

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

Thursday, August 16, 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
Sandra Massengill
Michael Patrick
Jerry Rogers
Scott Stovall

Members Absent

William Hutchinson
Matthew Montoya

Staff Members Present

Colleen Baker
Mark Hogan
Adam Leigland

Others Present

Bill Baxter
Bill Johnson
Kristina Guist

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Ms. Kowalski moved to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Houser seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 21, 2012

Mr. Rogers moved to approve the minutes of June 21, 2012 as presented. Ms. Massengill seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

5. MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no matters from the public.

Mr. Hogan introduced Adam Leigland, Public Works Director, who apologized for not getting to this committee meeting sooner. He wanted to see this program fit into the overall county program and learn who the committee members were.

Mr. Leigland said the Public Works Department was a large organization as other departments were consolidated with it because it has to do with capital improvements and maintenance of them. When those functions were all separated, the county didn't use economy in purchasing. He saw that right away and wanted more efficiency through economy of scale and to leverage what the county had. So we have project managers and people dedicated to maintenance and in there somewhere he had to work on preserving this program. It might be suffering the most from lack of maintenance and upkeep. The County didn't have much money for that or for developing the open spaces. The BCC just approved the \$6 million bond for that purpose.

He said they were still figuring out the game plan and would preserve the open space program. He was an advocate for it. Ms. Baker was worried that the program would be subsumed under something else and he didn't want that. He didn't have a lot of experience with this area of public works. So he had to listen to this group. Of all the advisory groups, this one was probably the most powerful one.

Chair Pallin thought that was nice to hear.

Mr. Leigland wanted to get the road advisory group going as well. If the voters pass the three bond questions and with funds the county has now, they would have about \$80 million worth for construction and he was excited about it.

Chair Pallin asked how they were going to address the maintenance problem.

Mr. Leigland said he and Mr. Hogan had a difference of opinion on it. Right now we have robust road maintenance and it was working. So he thought they could use that and perhaps use road maintenance with trails. The key thing was to get some more staff. He thought the best use of money was hiring more maintenance staff. In the short term they would work on facilities maintenance - parks and community centers. They also had a crew to clean areas - to change light bulbs, pick weeds, etc. They had technology for a broad based work order system.

Mr. Rogers thought that was good with the proper sense of values but road people sometimes had drastically different values.

Mr. Leigland said he had a strong sense of public service and the County had a diverse constituency.

Mr. Stovall asked what his vision was for the open lands and space going into the future and where it would fall in the organization chart.

Mr. Leigland said until the County got more serious about open lands and trails he would be content with where it was in Public Works but the Commission did have a traditional technical mind set. There was already a division within. Public Works always had the most money. At some future time Roads might be spun off as its own department. We can't do it until we have more staff. Right now it was a program within the Project Delivery Division. We were working on shifting some money for the next fiscal year. We have a planning division, project delivery and the utility division. The utility division was separate but didn't have its own project managers. We do have some part time maintenance staff and the volunteer coordinator.

Mr. Stovall asked what was wrong with buying raw land and sitting on it rather than having to go in to build trails. The County has bought some great parcels in his opinion and in this bond issue there was nothing to allow purchase of open land.

Mr. Leigland said every single commissioner was against buying more land. That was where that came from. The open space question got the most scrutiny.

Chair Pallin noted Mr. Stovall wasn't in the Edgewood meeting six months ago where it became clear the public was not in favor of sequestering land. They wanted the land open to the public.

Mr. Stovall supported it being open. But land prices were fairly low right now and developers over the last five years have come here asking for the county to buy these parcels.

Chair Pallin said if you inventory property you have to give at least the perception that it was being watched and paid attention too. Mr. Leigland agreed.

Mr. Leigland said the bond was not the only shot at getting capital funding and consolidating those sources was best with GRT, grants, and others. And that could be planned annually. So when opportunities arose they had an opportunity to consider it.

Ms. Baker said the capital package originally was \$10 million and what was cut was capital projects money. What we've purchased was not for conservation.

Mr. Stovall guessed the opportunity to buy these parcels might not be there in the future. It was a highly recreational area.

Mr. Rogers said the U.S. was only entering the changes it would have to make on roads but it would have to change. The importance of vision was not that you could report annually on parts of it but that everyone understands and gets pumped up when thinking about it and working toward it individually. Over the past three years we have evolved to the program and he thought there would be no sudden turns.

Ms. Baker said staff was really trying to hold tight to that - trying to hold onto the vision and make sense of things during this time. The sustainable land development plan has a lot in it that works toward that vision and still holds onto the reality of resource management.

Mr. Rogers said around this table you could make a list of 70 national organizations that COLTPAC members could influence and lots of them have local manifestations. He liked Mr. Leigland's energy and

the things he was saying.

Mr. Leigland liked what Mr. Rogers said about vision. We need to help people understand what the vision was about. He took administrative staff out to see some of what the County had. With this group, we were going to try to organize others who haven't thought about open space. Bill Baxter took us out there and it was exciting. And there was a historic road right there by NM 14.

Mr. Baxter mentioned the Galisteo Basin Archaeological Protection Group. It needed to be on everyone's radar because it was part of Santa Fé County.

Chair Pallin introduced himself to Mr. Leigland. The rest of the committee introduced themselves to him also.

Kristina Guist was here on the South Meadows project.

Mr. Leigland said this was his weakness and asked the committee's indulgence. He urged them to make sure they kept Ms. Baker going. We need to get out of the thinking about roads. We were looking at bicycle stuff. He changed the road department to be the transportation department. One project was in district one to put shoulders on some of the roads and multi-modal things.

Mr. Stovall said that was great to hear. That along with open space needs to get out to the public.

Chair Pallin put in a word for horse people to have a place to go. It was an army of vigilant volunteers. Many have been through the sheriff's training and they had 5,000 in one posse or another. They were armed and went through the national police academy so they could patrol trails and open space and it could take the place of staff members.

Mr. Rogers added that the potential in this county for roadside interpretation was unbelievable.

The Committee went first to 6-B.

6. MATTERS FROM OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS STAFF

B. Presentation of Conceptual Plan for South Meadows Open Space

Ms. Baker said they just got the conceptual plan prepared and would do the Master Plan and then a design for phase 1.

Ms. Kristina Guistin introduced herself as project manager for the South Meadows Open Space. She said they looked at topography, prairie dog community on site and trying to balance all the issues. She oriented people to the open space location - between Airport and Rufina at South Meadows. It was 22 acres.

There were lots of trails cut through there by the community. It was well-loved area and we want to continue that and help preserve the area for ecology. Prairie dogs were in the northwest corner. The

primary development area was on the southeast corner where there was a lot of disturbance already - It includes a parking/drop off area; amphitheater, outdoor education space, picnic area and a play area. One of the program requirements was for a dog park and we discussed how we could do that without interrupting the open space. So the dog park was out of the way and had several nodes for play off-leash with a concealed fence - a swale or berm hides the fence.

The site has an all ADA accessible loop through the main core and a larger loop around the whole perimeter and also follows many existing trails. The final elements were the interactive play nodes that were a way of combining the history of El Camino Real, the agricultural history and ecological opportunities. One would be a torreon to see over to the Santa Fé River where El Camino Real ran. We talked about a boardwalk area for native species interpretation and a kiosk with a wildlife camera connected to a program in elementary school so they could post their pictures of wildlife at the site. We want a berm at the northwest corner to keep water on site and utilize it for landscaping. Some existing fencing will be removed. Future parking would be at the trail head.

Mr. Baxter noted this was now a pretty intensively used 20 acres and would be even more so in the future which didn't bode well for the prairie dogs. He liked the idea but was not optimistic about it.

He asked if they were going to highlight the acequia there.

Ms. Baker said they were still trying to identify that.

Mr. Baxter thought they didn't have to have it exact.

Mr. Rogers thought they located it when they visited three years ago but might have been kidding themselves.

Ms. Kowalski asked about landscaping.

Ms. Guist said they would augment what was there with some trees for shade but not intensively landscaped. The landscaping would not include grasses.

Mr. Patrick liked having so many uses planned for this parcel.

Ms. Kowalski asked where the board walk was envisioned.

Ms. Guist said it was at one of the play nodes. It would give an opportunity to go through landscaping without trampling on it. The plants were hardy but when wiped out it would be difficult to bring them back.

Ms. Kowalski asked if the trails would be natural.

Ms. Guist said they were but the ADA would likely be paved.

Ms. Baker added that they were working on a recycling project also.

Ms. Kowalski thought the dog park was a good idea.

Ms. Houser commented that the most visible part was the dog park area.

Mr. Baxter asked about city annexation.

Ms. Baker acknowledged it was pending and had been put off but it would happen at some point which begs some kind of MOA. They were trying to chart the course for it now

Ms. Massengill asked if it was a public concern to preserve the prairie dogs there. Ms. Baker agreed.

Ms. Guist said all elements came from the Resource Management plan.

Ms. Kowalski thought the community garden looked pretty small.

Chair Pallin thanked her for the report.

A. Updates for Ongoing Projects

- **Bennett Easements** - the Board approved going ahead with it.
- **Mount Chal** - green light to go forward on mediation program. We have to prepare all the purchase agreements on it.

Mr. Hogan said there was really a push from the BCC to get this done.

- **November Bond** -
- **2012 Southwest Trails Conference (October 10)**

The Santa Fé Conservation Trust was putting together the conference on October 10. Mr. Johnson shared the draft agenda.

Ms. Baker reported they started on the parking lot at Arroyo Hondo Open Space. The wetlands area was the first priority. There was an acequia that runs through it and they objected to a culvert that ran across it.

Mr. Johnson said that delayed work for about a week.

C. Discussion of Resolution Sponsored by Commissioner Stefanics Requesting COLTPAC to Develop and Bring Forward a Volunteer Plan for County-owned Open Space and Trails.

Ms. Baker said the resolution was passed and asked that this committee work with staff to put it together. She put it on the agenda to see what it would look like and to get the Committee's thoughts about how we might do it. At the last meeting we decided the whole committee should be involved.

Ms. Kowalski asked when the volunteer coordinator would start.

Ms. Baker said the starting date was January 1st.

Chair Pallin said they had the posse involved in several different things. They were all volunteers and subject to the coordinator. They could have a south county group, a Galisteo group, etc. People were more likely to be active if the work was not too far from their homes. It was also important that they feel worthwhile and rewarded. It might be a T- shirt, food, etc. with a reward ceremony annually and prizes. For the posse, we paid an amount to join and it all adds up. He clarified that not all posse volunteers were riders. The posse members have special access and meet with the public and were important.

Ms. Massengill asked how much the membership fee was.

Chair Pallin said they had to buy a uniform and a badge. He thought the fee was \$35/year.

Mr. Stovall suggested the Adopt A Trail program also to take care of a mile or two.

Mr. Rogers said last time he suggested a site watch? program also for looking at archaeological sites.

Ms. Kowalski said she was serious about the naming issue.

Chair Pallin was thinking of a plaque only at the trail head and not about naming trails after people.

Mr. Stovall said they would have to have a training day beforehand for the adopt-a-trail people. The Forest Service could probably do it.

Chair Pallin suggested the volunteers could do a newsletter where they could also be recognized.

Mr. Patrick suggested finding out the best practices out there - find out who around the country has state of the art volunteer programs.

Ms. Baker said as the next step she would like to find out about all the models the members knew about and identify the ways people could volunteer such as labor, education, ranger, outreach - There were lot of different ways to work it.

Chair Pallin asked if she needed a committee or if she was going to explore these organizations. The Committee had been asked to come up with a plan.

Ms. Houser asked if they could gather plans the Committee knew of for her. Ms. Baker agreed.

Mr. Patrick, Ms. Kowalski and Mr. Stovall agreed to help with it.

Ms. Houser said it would be good to have something to hand off to the new person hired.

Mr. Stovall said the committee would come up with a draft volunteer plan with approval of new volunteer coordinator.

Chair Pallin said they had to come up with a resolution to send back to BCC.

Ms. Kowalski moved to appoint a committee to develop the volunteer plan outline. Ms. Houser seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

D. Joint Meeting of BTAC, POSAC, and COLTPAC on October 22, 23, 24 at 5:30 at Santa Fé Convention Center

Ms. Baker said BTAC preferred Wednesday. The discussion was around connectivity and funding mechanisms. She asked what the interest of the Committee was. Several members agreed they should have the joint meeting.

Chair Pallin said Wednesday would be October 24th at 5:30.

7. ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

8. MATTERS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Ms. Baker said the Rail Trail was turned over to the County. Seeding was now going on. The organic binder was very green and has been sprayed on the mulch. There were some other details being worked on. It was open and workable. They were looking at an opening date during the last of September or early October. She would like input on it.

Mr. Stovall asked whatever happened to the property at other end.

Ms. Baker said they dropped that. The trail head would be a little more south and they would work out an easement for a parking lot there and route bike traffic down the road between the two. There were arroyo issues and the road was not that heavily used yet. This will keep us from leasing from the state.

Mr. Patrick reported that Commissioner Mayfield was enthused about the Chimayó work and by Mr. Leigland saying don't be worried about acquisitions was encouraging.

Ms. Baker said leverage and the constituency were big factors. So the Committee needed to make sure all the projects in the wings that were not funded this round would be kept ready for when funding

might happen.

Next Meeting was scheduled for September 20, 2012.

9. ADJOURN

Mr. Rogers moved to adjourn the meeting. Chair Pallin seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

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 COLTPAC MINUTES
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I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
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Deputy Marcella)
Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Valerie Espinoza
County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM