

**MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FÉ COUNTY
COUNTY OPEN LAND TRAILS AND PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(COLTPAC)**

Thursday, April 19, 2012

1. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Santa Fé County Open Land, Trails and Parks Advisory Committee (COLTPAC) was called to order on the above date at approximately 6:00 p.m. by Chair Sam Pallin at the Santa Fé County Community Projects Conference Room, 901 West Alameda, Santa Fé, New Mexico.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll Call indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

Members Present

Sam Pallin, Chair
Judy Kowalski, Vice Chair
Melissa Houser
William Hutchinson
Sandra Massengill [arriving later]
Matthew Montoya
Michael Patrick
Jerry Rogers [arriving later]

Members Absent

Scott Stovall

Staff Members Present

Beth Mills
Colleen Baker [arriving later]
Megan Valdez

Others Present

Bill Baxter
Matthew McQueen
Mike Scisco

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was unanimously approved without change.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 16, 2012

Ms. Houser requested a change on page two where "Rio Cañada" should say "the Rio Quemado."

There were no other changes requested.

The minutes of February 16, 2012 as amended were approved unanimously.

5. MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no matters from the public.

6. MATTERS FROM OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS STAFF

A. Welcome to new member Melissa Houser

Chair Pallin welcomed Ms. Houser and invited her to introduce herself and talk about her background which she did including her work for Santa Fé Land Trust.

The Committee introduced themselves to her.

B. Update on FY 2013 Budget and CIP

Ms. Baker was not present yet. The Committee went on with the agenda and came back to the budget later in the meeting.

C. April 24th Open Space and Trails Program Presentation at BCC

Dr. Mills said the presentation would happen on Tuesday. They had been asked to highlight two projects for the BCC. The first was Mt. Chal which was approved for acquisition and they were working through some of the environmental complications of mining trailings. She hoped to gain support for the acquisition through the presentation. The other was of the Santa Fé River Greenway and its details.

Chair Pallin asked if members needed to be present. Dr. Mills didn't think so because of its brevity.

Ms. Baker arrived.

Ms. Baker said they had gotten stuck on the acquisition and now wanted to get it completed. Because of the mining history there it had environmental issues. They did extensive work to determine how much lead and other heavy metal was there. Dr. Mills and Mr. Valdez worked on slides for it.

Mr. Rogers arrived.

Ms. Baker said she might ask for some support at the BCC meeting.

B. Update on FY 2013 Budget and CIP

Ms. Baker used an excel spreadsheet to review the budget and current spending. She went through each line item for open space accounts.

Ms. Massengill arrived during her update.

The Committee briefly discussed the priorities of the BCC and how the Committee might best help in getting approvals for the projects.

Dr. Mills said she would be speaking with the County Administrator in a couple of weeks and take the papers for her to sign.

The Committee discussed how to proceed with the Edgewood project.

Ms. Baker thought getting some presence out might help.

Chair Pallin suggested an article in the Edgewood area newspaper.

Ms. Baker explained that all capital expenditures were going through the business office with the Public Works Department. The matrix she developed had answers to these questions: How ready is it for money? What other money sources are there? What sustainable area is it in? Is the priority higher than SDA 3? Does it contribute to economic development? Is the life span great enough to justify the investment? Is it mandatory? Is there a risk factor? Is it in a policy or a plan? Is it Commission driven?

She was asked to submit every possible capital project. They came back with a list of the top 12 for the bond issue in November. The rest was assigned to GRT revenues. The bond would be \$30 million with one third to water, one third for open space and one third for roads. It would have a four year time frame so in essence would be \$10 million per year for 4 years. She went through the list which totaled \$10.134 million. Mr. Hogan had asked to add a Park Needs Assessment contract at \$60,000.

Mr. Patrick asked if the bond was ready for November voting. Ms. Baker agreed.

Ms. Baker hoped they would write the bond language broadly.

Mr. Patrick didn't see any money for acquisition of open space.

Ms. Baker explained that the BCC didn't want more because the County couldn't afford to take care of what was already acquired.

Chair Pallin said the Committee did get them to pass the resolution to look into a regular funding mechanism.

Ms. Baker didn't see anything for that. It would be updated annually. She pointed out that the

COLTPAC staff had a lot less control than they had ever had.

Mr. Patrick asked when the BCC would vote on the bond allocations.

Ms. Baker said she had to turn this list into the business office today. It was an all or nothing proposition. But she wasn't sure the voters would go for no acquisition.

Chair Pallin agreed it was one of the biggest positives for voters.

D. Program Outreach at Cerrillos Hills Historic Park, Saturday, May 19th

Dr. Mills said the State Park was giving the County a chance to participate in the open house with a table there to do some outreach. They would provide an overview and discuss stewardship opportunities with a sign-up sheet.

She was taking a closed group out to Petroglyph Park on May 4. Two tours would be taken. She would send the dates to the members. There were two other hiking trails at Petroglyph Park.

She invited members to be at the open house on the 19th and talk about what the committee did, etc.

Chair Pallin asked if she had materials to hand out or posters.

Dr. Mills said she hadn't finished working on that. It was an incredibly beautiful space out there and they had a great partnership there.

E. Update on NM Central Trail and La Piedra.

Dr. Mills reported she had been working with the MPO for DOT approval to work on the NM Central Rail Trails trail. \$100,000 was budgeted for the work. That trail was the connection between Rancho Viejo and Eldorado. They were considering a paved commuter trail. She met with Public Works and found that the SE Connector would connect Eldorado to Rancho Viejo on a somewhat parallel route with NM Central. So they were rethinking whether to pave an extra trail. She thought a good bike lane might be better and they were never happy with the prospect of paving along the NM Central Rail. So they could move that \$100,000 over to the Santa Fé Rail Trail to complete it and keep the concept of a recreational trail.

They were about to formalize it next month at committee hearings. And during this time, the DOT came up with another \$100,000 for the Santa Fé Rail Trail. She personally was happy with this idea and was never on board with the paved trail.

Ms. Baker added that the original \$100,000 was first part of the Rail Trail but it would go very far with a paved trail.

Mr. Rogers asked if they mentioned coming off Richard Avenue for that development that was to

happen in 5-10 years.

Ms. Baker said they didn't have a good sense of it. In her opinion it was more 5 years than 10.

Dr. Mills suggested that in that time they could make the hiking a good connection but just not as a heavily engineered or paved trail.

Dr. Mills said the La Piedra Trail opening was pending. The Santa Fé Trust was working on it. They were finished with the trail and it was an amazing trail. They still had to work on some signage and fencing but people could hike it now.

The Grand Opening was scheduled for June 1 with a ribbon cutting. Ms. Houser was helping to plan it and work together with County staff.

Ms. Houser added that on that Saturday they would lead hikes of the trail. It would be launched on the Trust's web site. She said it was so much easier now with the trail. It had a .7 mile loop which Dale Ball always wanted.

Dr. Mills said the trust did a great job on it.

7. ACTION ITEMS

A. Request Approval of the New Mexico Land Conservancy's Application for a Federal Farm and Ranch Program Match of \$70,000 for the Conservation Easement on 17 acres of the Bennett Property

Mr. Mike Scisco introduced himself and thanked the Committee for inviting him to present the Rancho Valle Conservation Easement. They had worked on it for 2 years. It was near Española and they were asking COLTPAC to help fund the acquisition.

The NM Land Conservancy was founded in 2002 as a statewide land trust. There was one in Santa Fé one in Taos, one for the Rio Grande. They were youngest land trust and had conserved over 100,000 acres in New Mexico so far.

He reviewed briefly the conservation easement process. They make a request for contribution for help with easement costs and to a stewardship fund. Stewardship was based on the size of the land.

Mr. Scisco explained SALCI - Small Agricultural Land Conservation Initiative. Usually they were less than 10 acres in size.

He described the Rancho Valle property. It was on highway 76. It was about 17 acres of which 14 could be irrigated. It had river frontage and 56 ac/ft. of water rights. This property was given to the family upon their neighbor's death. They were an elderly family and could not keep it up.

Chair Pallin asked about its value.

Mr. Scisco said it was about 50% of appraised value - about \$15,000 /acre without water and water value was added separately.

He explained the County's role to provide up to \$70,000 that would leverage USDA-NRCS funding up to \$190,000. The County would be a co-grantee of the conservation easement, review the documentation, and help with monitoring and landowner relations.

He described the benefits to current landowner, to future farmers and landowners and to Santa Fé County.

There were two acequias on the property. The Santa Cruz Water Commission was the mayor domo. It was on the Santa Cruz River. There was once a pond on the property which the Land Trust was thinking of revitalizing for water storage.

Mr. Patrick asked if the county's investment could be done on an ongoing basis.

Mr. Scisco agreed, subject to the federal allocation for this area. If we could show that matching funding was available, the federal money could grow.

Mr. Patrick thought it was a great leverage. This was perfect for management and the county wouldn't have to worry about it. It could set the stage for a lot more.

Mr. Rogers thought public access should also be considered.

Ms. Kowalski asked how the County Attorney felt about contributing to an easement that resulted in private ownership.

Ms. Baker explained that the County would have a right to the easement but not to the property itself. They wouldn't get away with not being named and the County already had one on private ownership.

Chair Pallin thought this was different than their original plan because of not having public access.

Ms. Baker said conservation was the first goal; public access was secondary. And given where the County was with O&M this was one of the few they could consider without worry for O&M.

Mr. Rogers said access could be limited for instance to twice a year.

Ms. Houser thought it would be hard to have agriculture with public access.

Mr. Rogers mentioned one he worked on with access by appointment only.

Ms. Baker said they couldn't acquire land they had to maintain right now. But there was a lot they could accomplish with the leverage. It was attractive since there was no operational responsibility.

Mr. Patrick moved that COLTPAC recommend to the BCC to invest in a conservation easement at Rancho Valle at \$70,000, matched by up to \$190,000 federal funding. Mr. Hutchinson seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

B. Request Recommendation on Tijeras Ranger District's Proposal to use San Pedro Open Space as a Staging Area for Fire Fighting Operations.

Dr. Mills shared a letter from Major Peterson at the Tijeras Ranger Station with the Committee. It would be used as a base camp to stage large equipment such as bulldozers, water carriers, showers and quarters for fire crews. It had an attached land use agreement with blanks for reimbursement to the county.

Chair Pallin said the Committee wanted a trail head and interpretation station in there. He asked if they were willing to improve an area for a parking lot.

Ms. Baker said with this use it would be too small for a trail head.

Mr. Baxter said his agenda for this land was the historic and archaeology for that land. There had been a lot of activity over last several hundred years. So if it went forward they should be required to do a survey.

Mr. Rogers said a survey was required under the National Historic Lands Act and they could find out quickly that they didn't want to do that there.

Mr. Baxter noted that it was heavily disturbed land and it was conceivable they could do it but needed to know what was there.

Ms. Massengill asked if they said they had an alternate site. Ms. Baker agreed.

Ms. Massengill thought it would be nice to see what the other sites were. She asked if there was something in our policy to help with saying no. There were provisions for open space.

Mr. Rogers said he spent 40 years saying no to people who had good uses proposed.

Chair Pallin asked how the Committee needed to respond.

Ms. Baker said staff was looking for what the Committee wanted to do. It could be a letter from her or someone else in the county.

Ms. Kowalski thought it could only be as a last resort.

Mr. Rogers said federal law would prohibit that anyway. He thought the letter should say that there was a clear consensus from the Committee that this was an area with extensive but unidentified cultural and historical resources. The other point would be that it was acquired for open space and the use proposed

would be very destructive.

Ms. Baker agreed to write a letter.

Mr. Rogers said he would do everything possible to stop it from happening.

8. MATTERS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Mr. Rogers announced that the Resolution recommended to the BCC from the February meeting asking the BCC to support the overlay district in Chimayó passed unanimously at their March meeting.

Mr. Patrick reported that the TPL had finished a study of trails in Pinal County AZ. He would give a copy to Dr. Mills and link to download the report. It was on a huge growth curve there.

Mr. Hutchinson announced that the Santa Fé MPO Bicycle Master Plan was adopted by the Transportation Policy Board.

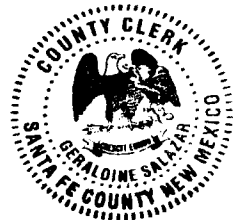
Ms. Massengill asked if staff would like Committee members to have a presence at BCC so they could see the support or not.

Ms. Baker thought it wouldn't hurt in case they asked for public input. Some of them were opposed since there was no money for maintenance and some had roads as a higher priority but roads had other sources of funding.

9. ADJOURN

Having completed the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Approved by:



Sam Pallin

Sam Pallin, Chair

Submitted by:

Carl Boaz
Carl Boaz, Stenographer

COUNTY OF SANTA FE)
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss

OPEN LANDS & TRAILS MI
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I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed For
Record On The 25TH Day Of September, 2013 at 08:11:30 AM
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 1718883
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County

Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Geraldine Salazar
Deputy *Geraldine Salazar* County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM