



Open Space and Trails Advisory Committee

Minutes
April 22, 2010

Meeting Summary

The committee received a presentation on the services of the Colorado Division of Wildlife in Broomfield and a discussion with the regional CDOW representative, Claire Sechrist. The committee also reviewed the location and design for proposed Xcel utility towers on the Great Western Open Space, discussed possible goals for 2010, and reviewed the upcoming Broomfield Trail Adventure.

Roll Call

Present:

Annette Cislo
Rob Bodine
Patrick Tennyson
William Olney
George Zack
James Haedrich
Kevin Jacobs, Councilmember

Absent:

Walt Spader, Mayor pro tem
Dennis Thompson

Others in attendance:

Kristan Pritz, Director of Open Space and Trails
Pete Dunlaevy, Open Space and Trails Planner
Claire Sechrist, Colorado Division of Wildlife
Burt Knight, City and County Engineer

Agenda Minutes

1. Call to Order OSTAC Meeting/Introduction of Interested Citizens
Interested Citizens introduced themselves:
Joel Hollis
CJ McKeral
Sarah Nadolny

2. Welcome and Introduction Among OSTAC members

Current OSTAC Chair Rob Bodine provided a brief introduction to the Open Space and Trails Advisory Committee including the history of the committee and the basic tasks and projects that the group works on. Current committee members described their background and interests for the group as well.

New committee members James Haedrich, William Olney, and George Zack provided brief introductions about their personal history and their interest in open space and trails, and what brought them to Broomfield.

3. Public Comment on Issues not on the Evening's Agenda by Interested Citizens

None.

4. Overview of the Colorado Division of Wildlife Services and Working Relationships with the City and County of Broomfield

Kristan introduced Claire Sechrist and the proposed Co-Existence with Wildlife Policy. Kristan highlighted the many areas where Claire has assisted the City and County with wildlife issues and education for the community.

Claire described the role of the CDOW and her job responsibilities. She works in the CDOW's South Boulder district, which includes the City and County of Broomfield. Claire's work entails law enforcement (hunting, fishing), nuisance wildlife, education and interpretive programs, and gathering data for biological surveys.

Claire will be involved with several upcoming issues in Broomfield. Claire will be joining Pete for a Wildgrass neighborhood meeting on coyotes on May 11th. Claire will also be reviewing the Great Western Open Space prairie dog site in June to determine if plague is still an issue at the site and to determine if live prairie dog relocations can take place there.

>George-how do you determine if plague is no longer an issue?

>Claire-we are advised that waiting through a full winter is recommended to insure that plague is no longer an issue, but even with this approach it is not 100% certain that plague will be gone from the site. We also look for any indicators that can be associated with plague and review the health indicators of any existing prairie dogs on the site;

>Annette-how has this year been for coyote issues?

>Claire-it has been a better year than last year in terms of direct conflicts; we have seen less conflicts so far this year; January to March are the times we worry about the most because this is the breeding season and we see heightened aggression, more frequent hunting, and more sensitivity among coyotes to intruders in their territories;

- >Annette-at Coal Creek golf course, saw sandwich board coyote warning signs; did these come from the CDOW? Was there an incident there?
- >Claire-the sandwich boards could be from the CDOW or from the local government, as Louisville has their own; they may be up in response to an incident but not necessarily;
- >Rob-want to state that we really appreciate all of the work Claire has done for Broomfield;
- >George-how is the coyote population regulated and do you know if educational efforts have helped?
- >Claire-Coyotes are largely self-regulated in this area; do not know population numbers as that is not something we specifically track, but we do assume that coyote territories include every part of the Front Range.
- >Pete-we will be tracking incidents such as bites, pets that are taken, or aggressive encounters with humans; this is being tracked over a map of the community, so over time we will be able to learn more about trends from the data;

5. Presentation on the Proposed XCEL Project to Replace Two Existing Utility Towers with Two New Utility Towers at the Great Western Open Space Property located south of State Highway 128 and east of Indiana Street

Kristan introduced Burt Knight, Broomfield's City and County Engineer, and provided an overview of the upcoming XCEL project to replace utility towers at Great Western Open Space.

Burt described the project which will replace two older existing towers that are currently on the open space, in response to new federal regulations requiring a greater distance between the hanging wires and the ground surface. XCEL is working with Broomfield to enter the open space -- they will access the northern tower from the north side of the open space and the southern tower from the west off Indiana Street. Staff recently reviewed the site and did not see any prairie dogs in the area, which has been confirmed by an environmental consultant. This work will likely take place in late-August or September. Burrowing owl surveys will take place prior to any construction activities and if owls are found in the work area, the project will need to be pushed back until the end of the owl nesting season in November.

- >Jim-will they be replacing the other towers further along the line?
- >Burt-they are only planning to do these two right now
- >Annette-what is the area that would need to be fenced off as the work area?
- >Burt-the access road will probably be 20 feet wide and then the work area around the towers will be about 100' by 100'. We will work on the fencing so they are contained within those areas;
- >Patrick-can the new towers be raptor-safe? Will raptors be able to nest in the towers?
- >Kristan-we can check on that question with the wildlife biologist that is working on the project and get back to OSTAC.

6. Discuss Draft Open Space and Trails Goals for 2010:

Kristan introduced the draft of the 2010 Open Space and Trails goals. Kristan described the proposed projects/programs and some of the current constraints that are in place due to budget limitations.

Kevin Jacobs discussed some of the projects that have recently been approved and the types of projects that could be funded in the next year. Some of the possible upcoming projects include the construction of the reservoir or projects that have a strong financial incentive to move forward immediately instead of waiting when they could be more expensive or not possible in future years.

Annette suggested that the new members be given a brief description of the Open Space Foundation and the work that they carry out at a future meeting. She also requested that continuing to work with the Broomfield Open Space Foundation be listed as a current project. It was suggested that Patrick may be interested in providing information on the Foundation as he attends foundation meetings and helps with projects.

OSTAC requested that the Willow Run Native Shrub and Fence project be listed as a separate project.

Kevin suggested showing the goals in order of priorities as some of them certainly could be completed in the next year, if possible.

Rob suggested that the committee come up with ideas for volunteer projects that could be completed within the community. George stated that he will look into ideas and will check with the cub/boy scouts on volunteering opportunities as well.

7. Review of the 2010 Broomfield Trail Adventure and Children's Wellness Day

Pete provided a brief overview of this year's event which will be hosted at the Anthem Highlands Parkside Community Center and will again feature walking loops of 1 and 2.5 miles, and a 6-mile biking loop. Pete described the trails for these loops and the educational tables that will be at the event. Pete also mentioned that staff can always use the help of volunteers from OSTAC and the community for this event.

Rob discussed the brief history of the Trail Adventure and the efforts to highlight and promote new sections of Broomfield trail system to the community.

8. Approve Minutes of the February 25, 2010 OSTAC Meeting

Patrick motions for approval; Rob seconds; minutes approved

9. Updates:

- May 1st Boards and Commissions Reception at the 1STBANK Center, 7:00 to 9:00.
- The City and County of Broomfield, Broomfield Open Space Foundation, and the Colorado Division of Wildlife will be hosting a Kid's Fishing Derby on May 15th at Tom Frost Reservoir.
- Broomfield's Co-Existence with Wildlife Plan – Public Open House will be scheduled for May, to be announced (update: May 26th, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.)
- No May OSTAC Meeting, next OSTAC Meeting on June 24th, 6:00 p.m.

10. Other as Desired by OSTAC

CJ McKeral – commented to congratulate the committee on a proactive wildlife plan and thanked them for their work.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.



Minutes Prepared by Pete Dunlaevy

Approved by OSTAC on June 24, 2010.