

COLORADO RIVERFRONT COMMISSION
683-4333

Riverfront Commission (RFC)

Minutes
March 15, 2016

Called to Order:

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

Frank Watt	Karen Jefferson	Stacy Beagh
Claudette Konola	Gale Foster	Dr. Bill Findlay
Cliff Sprinkle	Brad Taylor	Dr. Larry Copeland

Also present Pete Firmin, Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW), Bennett Boeschentien, GJ City Council Member, Ture Nycum, Fruita Parks and Rec Director, Ken Hayley, Fruita Engineer Director and Michael Bennett, City Manager with the City of Fruita, Bennett Price, Town of Palisade board member and Michele Rohrbach.

Absent – One currently vacant due to Bob Fuller moving, Eric James.

Approval of Minutes – Claudette/Gail. Motion passed.

Announcements – Retreat reminder on Saturday, April 23rd, 8:00am-8:30ish to 3:00pm. Social to follow at Bookcliff Country Club – 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Will meet at the GVT West Transfer Station at 24 ½ Road by the Mall.

Updates –

Mesa County – Greg was unable to attend.

City of Fruita – Ture introduced Michael Bennett and Ken Hayley with the City of Fruita. Mike talked about the work on the Little Salt Wash and City hopes to have completed by June. They'd like to do a ribbon cutting at one of the CRCS. He doesn't think it will be completed by the June 15th concert.

He then updated on the Kokopelli Trail connection that was included in the Governor's 16 in 2016. Fruita applied for a GOCO grant last year but was turned down because of the eagles' nest along the trail alignment. During the planning and design phase, they have mitigated the situation and will be doing construction in the fall. He also spoke about the trail alignment being more north along Reed Wash and will be under water during certain times of the year. He talked about the commercial hunting operation not wanting the trail heading west along the CDOT right-of-way on the north side up to the Loma exit. Group agreed with Fruita to keep it on the south and avoid a battle with the commercial operators.

Ture passed around a map showing the two trail options. Ken stated that they are still working on a feasibility study to determine how often the trail would be under water. Currently if nothing was done, it would be about a month. There are ways to mitigate the flooding. Will need to have signage letting folks know they will need to dismount and walk through the tunnel depending on the ceiling height. Discussed doing an overpass but it's too expensive. Ture said that their will doing open houses in the near future.

Mike spoke about the funding for the Kokopelli trail and stated that they have \$500,000 and \$160,000 and \$2 million from GOCO. Mike stated that the owners of the business park are having an appraisal done on the lake and once it is completed, they will donate it to the City.

Little Salt Wash to 15 Road is one Phase and the second phase will be from 15 Road to Loma so if they need to construct in two phase if funding still needed. Will be putting in a trail head at 15 Road. Mike said that companies they are talking with are excited about the riverfront trail running through the business park. He said they have someone interested in putting in a camping area.

Ture said they are working the CPW regarding the hunting on Skippers Island and Fruita is looking at putting hunting blinds on the oxbow rather than hunting off I-70. Ken said that council members are open to all recreation opportunities in the green area indicated on the map.

Mike added that they would like to have a soft path adjacent to the concrete trail.

GOGO Connect Initiative – there is \$30 million dollars over the next three years. Frank stated that he received an email today from GOCO that they received grant requested for \$23 million for this phase. True said they should hear in April if they are able to submit for the GOCO grant and if they received the go ahead, they won't hear about the grant until August.

Ture said the City of Fruita is very supportive of the other two sections that need construction. Frank will be doing a presentation on April 11th of the combine missing links for the Riverfront Trail project. Frank will work with Ture to get what they want him to present. He is good with the other two sections.

City of Grand Junction – Bennett B. said that the City did presentation to DOLA today for \$1 million for the amphitheater. Frank said the presentation slides where smooth and the Traci Wieland, Kathy Portner and Mayor Norris did a great job.

Bennett said that he and Eric attended the School Board meeting last month. Chevron presented a \$3,000 grant. He would like to see the RFF step up and fund. Michele explained that the RFF wants other groups to step up and help so it isn't just the RFF/Chevron funding.

Town of Palisade – Bennet P. said the Palisade Plunge did submit an application for GOCO Connect funds. There was concern of competing with Riverfront's application but didn't want to miss an opportunity and be left in the dust. Will need to have BLM and Forest Service approval before the route can be developed. Powder Horn will eventually tie into the trail.

Colorado Parks & Wildlife – Pete addressed the trail connection from Fruita’s trail to the State Park. He has funding to do some of the work but he doesn’t have enough to get to the boat ramp and lake. He will know how much funds he will have on July 1st.

Bill F. asked about getting safely from the Welcome Center to the State Park. Ture said it’s in their master trail plan.

Pete asked about the Department of Natural Resource (DNR) meeting and asked who will be spearheading the meeting. Dike repair is waiting funding.

Fencing repair – Pete doesn’t have the funding and won’t know if he has funding until July. He, Ron Wilson and Michele will meet to discuss and get it in the works. Michele will need the fence repaired before June to satisfy the liquor license application requirement.

Yellow Billed Cuckoo – will need a variance for construction. Currently require a one for one replacement. They do not want large area cleared. They want phasing, small area cleared and replanted and then move onto another area. Stacy said Shannon attended a meeting last week and she can get more info to the group.

New Business –

16 in 2016 - CDOT meeting. Frank updated the group on the meeting with CDOT. CDOT person stated that he hadn’t received directive from the Governor’s staff of what he can/cannot do for projects with the 16 in 2016 designation.

FLAP Grant – The City of Grand Junction will be submitting an application for Monument Road, the City of Fruita will be going for 18 Road and Palisade is going for North River Road. All funds will come from Mesa County. Frank said that the North River Road cost would be about \$2 million. Will need a letter of support from the Riverfront Commission for Monument Road and North River. Will not be looking for money commitment at this time.

Old Business:

Voluntary Surcharge – Stacy said Georgann said all is going well. Have received over a 100 online surveys so far. She is looking for RFC folks available on Friday. Claudette, Friday afternoon, Frank, Friday morning. Stacy and Bennett B. are also interested.

Should be finished online data next week.

2015 Annual Report – Brad hasn’t had time to get to the revision. Stacy had some and he needs to get with her. He will have ready for the next meeting.

One vacancy and three terms expiring. Dr. Bill Findlay, Dr. Larry Copeland and Eric James terms are expiring in June. Claudette asked what skills the group is looking for. Group said if you know any qualified candidate have them apply.

Public Comment – Brad discussed his meeting with ? the new State Recreation Director. Brad gave him one of the Riverfront People, Parks and Trails booklet. He’s aware of our project and

they talked about the Palisade Plunge. He did a tour with Libby Collins and with Ture Nycum. He was appreciative of everyone's time and was excited to take back to the Front Range.

Bennett B. will be attending a National American Planning Association conference in Arizona in two weeks and was wondering if anyone from the Verde River group will be attending.

Dr. Larry Copeland spoke with Danna Nunn at CMU on how to get more students down to the Riverfront trail. She is working on that.

Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.