

CARSON RIVER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the March 6, 2002 Meeting

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A regular meeting of the Carson River Advisory Committee was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 6, 2002 in the Community Center Sierra Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada.

PRESENT: Chairperson Charles Zimmerman
Vice Chairperson Claire Clift
Dan Greytak
Tom Hall
Kevin Walsh
Barbara Wright

STAFF: Steve Kastens, Parks and Recreation Director
Vern Krahn, Park Planner
John Flansberg, Transportation Manager
Vern Markussen, Certified Arborist
Laura Lueders, Carson River Intern
Kathleen King, Recording Secretary

NOTE: Unless indicated otherwise, each item was introduced by Chairperson Zimmerman. A tape recording of these proceedings is on file in the Clerk-Recorder's Office and is available for review and inspection during regular business hours.

A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM (1-0001) - Chairperson Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Roll was called; a quorum was present. Member Johnson was absent.

B. ACTION ON APPROVAL OF MINUTES (1-0006) - Vice Chairperson Clift moved to accept the minutes of November 7, 2001 and February 20, 2002. Member Hall seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS (1-0020) - Tom Quigley advised of a proposed zoning change for the Ambrose Natural Area, and read from a prepared statement which he had distributed to the Committee members prior to the start of the meeting. He requested that this matter be agendized for discussion at a future meeting.

D. MODIFICATION OF THE AGENDA (1-0091) - None.

E. DISCLOSURES (1-0094) - None.

F. PUBLIC MEETING

F-1. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING NOXIOUS WEEDS WITHIN CARSON CITY AND ALONG THE CARSON RIVER (1-0097) - Paul Pugsley, of the Carson Valley Conservation District ("CVCD"), advised that Dawn Rafferty, of the Department of Agriculture, would not be present at the meeting due to a scheduling conflict. He discussed a weed management effort in which Carson City is participating with Alpine County and Douglas County.

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Transportation Manager John Flansberg advised that tall white top became a problem in Carson City following the 1997 flood. He referred to a displayed map, copies of which were distributed to the Committee members and staff prior to the start of the meeting, depicting an inventory of tall white top throughout Carson City. He advised that approximately 45 acres are affected by tall white top. Certified Arborist Vern Markussen discussed methods applied to eradicate tall white top, including chemical and mechanical treatments. He explained that one acre of tall white top will produce 3-5 billion seeds, and discussed the benefits of using inmate crews to hand pull and burn the weeds. Mr. Flansberg discussed the three-step process for eliminating tall white top: education, location, and eradication. He advised that Ms. Rafferty and Susan Donaldson spend a great deal of time educating the public about tall white top and other noxious weeds. He plans to conduct another GPS study in two to three years to determine the status of the eradication efforts. He concurred with Mr. Markussen's comments regarding the benefits of prison crew labor, and requested funding assistance from the Committee.

Chairperson Zimmerman thanked Mr. Flansberg and Mr. Markussen for their presentation. He noted that this item was not agendaized for action by the Committee, but advised that the Committee advocates weed eradication. Mr. Krahn discussed the purpose of the agenda item and referred to the mailing list developed approximately two years ago for distribution of noxious weed information. He advised that the Committee has no available funding, but offered the Committee's resources to the Street Department. Mr. Flansberg advised of past assistance from Dan Kaffer, of Western Nevada Resources Conservation and Development, to fund inmate labor and indicated that he will continue to pursue this course. Mr. Flansberg and Mr. Markussen responded to questions regarding weed treatments applied along the River corridor over the past several years, the chemical application time frame, methods to keep from harming surrounding vegetation and wildlife, and plans to reseed treated areas to prevent invasion of new weeds. Mr. Kastens commended Mr. Flansberg and Mr. Markussen on the program developed to address the tall white top problem. Chairperson Zimmerman agreed and thanked Mr. Flansberg for his presentation.

(1-0411) Jane Schmidt, of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, advised that Ms. Rafferty will be presenting information on this topic at a future meeting. She discussed the extensive EPA testing required for the chemicals used, and described the properties of the chemicals which attack plant growth systems. She expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Street Department crews. She discussed other weeds besides tall white top which are becoming a problem, and advised that while the Street Department crews "have done a fantastic job of holding the line" the City will need to give attention to the bigger issue. In response to a question, she discussed the criteria for becoming a weed abatement district. Mr. Krahn advised that a presentation by Ms. Rafferty will be agendaized for the April meeting.

F-2. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING BIRDS ALONG THE CARSON RIVER (1-0475) - Mr. Krahn advised of speaking with former Carson River Intern John Warpeha, who recommended having Jack Walters present information on this item. Mr. Walters provided background information on his experience, and discussed his contribution to development of the bird list included in chapter 3 of the Carson River Master Plan element. He presented slides on several bird species found in the Carson River watershed, and responded to questions regarding the status of bird populations. In response to a question, Jim Eidel advised that he has not documented any decline in bird populations along the Carson River. He pointed out that bird populations decline as habitat diminishes. Mr. Walters agreed and commented that bird populations decline any time development takes place in an area. Discussion took place regarding Canada goose populations in Nevada and various woodpecker species found near the Carson River. Chairperson Zimmerman thanked Mr. Walters for his presentation.

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F-3. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING THE ROLE OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY IN FUTURE LAND TRADES/ACQUISITIONS AND CARSON RIVER ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION (1-0858) - Mary Bennington, of The Nature Conservancy, distributed a pamphlet on the Carson River Project and provided an overview of her responsibilities and activities since being hired in July 2001. She discussed strategies for acquiring conservation easements along the River corridor, development of the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act application for funding to purchase over 4,000 acres in the Carson Valley, and development of a proposal to present the O'Callaghan Ranch for conservation easement and partial acquisition. Ms. Bennington advised of working closely with the Carson River Coalition, the Bureau of Land Management, the CVCD, and other groups to coordinate weed abatement efforts. She expressed appreciation for the Committee's interest in weed abatement. She further advised that the Carson River Project is expanding to include the Pine Nut Mountains, and that site conservation planning began two weeks ago. The planning group includes representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the BLM, the Washoe Tribe, a retired U.S. Forest Service employee, and Jim Eidel. Ms. Bennington discussed fire learning networking for the Pine Nut Mountains, and advised of a grant application for on-the-ground treatment experimentation funding to determine best management practices. She expressed appreciation for the Committee's involvement in River issues, and offered her assistance in "overlapping" issues. Mr. Krahn thanked Ms. Bennington for her presentation. In response to a question, she discussed the status of the O'Callaghan Ranch transaction and the associated water rights.

F-4. DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING AN ACTIVITY REPORT ON THE UPPER CARSON RIVER MANAGEMENT PLAN, INCLUDING FUTURE PROJECTS AT SILVER SADDLE RANCH/CARSON RIVER PARK, AMBROSE NATURAL AREA, AND ACROSS FROM THE MORGAN MILL ROAD ACCESS AREA (1-1031) - Mr. Pugsley advised that CVCD representatives are continuing to work with State Prison officials on the project which began approximately two years ago. He discussed the details of a meeting with Parks and Recreation Department staff and BLM representatives regarding completion of a project started by the BLM to use large boulders to prevent vehicle access to the River, particularly on the east side along Mexican Dam Road. He noted that this will be an ongoing effort because of the fact that the boulders are constantly being moved. Mr. Pugsley advised of funding made available to Chuck Darling for installation of fencing on his property and a neighboring property. He described the location of the areas to be fenced. He reported that a portion of the Ambrose Natural Area will be surveyed next week in preparation for a vegetation project in the fall.

Member Walsh concurred with the efforts to block access to the River and some of the canyons. He referred to the staging area on Mexican Dam Road which also provides access to the Pine Nut Mountains, and recommended installation of appropriate signage to direct OHV users to the area. Mr. Pugsley advised that the BLM representatives had indicated their intention to install signage, and commented on the benefits of participating in the BLM's Pine Nut Mountains Plan Amendment process. Member Walsh suggested designating other OHV access points to mitigate the problem of people creating their own. Mr. Kastens advised that City staff will also be working on installation of OHV access signage. He further advised that Al Bernhardt, who owns the property next to Eagle Valley Middle School which is in the process of being excavated, has donated all the rocks to the efforts along the River. He expressed appreciation for Mr. Bernhardt's generosity and cooperation. Mr. Krahn acknowledged the contribution and transportation of rocks by Landmark Homes and Development. Chairperson Zimmerman thanked Mr. Pugsley for his report.

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F-5. DISCUSSION ONLY REGARDING SELECTION OF CARSON RIVER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO ACT AS COMMITTEE LIAISONS TO VARIOUS CARSON RIVER COALITION PARTNERS, THE PINE NUT MOUNTAINS LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENT AND VARIOUS CITY ADVISORY BOARDS (1-1237) - Mr. Krahn reviewed the staff report and the attachments. He provided background information on this item for the benefit of the viewing public, and discussed the benefits of designating Committee liaisons. He responded to questions regarding the responsibilities of the Shade Tree Council. He acknowledged that this item would be reagendaized for action at the April meeting. Member Hall expressed an interest in the Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife. Vice Chairperson Clift acknowledged that she has been attending the Clear Creek Watershed Council meetings on a regular basis. She suggested agendaizing an item to provide for reports from other meetings, and she and Member Greytak discussed the activities of the Clear Creek Watershed Council. Vice Chairperson Clift expressed an interest in the Storm Drainage Advisory Committee. Member Walsh offered to continue attending the Pine Nut Mountains Plan Amendment meetings. Discussion took place regarding the process for designating liaisons, receiving agendas, attending meetings, etc.

G. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMITTEE MEMBER STATUS REPORTS (1-1477) - Mr. Kastens advised of the City's consideration of the Deer Run Road site as a possible relocation site for the Fairgrounds. He assured the Committee members that they will have ample opportunity to review the proposal prior to any action being taken. He noted that the article published in the local newspaper was "a little premature." He responded to questions regarding the public comments made by Tom Quigley regarding the zoning change at the Ambrose Natural Area. He advised he would research the matter and provide information to the Committee at a future meeting. In response to a question, Mr. Pugsley advised that the River tour will need to be scheduled for sometime in May. He further advised that a tour of the upper Clear Creek watershed is being scheduled for March 16th. Vice Chairperson Clift requested that discussion of the status of Carson River Park be agendaized for a future meeting. Member Greytak requested a discussion regarding trails in the area.

H. STATUS REPORTS FROM STAFF (1-1560) - None.

I. ACTION ON ADJOURNMENT (1-1563) - Vice Chairperson Clift moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 p.m. Member Wright seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

The Minutes of the March 6, 2002 meeting of the Carson River Advisory Committee are so approved this ____ day of April, 2002.

CHARLES ZIMMERMAN, Chair