

## Notes from the Town of Marble

### Board of Trustees/Gunnison County Commissioners Work Session

June 15th, 2021

A. Call to order & roll call of the Work Session of the Marble Board of Trustees and Gunnison County Commissioners – There was no formal call to order. The meeting began at 6:10 p.m. Present: Ryan Vinciguerra, Larry Good, Tim Hunter and Josh Vogt. Absent: Emma Bielski. Also present: Ron Leach, Town Administrator, and Terry Langley, notes. Attending from the county: Commissioners: Vice-Chair Roland Mason, Chair Jonathan Houk, and Liz Smith. Also Sheriff Gallowitz and deputies, Marlene Crosby, public works director and Dan Sindholm, new public works employee. From the Forest Service: Scott Fitzwilliam, and Kevin Warner as well as representatives from the quarry. After introductions, Jonathan expressed thanks to Robert Pettijohn and best wishes on retirement.

B. Commissioners work session with Marble area residents.

a. Wild & Scenic – Some citizens are interested in revisiting this issue. They have had conversation with Pitkin County and Jonathan said it is best to bring this to the commission and the community early in order to be part of crafting the issue.

b. Broadband connectivity – Roland said that earlier there had been efforts to have a tower on BLM or Forest Service land but that fell through. There is a renewed effort with Visionary Broadband. Tim reported that construction begins this month and is funded 100%. The poles for the fiber optic cable have been surveyed and some that need to be replaced have been identified.

Law enforcement – Sheriff Gallowitz reported that the sheriff's office is restructuring. There will be two full-time deputies assigned to northern Gunnison County, including Marble. Deputy James Schaeffer is currently riding with the senior deputy, Corporal Scott Leon. They will be working on such things as OHV, Beaver Lake and other traffic issues. The county commissioners need to approve the town's traffic code so that the deputies can enforce that code. Placement and size of signs must follow state requirements. A place for the deputies to do their office work would be a help but the town building needs some work. Broadband will also be an aid. Tim reported that a desk, computer access, phone & refrigerator are in the building. Some traffic studies (monitoring with unmarked and marked cars) will be needed for speed limits to be approved and adopted by the county commissioners. They will be monitoring fire danger and meeting with experts on fuel moisture.

Fire Restrictions – Gunnison County is large and is not all in the same watershed. It borders 8 other counties, and several national forests. Coordination with the FS, sheriff's department and other agencies is important. There may be different restrictions in different areas in the county. Kevin Warner reported that the WRNF will go into fire restrictions at midnight Thursday/Friday. Eagle and Pitkin counties are in Stage 1 restrictions. Liz reported that they are working with public land agencies such as the BLM, Park Service and FS. They will be considering ratification of an ordinance allowing for faster response. In the meantime, they will meet in emergency session if necessary. Robert Pettijohn asked about considering limiting access to some of the danger areas. There have already been 5 fires and it is going to be getting drier. Soil moisture, forecast, run off, location of firefighting resources, use patterns all go into the decisions. Scott said that Stage 3 means closing the forest. It is an extreme

decision, particularly economically. Stage 2 means no campfires anywhere, smoking in vehicles only, etc.

Quarry, - The commissioners will be going on a tour at the quarry tomorrow. They will be looking at some possible land exchanges, trail realignment and public access.

LKL. – Jonathan stated that this is broader than just the loop. It includes impacts on CR 3, town of Marble and residents of the upper Crystal River valley. He expressed appreciation for the involvement of all the agencies that are part of process. It highlights the experience of what the area has to offer and that is different for different people. Tin Cup, White Pine, Pitkin, Taylor Park are experiencing similar problems with motorized use and other outdoor recreation. Public lands belong to all of us – there is a responsibility around stewardship and land management. Roland reached out to the FS, the town and became part of the LKL working group. Issues around the number of tourists and increased use are the focus. This summer there is an addition of Forest Protection Officers and more enforcement from the sheriff's office. CPW increased presence monitoring fishing and hunting licensed required for Beaver Lake. An example of an education piece is the model in Crested Butte with outreach to folks who are recreating in the area, including education around trash and excrement. There is a willingness to help from CVEPA and RFOV. Ryan reported on collaborating with Wilderness workshop on the information kiosk at Mill Site due to truck/trailer parking there. The kiosk will include three panels: first, a map with route & trailheads, 2<sup>nd</sup> best practices – trail etiquette, residential areas, 3<sup>rd</sup> OHV specific with historical, quarry, park and fire danger information. Liz emphasized that the county is working on both short- and long-term visions and solutions. They put in a sunset on allowing OHVs on CR 3. She is working with Western to determine and collect the data needed. There are vehicle counters on LKL currently. A parking solution needs to be to scale with the number of vehicles. Jonathan spoke to CPW about quantifying the impact on wildlife. He emphasized a need to identify data needed and not to miss a year of opportunity to gather that data, including money spent and taxes collected. FS has been very responsive. Kevin said one of the things they are focused on is facilitation in the LKL working group for collaboratively identifying issues/concerns and solutions. These include road safety, sedimentation due to traffic and runoff and impacts on wildlife. FS is bringing in a road safety analysis (rather than a motorized use study which doesn't take into account other uses) that includes physical characteristics of the road, interaction between users and additional vehicle count data. Forest Protection Officers In addition to safety, the FFPs will look at recreation impact monitoring (trash, excrement, vehicles on gypsy trails.) The FS hydrologist has been asked to look at scientific information regarding OHV use in other areas and whether the impacts to the road differ between types of vehicles (ATV, quads vs Razor, etc). They have asked CPW for data regarding what impact recreational use such as we see on the LKL has on wildlife. They will look at potential areas for parking on FS land at the base of Daniel's Hill. Marlene can access maintenance history. Jonathan stated that there needs to be a balance between tourists and the folks who call this home. Scott said that he got calls asking why the use isn't simply shut down. His answer is that will begin a war. He likes that the conversation has moved past that to dealing with high use recreation areas. Gathering common information and data is important. This has allowed permitting in other areas. There needs to be agreement on the vision for the future and the desired outcome. He emphasized the need for patience with the process and reported that Hanging Lake took 7 years and Marron Bells, 5-6 years. Investment in the time is worth it. Will we agree on everything? No.

But we will be further than we are now. Jonathan likes that we have gone from attacking each other to attacking the issue.

Public input followed. Robert Pettijohn asked for better info to public and education with a registration/permit system. Jonathan said that carrying capacity needs to be determined in order to determine the tools that will best address the issue, such as permit limits. John Armstrong, president of CVEPA said there is a larger desire for less degradation and numbers than there is a desire for no more regulations. He knows that there are people who no longer come – that is a difficult thing to quantify. Identify what Marble wants to be with the amazing natural resources and whether all uses can be accommodated. Jonathan stated that recreation has changed – SUP, bigger OHVs, etc. Scott asked if we can quantify what people want. Jonathan used Crested Butte as an example of providing parallel nonmotorized access. Kevin – explained that WRNF has 2-3 times trail miles over road miles and that there are no other road opportunities. Larry asked if the FS has a standing speed limit on FS roads and Kevin thinks it is 20 mph if not otherwise posted. Scott said that is a tool they can take a look at. The sheriff stated that they do not have authority to enforce FS limits, but it was said that game wardens do. Dan Szmiot asked “What is the new normal?” He spoke to a need for respect, not permitting or more regulations. He stated that area roads need work and asked what we get for our tax dollars? Josh asked how the 2-3 ratio of trails to roads compares to other forests. Kevin said some have more developed motorized trails. Scott explains that the ratios vary greatly. Can get info for WRNF. Terry Havens said the town allowed OHV and snowmobiles in 2015, requiring that they be registered with liability insurance. Can county and FS have the same requirements? Scott explained that for the FS, they must be registered with the state. No liability required on unlicensed vehicles. The state requires that drivers be licensed drivers. Counties have their own regulations that meet or exceed state regs. Scott gave an example of OHV ranger programs through grant opportunities. Ryan spoke to the sunset clause. He asked about removing OHV use at the end of the year and how will they come to the conclusion one way or the other. Liz said it was first allowed due to safety and access issues resulting in accidents and blockage of roads/drives. That resulted in unintended consequences and she feels it enables the problem and is not sustainable. Jonathan agreed that the amount of use untenable. He stated that the sunset clause is not intended as a threat and they will revisit based on work together this year. Larry asked if there were contingencies on reopening the road to OHV use. Liz explained that ideally, it would involve a two-year time frame and that they need to be able to justify reopening to those who are impacted. Roland said that they can revisit/renew after seeing the impacts of things going on this summer with data gathering and enforcement work. They have an accountability to the community to address issue.

### C. Commissioners work session with Town of Marble Trustees.

Larry would like to see a noticeable decrease in traffic, motorized recreation with controlled growth. The town worked on a parking plan, the campground and on-line monetized reservation systems but that they hit a road block due to deed restrictions of parking area. He asked if county would support and help with working with the SBA and possible changes in deed restrictions. Jonathan said they would need to understand the deed restrictions and reasons for those. He suggested holding another work session with one or more commissioners with all the information regarding the deed restriction. They

need to know specifics on what is being asked and if it aligns with the long-term plan. Liz doesn't feel that having OHV parking is a long-term solution if OHVs are banned from CR3.

Larry asked if there is a way to get weekend coverage from Sheriff's department before Aug. Scott Leon said they have been doing as much as possible.

Ryan thanked the commissioners for coming over. He spoke to the growing pains with tourism as well as the growth of town.

D. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Terry Langley