

**COLORADO RIVERFRONT COMMISSION**  
683-4333

**Riverfront Commission (RFC)**

**Minutes**  
**November 18, 2014**

**Called to Order:**

Meeting called to order at 5:30pm by co-chair Frank Watt. Those present from the Commission were:

Frank Watt	Brad Taylor	Claudette Konola
Bob Fuller	Stacy Beaugh	Dr. Larry Copeland
Dr. Bill Findlay	Jason Bailey	Karen Jefferson

Also present Biz Collins with Urban Trail Committee (UTC), Pete Firmin with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Bennett Price, Town of Palisade Board Member, Bennett Boeschstein, City Council Member with GJ City and Michele Rohrbach.

**Approval of Minutes** – Bill/Claudette. Motion passed.

**Announcements** – Michele talked about CO Gives Day and what she needs board members to do. (Brad/Claudette/Larry/Bill on the December 1<sup>st</sup>. Don't need all folks signed up on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Michele told Claudette that she isn't needed since the UTC meeting has been moved to December 3<sup>rd</sup>).

IGA meeting on December 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00am.

Comment period for the Yellow Billed Cuckoo has been extended. Michele to email out Frank's comments out to the RFC members.

**Updates -**

Trail graffiti cleanup after events – Pete talked about the Dream Catcher marathon this summer being very successful but will need to revisit. Permanent markers/paint are being used for events on the trail and Brad would like to have our partners asked event/run planners not to use permanent markers/paint on the trail. Brad would like to make a motion that planners are ultimately responsible for the cleanup of the graffiti. Pete said he will make sure it's in all future applications. Bob motioned writing a letter to each of the entities informing that there is a problem with graffiti and that we'd like to discourage permanent markers/paint being used and recommend alternative marking products. Claudette amended to say that they need to leave the trail exactly in the same condition as the trail was before the event. Pete suggested a more advisory letter stating alternative.

Mesa County – Greg Linza unable to attend.

City of Fruita – Bob stated that the maintenance agreement with the Railroad for the culverts under the rails will be approved at the meeting tonight. Will be able to move forward in the summer of 2015. The 100' property is currently in foreclosure and will be going to auction next week. The City will be reviewing and decide whether or not they will bid on the property and will probably agree to bid on it because of grant funds waiting to be used. Have also spoken to Mesa Land Trust to see if they could help and then resell the property – not a desirable parcel of land and difficult to resell.

City of Grand Junction – Bennett B. said Las Colonias ground breaking for Phase I will be in January or February and will be quickly followed by the amphitheater which the City has funds for already. He proposed a couple of trails that came out of the UTC proposed priority list. His proposal consists of the Horizon Drive trail and the bridge at the DOE.

He talked about parcels of land for sale down by Las Colonias but the price was too expensive for the City. Colorado Discoverability building is going down by Las Colonias.

Town of Palisade – Bennett P. updated on the Town of Palisade Board's comments on the Yellow Billed Cuckoo and that they don't want the ruling to discourage current use along the trail. Will be doing a presentation to DOLA tomorrow regarding the shooting range for the \$2 million grant.

Stacy stated that the Tamarisk Coalition isn't taking a stand one way or the other but they will be submitting revised language stating that if revegetation/restoration work is happening that tamarisk along the river should be removed.

Colorado Parks & Wildlife – Pete talked about the work started today to remove tamarisk and Russian olive along the CPW properties. He also talked about the difference between "threatened" and "endangered" and how it efforts what can be done in the habitat area.

Bennett B. added that the long standing history of the Riverfront project has been to reclaim and restore the riverfront from industrial to a more natural/native habitat. He added the history of the bald Eagle making a come back here because of the improved habitat.

Stacy added that the Tamarisk Coalition has lots of pole Cottonwood needing a good home. She would like to pitch a project to the Riverfront Foundation (RFF) to partner in getting funds to plant them along the river which is where most people want them planted.

UTC – Biz stated that on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, the group will be going before the City Council to become a Volunteer Advisory Board with the City of GJ, bringing it in line with other City Volunteer Boards. Still working on Strategic Plan and planning the Walking and Biking Trail Summit on March 13, 2014. Save the Date cards will be emailed out soon, RFC, RFF to be included.

## **New Business –**

December meeting in schedule for 16<sup>th</sup>, Frank asked again if the group really wants to meet. Group open to having a more casual meeting and moving it someplace for “fun” after a brief meeting.

Water trail – Frank said the Grand Valley Trail Alliance approached the RFC about designating the trail. Frank isn't sure if it will benefit the riverfront trail or not. Stacy suggested it sounds similar to the Blue Rivers Project and she's willing to do more research for the RFC.

Monument Striders Run – proposal a couple of months ago. Discussed top fundraisers being the Concert Series, then the Tour of the Moon. Brad recommends passing on this event. Michele will contact Larry Ingram with names and organizations that might be a better fit for the event - Hilltop, Robin Brown and CMU.

Brad said he will be sending out three emails dealing with the following:

- 1) the Yellow Billed Cuckoo
- 2) Tour of the Moon
- 3) Mesa County budget (mcaadmin@mesacounty.us)

Brad said that Lisa Eckert with the Colorado National Monument has yet to approve the permit for the 2015 event. The RFF has received \$30,000 over the past three years as well as Bicycle Colorado and that it's a \$500,000 economic benefit to Mesa County for this event. It comes at a down time for hotels in GJ and Fruita. Bob asked if Brad would like the Cities to write a letter or resolution stating that this is an important benefit.

Stacy commented that getting the next generation to become the stewards of the future. Brad wants to keep it more of how the RFF benefits in a big way from this event.

Brad reminded everyone that Steve Acquafresca came and spoke to the group last month and informed the group that the County will not be providing the \$17,000 in funds for their share of the RFC office operating budget. There is no funds set aside for trail work either. Brad gave history of the funding of the trail and by which entities. He believes the RFC has to write a letter reminding them of the joint resolution established in 1997. Will also remind them of the First Right of Refusal on the Skinner property.

Stacy asked about the maintenance of the trails and if the County will still be honoring those agreements. Frank stated that yes they will still maintain the trails.

Jason talked about PR and getting the word out that not being supported.

Bennett B. stated that there is economic benefit to the riverfront trail even though there are some doubts by Commissioners about the benefit.

Stacy said need to move forward on the strategic plan and come up with goals so that we can get action items.

Claudette thinks we need to think more like the donors or potential donors.

Frank stated that he'd like to focus on the donor issue, etc. at the January meeting.

Mara said the RMPBS spots will be coming out in February.  
There was no further new business.

**Old Business:**

Advertising – Karen said that needs to tie into the Strategic Plan.

Safety and Signage – Frank said that should have something on the trail in six to eight weeks.

Media and social – July over 2,000 (concert and trails page, Colorado Riverfront, Grand Junction trail) visit – October 1,000 (trails page)

Facebook – 268 page likes. Karen reminded everyone to share Claudette posts. Claudette said she tries to post everyday.

**Public Comment** – There was no public comment.

**Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.