
MINUTES
Monolith Ranch Advisory Committee
April 2, 2015, 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, and Jason Sherwood
Staff Present: Danielle Brewer, Dave Derragon and Darren Parkin
Absent: David Evertson, Jayne Pearce and Earl Smith
Guests Present: Mindy Meade – US Fish and Wildlife Services, Paula Wilson-Cazier – COL City Manager’s Office, Jeff Streeter – Trout Unlimited, Lee McDonald – Game and Fish.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Request from Paul Wilson-Cazier from the COL City Manager’s Office to move her new agenda item to the front so the office will have available coverage.

MOTION BY Rechar, seconded by Sherwood, to approve the agenda with the change in order of New Business items. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION BY Rechar, seconded by Sherwood, to approve the minutes from the February 12, 2015 meeting as sent via email. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Open Meetings Act and Public Records Act – Paula Wilson-Cazier, City Manager’s Office

See the following attachments; *Wyoming Public Records and the Open Meetings Act 2012 Presentation* and *Wyoming Public Documents and Open Meetings Act – Effective July 1, 2012.*

The Opens Meeting Act and Public Records Act training has been presented on an annual basis. The City is currently working to include Ad Hoc committees into the training to exercise due diligence in terms of everybody’s awareness of the legislation and when it comes to conduct collectively as representatives of boards and commissions. The Wyoming Open Meetings and Public Records Acts were amended by the legislature in 2012. Guest Wilson-Cazier presented *Wyoming Public Records and the Open Meetings Act 2012 Presentation* and *Wyoming Public Documents and Open Meetings Act – Effective July 1, 2012* to the committee addressing the committee’s questions and concerns in further detail.

No motion necessary at this time.

B. Goforth Reservoir rebuild potential – Mindy Meade, Jeff Streeter and Lee McDonald

The nature of business is to find opportunities on privately owned land, such as the Monolith Ranch, for fish and wildlife. The common denominator that keeps being brought up in conversations is the Goforth Reservoir on the ranch. The goal is a brief discussion to determine the interest of the RAC with some type of project on the Goforth. Some of the partnerships that could potentially be involved within the water fowl project include: Audubon (locally) and well as regionally has been looking for opportunities to get community people out on the grounds, Ducks Unlimited (locally) are looking for a project to put locally raised funds back into the community, Ducks Unlimited regionally is interested in a project within the Laramie Plains as well. State agency partnerships could include: Game and Fish has interest in providing community fisheries within a few miles of willing communities – always looking for opportunities in developing fisheries – possible funding options are available. Trout Unlimited would also encourage the development of a community/urban fishery, perhaps for the younger generation, in relationship with the Game and Fish. Trout Unlimited would work with Game and Fish and possibly bring in the match for the funding options (Wyoming Wildlife Natural Resource Trust).

The proposal brought forward is to evaluate the previous engineer's report (WWC) regarding the reservoir being capable of being redesigned, see what the possibilities are (fisheries, fowl habitat, etc.) – working with Duck's Unlimited Engineers – if the costs are in line and we would like to move forward or if we are comfortable with the way the reservoir works now, that is okay too. Keeping in mind with the discussion there is funding, grants and working relationships available to assist.

Floor was open for discussion. Discussion included past engineer's report regarding water flow being low, priorities of fishery vs. water fowl, water rights, bringing the lessee into the discussion regarding public access if it goes that direction, consumptive use and council interest.

Committee members allowed permission for Mindy to bring in Duck's Unlimited Engineer for a site visit and provide them with the previous engineer's report from several years back for a current investigation on some of the options available. Contact for this project are Darren Parkin and Dave Derragon.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Lease Negotiation and House Inspection Update – Water Resource Manager

The sub lease committee has met with Stanley Baer and Bob Coreless a couple of times since the lease was released to them for review. The parties involved are close to agreeing on the final lease terms, with the exception of meeting with Council Member Jayne Pearce for further recommendations. The draft lease the RAC last saw went through legal review unchallenged with very minor revisions. The \$50,000 flat grazing fee was not objected; however, the biggest point of discussion within the lease terms was in regards to the hay. We are currently getting \$40,000/year for hay, the committee suggested \$60,000/year and Stanley countered with \$45,000/year.

The housing reports have not yet been filed; however, the City Inspector has been out to view the houses. The City is planning to undertake a few thousand dollars per residence to bring the houses up to health and safety standards, not necessarily City code, but to a standard we feel is acceptable with the primary cost going towards wiring/electrical. There was found to be no structural problems or other major issues with the residences. The Hunziker has some minor roofing items and bad windows but again it is primarily electrical. Potentially we will look at putting some kind of treatment systems on the drinking water at the residences; the river ranch house basically pulls water right out of the river and the Hunziker has some issues with water quality there also. Regarding the agreement with the lessee and the housing situation, Stanley is agreeable to what has been proposed and the housing is still within the lease documentation, with the knowledge of signing that he is responsible for the welfare of the occupants under his employment.

B. Feeding Laramie Valley Update – Water Resource Manager

Darren drafted a rough copy cash lease for Feeding Laramie Valley and forwarded to Janine Jordan, City Manager and Dave Derragon for review. Would like for Janine and Dave to visit the site so they can be acquainted with how the property is laid out and away of some of the issues discussed. Ultimately, the lease will go before Council for a vote. The lease entails keeping the house with the current lessee, the risk is assumed by Feeding Laramie Valley, the COL will not guarantee they will have success in their crops, and Feeding Laramie Valley will incur all the expense for the entire operation.

Discussion is still in progress regarding the current lessee and the lease with Feeding Laramie Valley.

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

The committee is half way through the public comment period on the final report. The next meeting will occur on April 8th to receive and discuss any final comments on the draft report. From this point the plan could move forward to County Planning/Zoning, City Planning/Zoning, County Commission and City Council.

D. Hunter Management Plan Update – Jason Sherwood

See the following attachments: Walk-in and Hunter Management Area Payment Schedules, HMA agreement with Game and Fish and COL, map of current hunter management area.

Since the last agreement, done last year, the commission met last week and approved a pay rate increase to land owners; this will take effect when renewing this year with a gain of approximately \$500.00. The payment schedule shows the new changes. Everything else within the lease will remain the same and is shown in the agreement attached.

The white tail deer seem to be an issue on the pivot with the green alfalfa; a possible solution proposed are archers/youth can shoot any deer with permission slips. Another topic to discuss is the use of portable blinds for archery and if the landowner would approve them or not; the main issue being how long the portable blind would be allowed to be left.

Due to the lack of quorum on the committees behalf (as Jason recused himself from voting), the discussion regarding use of portable blinds has been tabled until the next meeting.

E. Quarterly Report – Water Resource Manager

Construction activity on the ranch includes: replacing the culvert going into Jerry Yate’s yard on the Bath Ranch where their driveway crosses the haul road ditch – work was done and completed by Domino Construction and the head gate at the center pivot is being redone where it blocks the water off into the pumping pond – work being done by Domino Construction. Gilbert Weaver is under contract to replant the alfalfa, the plan is to deep rip it, disc it twice and put in an oats cover crop – the farming will start immediately and will be replanted the first part of May. Staff hauled approximately 1100 tons of compost from the landfill to the ranch to mix in with the alfalfa field when they rip it, this will be spread in the next week. The cattle are starting to be moved off the ranch around the Gorforth, most of them will be shipped out by the 15th - the ranch will go from over two thousand to just a couple hundred. Some of loggers have been installed to prepare for the irrigation season, the plan is to get the haul road ditch on by the 15th. Preston was hired as the ranch irrigator, he has a lot of ranching background and is from Erie, CO. Snow pack is measured at 80%, without further moisture the season ending snow report will be around 60-65% which will make for a dry year.

Bath quarry expansion and City Ranch road have no updates.

F. Pivot Update – Water Resource Manager

The third payment was withheld from P-Diamonds and they are no longer on the job. L&M out of Lingle, WY was hired to replace P-Diamonds and finish out the work. The pump and motor has been relocated to dry ground and a 21” PVC has been put into the pond with twin 15” risers. Pre-season maintenance was performed on the pivot to have it ready for the season. The final issue is the GPS monitoring of the pivot, this function never worked, come to discover the radio was never installed. Water will run through the pivot mid-May.

G. Titus Survey Update – Water Resource Manager

Murray with WWC is officially off of the job and terms could not be reached with HDR on a contract between them. As of now, HDR is trying to find a sub to do the surveying. A meeting with HDR, Dave Derragon and Darren will occur in the next week. The project is four months behind schedule.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Danielle will be stepping down as the RAC Secretary and the new administrative assistant to Public Works will be stepping as secretary.

VII. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is set for July 9, 2015, at 1:00 pm.

VIII. AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

- A.** Lease negotiation update
- B.** House inspections update
- C.** Feeding Laramie Valley update
- D.** Standing Report from Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan Ad Hoc Advisory Committee
- E.** Hunter Management Plan update from Jason Sherwood
- F.** Quarterly Report from Water Resource Specialist
- G.** Pivot Update from Water Resource Specialist
- H.** Titus Survey Update from Water Resource Specialist

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully Submitted,

S/Danielle Brewer

Secretary

Ranch Advisory Committee

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL

Date