

San Miguel County Open Space Commission (OSC) Meeting Minutes DRAFT

Date: Monday, August 22, 2022

Time: 4:00 PM MST (via Zoom)

Attendance:

OSC Members Present: Susie St. Onge, Yvette Henson, Sefra Maples, Jason Merritt, Roger Wickham

OSC Members Absent: Laura Kudo, Angela Dye

SMC Staff Present: Janet Kask, Deanna Drew, Rich Hamilton

Guest: DeeAnna Burbridge, Fairgrounds Coordinator

Call to Order: 4:03 p.m. by Chairperson St. Onge. A quorum was established.

Approval of 7/25/2022 Meeting Minutes: After a minor wording correction was made to the draft 7/25 meeting minutes, Roger made a motion to approve as amended, Sefra seconded the motion, and all voted in favor to approve.

Agenda Items:

County Fairgrounds Prairie Dog Issue: DeeAnna Burbridge, Fairgrounds Coordinator: DeeAnna reported that prairie dogs are moving into the ballfield and race track at the County Fairgrounds. Because the animals present a safety issue for Fairground users, staff is prepared to hire a professional company from Delta to eradicate the prairie dogs using carbon dioxide gas. The OSC was supportive of this action being taken.

OSC 2023 Budget: \$75K increase in PES program budget for 2023 (\$135K-\$210K), SMC currently has 3 participants and is looking for up to 4 more to participate in the program in 2022. GuSG program will remain in POS budget even though the program is now managed by the Natural Resources dept.; there is \$14,500 in the 2023 budget, which will serve as the funding match for the Restore grant obtained with the Montezuma Land Conservancy. In the past, the \$14,500. represented \$9,500 for the GuSG Coordinator's salary and \$5K for Zeedyk structures; there is a crossover with POS/OSC and NRSP departments' responsibilities for the GuSG program, as this initiative is still mentioned in the OSC's Work Plan. Roles and responsibilities need to be addressed and defined. There is a potential 2023 land conservation easement with Montezuma Land Conservancy that could require a \$50K-\$65K SMC Land Heritage Program commitment. **The next step will be to review and compare 2022 and 2023 OSC Work Plans with approved and projected OSC budgets.**

Old Business/Other Updates:

DVCT: August 9 was the official kickoff meeting of the DVCT feasibility study project. The County hired Otak, Inc. to oversee this project. The proposed new trail would be approximately 3.4 miles connecting the DV Park to M59 trail. This is a feasibility study to focus on the issues tied in with potentially constructing this trail. The priority is to see if this can happen by utilizing CDOT ROW and publicly-owned lands (BLM). If private property were necessary, conversations would take place with those landowners. Items to be addressed during this feasibility study include, but aren't limited to, briefing private property owners, potential trailhead and parking areas, snow removal, trail alignments, bridge crossings, road easements, etc. Otak is planning to hire a local public relations firm to manage public messaging and outreach for this project, while project study committees will be established to assist

with community outreach in individual neighborhoods. Staff has created a separate email for comments regarding this project: DVCT@sanmiguelcountyco.gov. Angela, Laura, and Susie have volunteered to assist Staff with the study committees.

OAG Mgmt. Policy/BOCC Comments: 7/27 BOCC (Commissioners Holstrom and Waring present) discussion comments were supportive of basic 'leave no trace' principles, but suggested bringing facilities back on line for camping events with added picnic tables and a shade structure. Access, potential porta potties and polycarts, parking and permitting were also discussed.

Mill Creek Park/BOCC Comments: 7/27 discussion with BOCC (Commissioners Holstrom and Waring present) comments were supportive, they liked the look and natural feel of the park plans, the unobtrusive look from the spur and wanted to make sure the site was ADA compliant. Staff discussed proposed budget figures from Superbloom and the handling of items in-house vs. hiring contractors. Staff mentioned and stipulated grant dollars would be pursued. Restrictive covenants by SMVC won't allow drilling for a well on the site, so it appears purchasing a water tap from the Town of Telluride may be the best solution for providing water for irrigation and drinking.

Perimeter Trail/BOCC Comments: BOCC is supportive of the new trail. The site walk of the phase 1, potential Tram Tower Road alignment has been rescheduled for September due to summer rains.

E-Bikes- Signage/Regional Rec. Collaborative: At the request of the BOCC, NRSP Director Starr Jamison is heading up a new Regional Recreational Collaborative and will discuss e-bike usage at a future BOCC meeting and its impact in the County on a larger scale. Staff stated one of the main conflicts is trying to accommodate various user groups at the same time on single-track trails. Rich explained that because many County trails connect with USFS trails and e-bikes are disallowed on USFS trails, then the County also disallows e-bikes to discourage them on trails in the National Forest. Staff regularly sees e-bikes on County trails that are posted for No E-bike usage. It is the staff's opinion that Class 1 e-bikes don't create additional impacts to trails but Class 2 and 3 do create more impacts to trails than mountain bikes. Commuters are interested in riding e-bikes on the Galloping Goose Trail from Ilium to Telluride, but this is USFS land so no e-bikes are allowed there. 'No E-bike' signs continue to be vandalized and removed from posts on County trails.

Crossover Report: Susie provided an August TOT crossover report. There is talk of a new trail crossing Bear Creek and leading to the Perimeter Trail. The EPA clean up on Valley Floor is almost complete, but a written revegetation plan wasn't provided, as the EPA is only reclaiming the site and not restoring it.

Next meeting Monday, September 26, 2022 @ 4:00 pm

Meeting adjourned @5:30 by Chairperson St. Onge