

## Estes Valley Watershed Coalition Minutes – July 22, 2015

The meeting was opened at 6:45 pm by the President, Frank Theis. There were six voting members present, so a quorum was announced.

In addition to the voting members, Naren Tayal, Tina Kurtz and Megan Nies were present. Megan is from the Larimer County Emergency Management Office, working with Lori Hodges. This was Naren's last meeting as his position with FEMA will end on July 30.

The minutes of the July 8<sup>th</sup> meeting were reviewed. Jay Blackwood moved to accept the minutes and Sue Durnford seconded. The motion carried.

### Grant/Projects Committee Report

Sue Durnford reported:

- The Capacity Grant contract was signed on July 19<sup>th</sup> and returned to DOLA for their signature.
- Jeff Crane has offered to give Molly a tour of the watersheds once she is on board (or possibly before).
- The computer for the Coordinator has been loaded with all the needed software, as well as the sample RFP's sent by Jeff Crane.
- We have applied for a potential three part grant from the Northern Colorado Community Foundation. First, a grant request for \$4, 967 for publicity and marketing efforts on behalf of the Coalition; second, \$1,800 for professional and filing fees in connection with obtaining a 501 (c)3 designation for the Watershed Coalition; and third, a remote possibility, but a request for up to \$5,000 for capacity building.
- The Senate Fund Project Status: Good news that a major restoration project will be undertaken in connection with the infrastructure project on Fish Creek. It will include the stretch from the pedestrian bridge above Stonebridge down to some distance past the Van Horn Engineering building. This project could be the needed match money for the Senate Bill project.
- Frank is waiting to hear from Julie Ash on a project plan that could be submitted to Chris Sturm regarding the Senate Fund Project. We have his permission to single-source the work to her at Otak so no RFP process will be needed.
- Implementation Grant: Environmental Assessment was requested by Mary several weeks ago.
- Further discussion on the process for the Implementation Grant with input from Tina Kurtz, who is working on the parallel work on the Hydroplant project: Tina indicated that you have to have a 404 permit before you can actually have the Environmental Assessment ~~started~~completed. ~~The Town is Olsson paying Brian Varella of Olsten Associates of Fort Collins is to do this working on the 404 permit for the Town's Hydroplant project.~~ Because it's federal funding, there are also many requirements to get other approvals – including those from 5 tribes. Tina expressed concern about the costs of obtaining the 404 permit and the necessary approvals because the Coalition doesn't have outside funding available.

- Frank indicated that he will talk with Mike Todd of Cornerstone, who has already volunteered pro bono work for the Morten's area.
- We should also talk to Jeff Crane and CWCB to get the process sequenced.

#### Public Outreach Committee

- We have email lists from the Fall River Coalition and the Fish Creek Coalition which could be used as a base of interested people to approach for membership and funding.

#### Larimer County – Megan Nies

- Megan reported that the county is organizing the Coordinators from all the Watershed Coalitions. The first meeting is to be held on Monday, July 27<sup>th</sup>. Megan will invite Molly.

#### FEMA – Naren Tayal

- Naren's report consisted of a heartfelt goodbye and statements that he believes the EVWC is the most outstanding of the Coalitions, farther ahead on its work than any of the others. His job will end on July 30 and he does not have another position lined up, although there are a lot of possibilities in this area of work. He promised to keep in touch.
- Naren also commented that EVWC is the exact representation of the ideal Coalition as they were originally defined- landowners coming together and working with the Town synergistically.
- He offered to send copies of the Big Thompson Coalition Meeting Notes for our information.

#### Town of Estes Park – Tina Kurtz

- Hydrology RFP is her present project. It includes Fall River, Big Thompson and Black Canyon.
- Next project is the Hydroplant RFP. Their funding is on a much tighter timetable than ours is for the Morten's project, but the Board expressed interest in keeping up with her RFP so we can possibly get bids on the two projects together for potential cost savings and for certain coordination between the projects.
- The Seed Network will be collecting plants this Saturday (July 25<sup>th</sup>) ~~throughout the Estes Valley on Town-owned property.~~ They are specifically collecting 4 types of willows which will be grown and then become available to our Coalition and others for revegetation of the flood-damaged areas (for a fee).
- The Army Corps of Engineers Silver Jackets Group has offered ~~, at no cost to the Town, to submit a study proposal to the Feds about the potential of the Town free services which include education on flood-proofing measures for downtown buildings. They could also help the Town- identifying additional funding sources from different agencies for projects, and possibly submitting a study proposal to the Feds.~~
- The Fall River Master Plan document revisions and corrections are almost complete. It should be possible to post it soon.
- The Town has spoken with Slate Communications (who maintains the two Master Plan websites) about broader communication to the public on flood recovery and flood issues, through different media, such as pamphlets and social media. The Town will be organizing a project team on this communication and will ask the Coalition to participate.

- The Thompson Watershed Alliance met on July 21<sup>st</sup>. ~~At the TWA meeting, there was a lot of discussion about sources and types of resources for Colorado Watershed Coalitions resources, including and specifically about resources available from the Larimer County and non-government agencies. Items also discussed were the facilitation of collaboration between Coalitions and the resources TWA could provide that individual Coalitions would not be able to afford or easily access. During the Coalition meeting, Megan Nies was asked about the availability of financial resources from Larimer County for the Coalitions. She then, but didn't have any firsthand knowledge of direct financial support from Larimer County to any of the Coalitions. At the meeting, it was clear that "Larimer County is providing resources to the Coalitions.~~

**Commented [T1]:** I've changed this section quite a bit. Since funding from any source is a major issue and touchy subject, I want to be as clear as possible on the discussion about the availability of County funding – both at the TWA meeting and at the EVWC mtg. Also - during the EVWC meeting, I brought up the TWA discussion about the help they could provide and collaboration between Coalitions, which I think is an important point to capture for the minutes.

- Big News – at 4:30pm today, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Town was notified that OEM Round 2 Infrastructure has allowed \$2 million for the Moraine Bridge Project (the full amount requested)! This is approval to move to the next step of budget analysis and begin the environmental assessment.

~~We congratulated Tina on the Moraine Bridge win because she prepared that grant almost entirely by herself and it's such an important project!~~

**Commented [T2]:** I really appreciate the kudos (!), but I'd rather not have it in the minutes.

- Discussion about the downtown flood prevention measures which must include a variety of methods, including replacing bridges, flood-proofing buildings, providing high flow channels down the center of Elkhorn and other roads, and more.
- State will complete the 100 year floodplain map in about 2 years.
- FEMA Public Assistance Money is all gone. That would have been the source for acquisitions , etc.
- Scott Ponds meeting with the Town Trustees was discussed. We concluded that:
  - The supporters of the dams were well organized and way ahead of everyone in making their desires known to the Town, the state and others.
  - The Coalition was not in position to do anything when the Scott Ponds reach was separated from the Master Plan, which may have been a critical point in the process.
  - Comments were made about how this could go forward against the national mandate for resiliency.
  - Naren indicated that it is still possible that the dams will not be built because of the environmental assessment or the cost of water rights. He also thought there is a possibility that the issue of resiliency will be brought up again.
  - Naren suggested that we keep up with what ~~Aegeiss~~ AGEISS is doing on Scott Ponds. Perhaps Molly can get involved.
- A new Federal disaster was declared in Vermont on 7/16, which may cause pressure on our remaining disaster funding.
- Town will be putting out an RFP on the Downtown Study. The RFP includes Elkhorn Lodge.

Question was raised about whether the Coalition should or could have any impact on that study, especially because our NRCS priority was for Elkhorn, and the second priority included the reach all the way to Spruce Street. Allison has been heading up the Downtown Project. Is it possible to combine the efforts of these projects to leverage more resources?

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Prepared by: Sue Durnford

Approved/submitted by: Jim Daugherty, Secretary

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