetlands. Aesthetically it will look much nicer. Vicky was opposed to spending that much money on a property with minimal to no natural resource value. Mark explained that within the growth management area NAD has acquired very little property that had high natural resources. He listed those natural areas that had minimal natural resources when the properties were initially purchased. Other concerns were connectivity, being next to the brewery and train tracks, and another challenge is it where it's located. Joe thought it would only service those community members in that immediate development area. Overall the Board was supportive of NAD's presence at the charettes during the development design process, but somewhat apprehensive about the purchase. They asked Mark to bring the partnership agreement to them for review.

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ACTION ITEM:

Proposal to increase Natural Areas Special Use Permit Review period from 7 days (5 business days) to 21 days (15 business days). Rick Bachand, Ranger Manager, reported to the Board the current review period for Special Use and Commercial Use Permits are five working days. Over the past few years, the number of permit requests have increased, and staff resources are more required. To provide a better customer service, provide the appropriate staff resources for permit application reviews and allow enough time for permits to be reviewed, Rick is requesting City Council to extend the review period to 21 days (15 business days).

Board members supported the change but suggested the proposal clearly lay out why the change is so important.

Kelly Ohlson made a motion that City Council approve the Board's recommendation to modify the current Fort Collins Municipal Code 23-194, changing the current application review period from five (5) business days to fifteen (15) business days, for Special and Commercial Use permit applications.

David Tweedale seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved 9-0.

Annual Appropriation of Prior Year Reserves, John Stokes, Director reported on the memo he distributed and the appropriation amount of \$10M. Most of the appropriation is for land conservation along with another handful of items but is typical for the last few years. John would like to take the appropriation to City Council the first part of May for approval.

Kelly inquired about the \$1M in unanticipated revenues. John explained most of the funds were from the County and City Sales Tax. Most of those funds are from the County Sales Tax. Part of the reason for that is City Finance instructs NAD how to receive for city generated revenues, but NAD generates its own estimate of county revenues and it's done conservatively on purpose.

Joe asked about all the new hires and conversions. John reported NAD converted 8 positions. Six of those positions were in Field Services, one was the GIS position that was converted to full time position and the Environmental Planner position (Nature in the City) that is still open.

David Tweedale made a motion that City Council approve the proposed 2019 Appropriation of Prior Year Reserves for the Natural Areas Department.

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Edward Reifsnyder seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved 9-0

The Land Conservation & Stewardship Board went into Executive Session at 7:25 p.m. The following Board members were in attendance:

David Tweedale, Vicky McLane, Joseph Piesman, Andrea Elson, Kelly Ohlson, Alycia Crall, Raymond Watts, Mike Weber, Edward Reifsnyder

The Land Conservation & Stewardship Board resumed regular Board meeting at 8:10 p.m. The following Board members were in attendance:

David Tweedale, Vicky McLane, Joseph Piesman, Andrea Elson, Kelly Ohlson, Alycia Crall, Raymond Watts, Mike Weber, Edward Reifsnyder

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Mike reported he had not attended any of the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) meetings to date. The main discussion, as he understands, is Safe Routes to Schools. There was also a second reading during City Council meeting for the e-bike pilot. Mike reported the pilot will launch with counters, starting the last week of this month. Mike will attend the April 22 BAC meeting and should have more to report after that.

Joe pointed out that Councilman Gerry Horak has served as the Land Conservation Board Liaison for the last four years. With the newly appointed council members we are unsure of who the current liaison will be yet. City Council will host a Council Retreat in May when a new liaison will be appointed.

Joe suggested a retreat for the LCSB as well at which time the new liaison would be invited.

Mike reported that he and Alycia attended the Foothills Management Plan Stakeholders meeting on March 26th. Most of the comment he heard at the meeting were 'it was great to get all the stakeholders in one room, but it didn't accomplish anything'. There was, an introduction to the Impact Decision Framework tool that NAD will use to make many of the decisions for the Plan. Mike reported a diverse group of stakeholders at the meeting: conservationists, birders, horse riders, volunteers, Sierra Club members and mountain bikers. This provided a diverse perspective of opinions, which Mike thought most attendees appreciated. Despite the various opinions, he felt conservation remained a priority for attendees.

ADJOURNMENT

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The Board adjourned at 8:15 p.m.