

COLORADO RIVERFRONT COMMISSION
683-4333

Riverfront Commission (RFC)

Minutes
September 15, 2015

Called to Order:

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

Brad Taylor	Stacy Beaugh	Karen Jefferson
Bob Fuller	Eric James	Cliff Sprinkle
Dr. Bill Findlay	Dr. Larry Copeland	Gale Foster
Frank Watt		

Absent: Claudette Konola

Also present Kristen Jespersen, Tamarisk Coalition, Bennett Boeschstein, City of Grand Council Member, Harry Griff, Grand Junction Lion's Club, Greg Linza, Mesa County, Shalin Pilling, Colorado Mesa University student.

Approval of Minutes – Stacy/Karen. Motion passed.

Revised Agenda: Frank Watt, Co-Chair read revised agenda. Motion to accept revised agenda: Frank/Bill. Motion passed.

Announcement: Brad Taylor gave a reminder of the volunteers committed for the Tour of the Moon event on October 2 and 3.

Updates:

Mesa County - Greg Linza: Mowing along all county trail sections is nearly complete.

City of Fruita – Bob Fuller: The Request for Proposal has gone out for the next section of trail under I-70 and the railroad tracks. Bids are due at the end of September and construction is expected to start in October with a target finish date spring of 2016.

City of Grand Junction – Bennett Boeschstein: GJ City Council held a preliminary vote on whether to proceed with the revised phase II plan for Las Colonias Park. The vote was tied, three votes for and three votes against. Bennett suggested a letter of support for the park from the RFF/RFC. The final vote will be in the next few weeks. Bennett also reported that the Brady Trucking property looks to be partially vacated and recommends the RFC look into acquiring the section of land adjacent to the river.

Town of Palisade – Frank Watt: Colorado Wine Fest is this weekend at Riverbend Park. The bike skills park dedication is scheduled for September 26. Frank also announced that GOCO funds were dedicated to the shooting range/park in Cameo.

New Business:

Guest, Harry Griff with the GJ Lion’s Club gave an update on the revised Phase II plan for Las Colonias Park. Plans include an amphitheater that can accommodate up to 10,000 people at a cost of \$2.5 million and will be multi-functional and expandable for small groups and large groups. It will be fenced for access control of ticketed events. Sections of the park can be open at all times for public use, even during scheduled events inside the amphitheater. City council is reviewing architectural plans and funding through various grant-based entities is in the works. Harry also outlined amenity differences and amphitheater size differences between the \$2.5M park and the \$4M park. An option for fundraising could be a capital campaign if the city needs additional funding but timing is a limiting factor if funding is needed quickly. There will be a GJ City Council workshop to discuss the Las Colonias project as well as other projects on September 25th.

Brad explained the Governor’s “16 in 2016” program. Sixteen projects within the state will be chosen for consideration of funding through the Governor’s office and GOCO in 2016. Brad requested project recommendations. Frank said the program was discussed by Palisade Trustees at a recent meeting; a resolution was drafted by the Town of Palisade in support of the promotion of completion of the Riverfront Trail Project (resolution attached.) It was discussed that all our governmental partners could approve and adopt the resolution and make the same recommendation for the program. Greg will discuss the resolution with the Mesa County Commissioners. Bob will discuss it with Fruita City Council. Bennett B. will discuss it with GJ City Council. The importance of equal emphasis for all unfinished sections was discussed. Present Commission members reviewed the resolution. Motion to endorse the GOCO and DNR “16 in 2016” resolution as written by the Town of Palisade was made by Frank/Stacy. Motion passed.

Brad introduced and explained the possibility of RFC board alternates. Citizens who are interested in becoming RFC board members when there are no openings could be chosen as alternate board members. Bennett B. explained the alternate members would not be voting members unless a quorum was not filled with appointed members. The alternates would attend all regular meetings and contribute input and be groomed as future, appointed members. A group discussion about the lack of a voting quorum at regular meetings determined that was not an issue with our 11-member group, whereas with other advisory groups – smaller in size – reaching a quorum at monthly meetings was an issue. Brad pointed out the fact that the RFC is an appointed volunteer board at the discretion of the City of GJ, City of Fruita, Town of Palisade, and Mesa County Commissioners, these entities could mandate that the RFC take on alternate members.

Brad reported of a bicycle rider accident along the trail. A bicyclist collided with a center bollard. Greg reported that the bollards have reflective tape on them but are not illuminated. It is not known if the rider was using a headlight or not. Illumination of the bollards is not feasible. Trail use is not recommended after dark. Frank reported that the

Town of Palisade removed their bollards. The RFC will field calls or messages regarding trail use issues and funnel them to the governing entity where the issue occurs.

Brad discussed reminders for our trail partners to post hunting season informational signs along the applicable trail sections. Suggestion was made to send out a press release to the media to let the public know, it could also be a part of an e-newsletter, and announced on RFC Facebook page as well as the partner Facebook pages.

Old Business:

Stacy and Kristen reviewed funding idea and feasibility of the fundraising concept of a valley-wide, retail voluntary surcharge program as was discussed at the previous meeting. A next step to be discussed is the presentation of the program to the RFF for funding. A group discussion including the feasibility study to determine if the concept would work well in our communities, plus if preliminary discussions with local businesses should happen before a feasibility study. The Tamarisk Coalition has begun drafting the Request for Proposal for the solicitation of feasibility study vendors. Further discussion about how the idea should/could be communicated to the public and how businesses would process the accounting of the surcharge. Kristen discussed several topics and challenges that could be answered by the feasibility study. Stacy recommended a conference call between RFC members and representatives from the program active in Crested Butte to help answer preliminary questions and learn how they overcame challenges. There was group support for this idea and it was determined more information was needed before it could be presented to the RFF. Other discussion about individual RFC members discussing the program with a variety of local businesses to determine potential buy-in and support. The cost of the feasibility study needs to be determined before going to the RFF. Discussion will continue at the next regular RFC meeting.

Karen reported of a half page ad will run in Grand Valley Magazine in the months of September and October.

Adjournment: 7:30 PM Motion to adjourn: Cliff/Bill. Motion passed.

Attachment:

Proposed Resolution Language

Whereas the staff from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) visited our community to engage in discussions on “Colorado the Beautiful and the 16 Trails in 2016 Project”, and

Whereas Governor John Hickenlooper, under the “Colorado the Beautiful Initiative” announced the state would build a comprehensive outdoor recreation map to include all trails, open spaces, parks and protected lands, with publication planned in 2016, and

Whereas Governor Hickenlooper also announced DNR, in coordination with GOCO, nonprofit organizations and state agencies, would identify 16 important trail gaps, missing trail segments and unbuilt trails across the state and elevate them to priority projects by 2016, and

Whereas the Governor outlined efforts to encourage Coloradans, particularly children, teens and minority youth, to develop deeper connections with the natural environment that sets Colorado apart as a special place, and

Whereas the Grand Valley has undergone a 25+ year effort to build a comprehensive river trail system called the Colorado Riverfront Trail Project with the support of all the local communities and the County, and

Whereas millions of dollars of local and Great Outdoor Colorado monies have already been invested in this successful project, and

Whereas the Colorado Riverfront Trail Project has yet to be fully completed, and

Whereas the Grand Valley communities continue in their support of this project and are anxious to see its completion, and

Whereas the Grand Valley Regional Transportation Plan 2040 identifies the Colorado Riverfront Trail as a priority under “Active Transportation Corridors”, and

Whereas this priority designation will bring additional State resources to bear in completing this project which provides both recreation, active lifestyle alternatives and economic development.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City/Town/County of _____ requests the Division of Natural Resources select the Colorado Riverfront Trail project to be one of the 16 priority trail linkage projects for the State of Colorado.

Given under my hand.....

Mayor