

CARSON RIVER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the May 3, 2000 Meeting

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A regular meeting of the Carson River Advisory Committee was held at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 3, 2000 in the Community Center Sierra Room, 851 East William Street, Carson City, Nevada.

PRESENT: Chairperson Charles Zimmerman
Vice Chairperson Claire Clift
Thomas Hall
David Johnson
Paul Pettersen
Kevin Walsh
Barbara Wright

STAFF: Juan Guzman, Community Development Senior Planner
Vern Krahn, Parks Planner
Kathleen King, Recording Secretary
(CRAC 05/04/00; Tape 1-0001)

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. ROLL CALL, DETERMINATION OF QUORUM (1-0008) - Chairperson Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Roll call was taken; a quorum was present.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (1-0011) - Vice Chairperson Clift moved to accept the minutes of the April 5, 2000 meeting as presented. Member Pettersen seconded the motion. Motion carried 7-0.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS (1-0025) - None.

D. MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA (1-0030) - None.

E. DISCLOSURES (1-0033) - None.

F. PUBLIC HEARING

F-1. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT'S DRAFT INTERDISCIPLINARY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SILVER SADDLE RANCH AND AMBROSE-CARSON RIVER NATURAL AREA (1-0035) - Chris Miller, of the Bureau of Land Management ("BLM"), distributed the draft Interdisciplinary Management Plan. She advised that the public comment period starts this evening and will remain open through June 9, 2000. She encouraged the Committee members to review the draft plan, and informed the public that draft plans and environmental assessments may be requested by visiting the BLM Office or by contacting Ms. Miller at 885-6000. An open house is scheduled for Thursday, May 25, 2000 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

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Ms. Miller displayed and reviewed maps of the proposed and the alternative plans and discussed the various aspects of each. The grand opening of the Silver Saddle Ranch is scheduled for September 23, 2000, National Public Lands Day. Ms. Miller invited the public to participate in work projects, including construction of a portion of the parking area for the trail head, completion of the trail to Prison Hill, painting, trash pickup, a BBQ, and a blue grass band. She acknowledged that most of the trails shown on the proposed plan are existing. She pointed out proposed trails/roads and the group picnic area, and advised that public comments have been solicited regarding use fees. At the request of Chairperson Zimmerman, Ms. Miller explained the pilot fee program, which has been in effect since the fall of 1997, and the method by which said fees are allocated. She discussed development of a 501(c)(3) organization, Friends of the Silver Saddle, which could accept donations.

Member Walsh inquired as to volunteer opportunities for work on the staging area and Ms. Miller reiterated that the first opportunity will be during National Public Lands Day. Other opportunities will include putting up signs and blocking off certain roads. In addition, the BLM will need monitors to advise of vandalism, trash and debris, trail braiding, and problems with signs. Ms. Miller discussed the purpose of the Friends of the Silver Saddle Ranch, the need for a caretaker regardless of the chosen plan, and the need for a seasonal ranger to work with volunteers and help coordinate interpretive activities. She advised that the BLM hopes to share a law enforcement position with the City to patrol the area, close the gates at night, and address problems on the east side.

Ms. Miller explained that wildlife was considered extensively in the Proposed Plan as the Ranch is one of the last winter ranges for deer in the Eagle Valley. She discussed an extensive program to enhance the current wetlands, and advised of a three-year agreement with the City Utilities Department for irrigation. The grass hay will be contracted out through the City and, since the BLM does not own the water, the City will receive the proceeds. Cattle will continue to graze the old mat to improve the harvest. This plan would change if Alternative A is chosen, and she discussed options to the agreement if Alternative B is chosen.

Ms. Miller advised that no trails will be constructed on the west side of the Carson River as the plan coincides with the City's Carson River Master Plan Element and Trails Plan. These documents state that trails will not be constructed on both sides of the River in order to protect habitat. She pointed out the walking trail along the east side of the River and the access to the west side which is available through Carson River Park. She acknowledged that a trail will be developed to connect the staging area to BLM land. The BLM portion of the trail will be less restricted and subject to BLM's new regulations for the Pine Nut Mountain Range due to be published next year. Ms. Miller displayed the Trail Development map and advised that the BLM will cooperate with the City to develop a Mexican Ditch Trail and a Carson River Trail. The BLM continues to work closely with the City so that residents and visitors can enjoy a regional trail system. Ms. Miller commented that the management plan is long-term and will assist with natural resources planning. It considers fire, non-source point pollution, runoff, irrigation, appropriate fertilizers, and noxious weeds.

Ms. Miller discussed the Ambrose Carson River Natural Area ("ACRNA") which is one mile north of the Silver Saddle Ranch and includes private property and the Riverview Park. A parking lot and trail system have already been developed. She referred to page 7 of the draft plan, issue #10 and explained that the

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ACRNA will never be developed as much as the Silver Saddle because of the flood plain. The BLM is interested in developing the ACRNA interpretively, however, and Ms. Miller advised that student activities have already been taking place in the area.

Ms. Miller provided background information on development of the Silver Saddle Ranch plan, and emphasized the need for public comment. In response to a question, she reviewed the proposed schedule which had been previously distributed. She clarified that once the plan is approved, development can move forward without any further need for environmental assessments. Ms. Miller provided her e-mail address, as follows: christina_miller@nv.blm.gov.

In response to a question, Ms. Miller discussed capital costs, including repairs to the well system, installation of additional wells, repairs to electrical wiring, and vegetation and cultural resource maintenance. She advised that the Ranch cannot be opened to the public until the cottonwoods are trimmed and that a tree contract has been awarded.

At the request of Chairperson Zimmerman, Ms. Miller discussed her vision for the Friends of the Silver Saddle organization. She referred to the Friends of Red Rock Canyon in Clark County and discussed the activities of the volunteers. Discussion ensued regarding the budget on page 39 of the draft plan and, in response to a question, Ms. Miller explained the budget process. Vice Chairperson Clift requested that Ms. Miller provide updates to the Committee as to the budget which will be submitted on October 1st. Ms. Miller suggested that the Committee members contact congressmen and senators regarding funding for the Ranch. Chairperson Zimmerman inquired as to feedback received from the letter the Committee sent to John Singlaub, and discussion ensued with regard to the same. Ms. Miller emphasized that Mr. Singlaub is very much in support of the Silver Saddle Ranch.

Chairperson Zimmerman commended Ms. Miller and the BLM for development of the draft management plan. Ms. Miller thanked the Committee for their assistance with developing the plan, and the public for their support and involvement. Mr. Krahn suggested that the Committee provide any general comments at the June 7th meeting. Vice Chairperson Clift concurred with the idea of the Committee providing comments as a whole and requested that staff prepare a draft letter. Mr. Krahn suggested that the Committee members provide specific comments to Rosemary Johnson of Community Development. The comments will, in turn, be included in the June 7th agenda materials. Mr. Krahn advised that the draft management plan will also be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Commission for their review and comments. Discussion followed regarding trail usage fees, the Committee's comment process, and submission of individual comments to the BLM.

F-2. DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING A JOINT FIELD TRIP WITH THE OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO REVIEW RIVER PROPERTIES SUBMITTED FOR INCLUSION IN THE OPEN SPACE PROGRAM (1-0832) - Mr. Krahn advised of two properties which had been submitted for consideration by the Open Space Advisory Committee. He described their locations, and advised that, as of today, the Desormier property has been withdrawn from consideration. Staff has been attempting to contact the other property owner who had indicated an interest in the open space program. If staff is able to determine whether or not the property owner is still interested in having

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his property considered, a joint field trip will be scheduled with the Open Space Advisory Committee. Mr. Krahn advised that the Open Space Advisory Committee members feel very strongly about touring the properties under consideration. He discussed the tour conducted on April 18, 2000 with Jeff Winston and the Open Space Advisory Committee. He advised that a joint meeting may be scheduled with the Open Space Advisory Committee on June 5th.

At the request of Member Hall, Mr. Guzman described the property which Mr. Desormier was interested in making available. Mr. Krahn described the location of the property owned by Jerry Howard and Ken Santiago. Member Wright advised that there is presently no access to the Howard/Santiago property. No formal action was taken.

F-3. DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING A REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE'S MASTER PLAN GOALS, AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO (1-0960) - Chairperson Zimmerman referred to the Goals included in the agenda materials and reviewed the same. He suggested prioritizing the projects which will produce partnerships with various agencies and organizations, and the River inventory.

Vice Chairperson Clift inquired as to residential construction tax available for park development, and Mr. Krahn advised that staff had developed the monetary requirements for phase two development of Carson River Park last year. This will be resubmitted for review and consideration by the Parks and Recreation Commission. Mr. Krahn explained allocation of residential construction tax. Vice Chairperson Clift moved that in addition to submitting phase two recommendations, the Committee resubmit the unfunded portions of phase one. Following discussion, Vice Chairperson Clift withdrew her motion. Mr. Krahn committed to discussing the matter with Mr. Kastens and the Vice Chairperson.

Member Johnson expressed a concern over the direction and expectation of the BLM that Carson River Park will articulate with their plans. He expressed the opinion that completion of the park is critical as use will increase as the weather gets warmer and as the Silver Saddle Ranch opens. He pointed out the need for installation of a gate at the front end of the park in order to close the park in the evening, and discussed the need to continue with phase one and the balance of the development. Chairperson Zimmerman concurred with the comments of Vice Chairperson Clift and Member Johnson and suggested developing working groups to focus on the projects to ensure they are completed in a timely fashion. Member Johnson advised of his continued interest in the Carson River Park project. Vice Chairperson Clift also expressed an interest and discussed former member Robert Piccolo's previous involvement and continued interest. Chairperson Zimmerman requested a third volunteer and when none was forthcoming, he volunteered himself. Mr. Krahn will request the Parks Department Secretary to schedule a subcommittee meeting. Chairperson Zimmerman reviewed the projects listed as items 1-4, as follows: Phases 1, 2, and 3 of Carson River Park; the Silver Saddle Ranch; and the Ambrose Carson River Natural Area. He added the canoe portage area to the list and indicated that, since all the items are related, the subcommittee will continue to work on the projects.

Member Johnson discussed corrective action which was to be taken regarding the pathway/dike adjacent to the golf course. He suggested going through old minutes to determine whether there are other, similar

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issues to be addressed. Chairperson Zimmerman suggested that a member volunteer to reconcile outstanding issues which have been “dropped by the wayside.” Members Johnson and Wright volunteered, and Chairperson Zimmerman suggested that, as other members recall issues which need to be addressed, they bring them to the attention of Member Johnson.

Chairperson Zimmerman referred to the next project, “Establish Recreational Access - Southern Area (State Prison Lands).” (1-1342) Paul Pugsley, of the Upper Carson River CRMP, discussed fencing projects along the Prison property and plans to apply for diversion of water rights held by the Prison to enhance the lower portion of the property. Discussion ensued regarding possible installation of an electric line, and Mr. Pugsley acknowledged that actual, physical work to subsidize erosion areas on the River would be worthwhile. Discussion regarding possible recreation accesses followed. In response to a question, Mr. Pugsley advised that he would be able to present the project plans at the June 7th meeting.

Member Pettersen concurred with prioritizing the five construction projects and recommended that the Committee assign a number two priority to the River Inventory. He suggested that the wildlife studies done by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (“NRCS”) be incorporated into the Carson River Master Plan Element. He discussed the importance of understanding the River inventory to ensure that construction projects to not cause irreversible harm to the area. Chairperson Zimmerman referred to Gary Juenger’s presentation at the April meeting and the Committee’s subsequent direction to Mr. Juenger that he pursue grant funding for an actual field study. Discussion followed regarding the eroded stretch of River near the Prison, and the area from the Ambrose Carson River Natural Area to the Deer Run Road Bridge. Chairperson Zimmerman pointed out the importance of understanding the areas of concern from a stability and erosion control standpoint. He requested that the conservation district staff assist the Committee with grant writing or other means for conducting the assessments. Discussion regarding storm water drainage followed, and Mr. Krahn advised that Mr. Kastens is working together with Development Services Manager Mahmood Azad on this matter. With regard to the Army Corps of Engineers survey, Mr. Krahn advised that a general review based on the initial inventory had been submitted; however, he has had no contact with Army Corps of Engineers representatives within the last four or five months. Mr. Pugsley advised that the Army Corps of Engineers had offered to study the River for approximately \$2 million. In response to a question regarding water quality, Mr. Pugsley advised that the Department of Environmental Protection generates the reports. He suggested that these types of questions would be best addressed by the Carson Water Subconservancy District. Mr. Pugsley discussed the report generated by the Army Corps of Engineers 509(b) analysis based on the 1997 flood. Chairperson Zimmerman explained the U.S. Geological Survey report on water quality which is published each year, and discussion followed with regard to the same.

Chairperson Zimmerman discussed management of noxious weeds and wildlife infestations, specifically beavers. He suggested that the wildlife survey may provide some better understanding, and commented that the noxious weeds continue to be “an uphill battle.” He referred to Jane Schmidt’s comments at the April meeting with regard to this issue.

Member Walsh discussed the northern area of the Carson River as an additional project, including restoration of the washed out bridge leading into Brunswick Canyon. Member Wright inquired as to

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funding for those projects. Chairperson Zimmerman advised that the Committee has considered the Brunswick Canyon Bridge in the past. Member Walsh pointed out the historic significance of the bridge. Chairperson Zimmerman suggested adding recreational access to the railroad grade to the project list. Member Walsh suggested language, as follows: to promote continued access and improvement of the overall character of the northern portion of the River.

Vice Chairperson Clift inquired as to the redrafted resolution which was to be submitted to the Board of Supervisors. Supervisor Williamson advised that the item had been agendaized for the May 4, 2000 Board of Supervisors meeting. Mr. Krahn acknowledged that the revised membership criteria had been submitted as part of the resolution.

Chairperson Zimmerman referred to the River Inventory and requested input from the Committee. He commented that the items listed are still valid considerations. The Committee concurred that the current list is appropriate. Member Walsh pointed out that no member had been assigned the responsibility of historical/cultural resources and he indicated an interest in this area as it often coincides with recreational activities. Vice Chairperson Clift commented that the listed interests do not preclude the Committee members from involvement in cultural/historical points of interest. Member Johnson suggested including cultural resources in the inventory and the Committee concurred. No formal action was taken.

G. ADJOURNMENT (1-2150) - Member Pettersen moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried 7-0.

The Minutes of the May 3, 2000 meeting of the Carson River Advisory Committee are so approved this _____ day of June, 2000.

CHARLES ZIMMERMAN, Chairperson