
MINUTES
Monolith Ranch Advisory Committee
September 18, 2014, 1:00 PM
405 Grand Ave., Laramie, WY
Annex Conference Room

The regular meeting of the Monolith Ranch Advisory Committee will meet at the Historic Carnegie Building, 405 Grand Avenue, 1st Floor Conference Room.

I. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Paul Rechar, Joe Lord, Jason Sherwood, Vicki Henry, and Earl Smith
Staff Present: Danielle Brewer and Darren Parkin
Absent: Cal Van Zee and David Evertson

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION BY HENRY, seconded by Sherwood, to approve the agenda. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION BY LORD, seconded by Rechar, to approve the minutes from the July 17, 2014 meeting as edited in the last email sent. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IV. NEW BUSINESS

None reported at this time

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Committee's Structure and Elections

City Council approved the resolution (2014-59) to restructure the Ranch Advisory Committee. Effective from this meeting forward the committee will consist of five (5) volunteers with staff serving as liaisons, staff will no longer have a vote. Electing a slate of officers consisting of a Chair and a Vice Chair; Joe Lord was nominated as Chair and accepted, Vicky Henry was nominated as Vice Chair and accepted.

MOTION BY SMITH, seconded by Sherwood, to elect Joe as Chair and Vicky as Vice Chair for the Ranch Advisory Committee. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. Standing Report from Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan Ad Hoc Advisory Committee

Vicky Henry provided an update from the Ad Hoc advisory committee. The master plan has gone through the approval process through various committee's and departments. There are a few members residing in the county (private property) that are very much against seeing symbols on or near their property, resulting in a word change within the master plan; the word "proposed" throughout the whole document has been changed to read "recommended" and all maps show a new clause stating "the specific location of all recommended parks, paths and trails are hypothetical in nature and may change at the time of development." The property owners have also asked that all dashed lines and shaded areas within the one mile donut around the city limits be removed. The committee is continuing to process through the 46 comments received on the plan.

C. Quarterly Report from Water Resource Specialist

All irrigation water from the Laramie River was shut off at the Monolith Ranch on September 15. 18" of water was applied to the alfalfa after the center pivot was restarted after the first cutting. The final downloads of the data loggers have been completed, but the diversion records for this year have not yet been compiled. A lot of open flow measurements were done, so some data will need to be shifted. The records will be compiled to obtain the final numbers later this fall and provided to the committee. The records are currently located in Darren's office. The hay crew started cutting the grass hay in the Big Meadow on September 16, and with the amount of remaining acreage they will probably be haying for the next few weeks. Depending on the weather, some additional irrigation water may be turned on after they are finished.

The ranch irrigator, Jesse Lee, ends his seasonal employment with the City on September 30, and he has done a good job all summer long.

Beaver dams in the Dowlin Ditch caused some minor flooding of some Bath Ranch hay meadows, causing the City irrigator to have to remove them on a daily basis. There are also infrastructure deficiencies on the Bath Ranch, and these problems caused us to divert less water from the river than we wanted to in the name of neighbor relations. These issues, when combined with not being allowed to run late season irrigation water in the Haul Road Ditch, means that accommodating the Bath Ranch is a definite hindrance to the consumptive use plan.

A major issue also arose with a neighboring landowner across the river, Smiley Lentz, and the individual leasing his land, Tom Rardin. There is some river bottom acreage on the Lentz property upstream from the Dowlin diversion dam that Smiley and Tom wanted to dry out and try to hay. Thus, it was their opinion that the City needed to open all of the gates on the Dowlin diversion dam to lower the river level. So, on August 16 they began opening up the gates on the diversion dam and caused a series of issues with our being unable to provide irrigation water to the center pivot. In response to these actions the City retained the legal services of water attorney Harriet Hageman from Hageman Law in Cheyenne. Ms. Hageman, City Attorney Dave Clark and Darren conducted a field inspection of the Monolith Ranch and the diversion structure on August 21, and subsequently a response letter was produced that was mailed to Mr. Lentz on August 29. To date there has been no further response or action from Mr. Lentz or Mr. Rardin.

The Federal Trapper for Wildlife Services here in town, approached Darren regarding enrolling the Monolith Ranch in an aerial coyote gunning program in collaboration with Game and Fish's Mule Deer Reintroduction. Darren asked for Jason to provide more information when it is gathered.

No further activity has taken place since the last RAC meeting concerning the Bath shale quarry expansion, City Ranch Road, or the Pioneer pasture rehabilitation.

D. Pivot Update from Water Resource Specialist

P Diamond's contract has been terminated. There are current issues with the GPS telemetry and the flow meter. Discussion will be made for another company to come in and provide maintenance services.

E. Titus Survey Update from Water Resource Specialist

A contract was awarded to JR Barnes Consulting in Cheyenne to survey the lands being irrigated under the Dowlin Ditch and to prepare a water rights petition to the State Board of Control. Unfortunately, Mr. Barnes was unable to acquire the necessary insurance and had to decline the job. Therefore, a meeting was held with HDR, also out of Cheyenne, and they were offered the opportunity to take on this project. It is anticipated that they will be under contract and begin work in the next few weeks. HDR's proposal will be emailed to the committee

F. Lease Negotiations

The RAC lease renewal subcommittee met on August 20, and discussed several key components in the current lease that could be changed. Each member of the subcommittee has been working on their edits and another meeting will be scheduled soon to bring everyone's ideas together and produce a lease renewal proposal for Stanley Baer by November 1st. One major component of the lease renewal process that has yet to be decided is whether or not to lease the Hunziker property to Feeding Laramie Valley.

MOTION BY HENRY, for the committee to continue negotiations with Feeding Laramie Valley to lease the Hunziker parcel as described in the proposal. With no second, the motion dies.

The floor was opened for discussion concerning the proposal from Feeding Laramie Valley including the current use for that acreage, the house on that property and any effects this would have on the water rights.

MOTION BY HENRY, seconded by Lord, that the Ranch Advisory Committee does not object to a lease on the 50 acres because it does not impact the water rights being converted. **MOTION CARRIED TWO FOR AND ONE AGAINST.**

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

None reported at this time.

VII. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is set for October 16, 2014, at 1:00 pm.

VIII. AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

- A.** Lease Negotiations – Feeding Laramie Valley
- B.** Standing Report from Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan Ad Hoc Advisory Committee
- C.** Quarterly Report from Water Resource Specialist
- D.** Pivot Update from Water Resource Specialist
- E.** Titus Survey Update from Water Resource Specialist

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL

S. Danielle Brewer

Secretary
Ranch Advisory Committee

Date