

**Fountain Creek Watershed, Flood Control and Greenway District
Citizens Advisory Group**

**Meeting Minutes
July 11, 2014**

The meeting was held at:
City of Fountain, City Hall
116 S. Main Street, 2nd Floor
Fountain, CO

1. Call to Order, Establish Quorum and Introductions

The July 11, 2014 meeting of the Fountain Creek Watershed, Flood Control and Greenway District (“FCWD”) Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) was called to order by Ms. Irene Kornelly, Chairperson, at approximately 9:30 a.m. A quorum was noted, with the following members of the CAG in attendance:

Irene Kornelly – Chairperson
Jerry Cordova – Vice Chairperson
Richard Skorman - CAG Representative to the FCWD Governing Board
Ferris Frost – Alternate CAG Representative to the FCWD Governing Board
Jack Wallick – CAG Secretary
John Chavez – TAC Chair and Representative to the CAG
Dan Henrichs
Lois Illick
Ross Vincent
Jordan Vana

CAG Members not present:
Mary Barber – FCWD Web Manager
Elaine Kleckner
Allison Plute
Tom Ready

Also in attendance:
Terry Hart, Pueblo County Commissioner
Larry Small, Executive Director Fountain Creek Watershed District

2. Approve Agenda of July 11, 2014 Meeting

Upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the July 11, 2014 Agenda was approved.

3. Approve Minutes of June 13, 2014 Meeting

Upon motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the amended June 13, 2014 Minutes were approved.

4. Presentation:

a. Frost Ranch Demonstration Project – Graham Thompson, Matrix Design Group. The presentation was postponed until August.

b. El Paso County Fire and Flood Recovery Efforts – John Chavez, El Paso County and FCWB TAC.

John gave an in-depth report on county recovery efforts, with PowerPoint slides and photographs.

- The Waldo Canyon Fire burned over 18,000 acres and 347 homes,

- At this point about \$48 million has been spent on recovery efforts,
- Early on, El Paso County became involved in the Regional Recovery Group, comprised of representatives from Colorado Springs, El Paso County, CDOT, U.S. Forest Service, and virtually all other entities associated with recovery efforts.
- The Watershed Analysis of River Stability and Sediment Supply (WARRSS) study after the fire provided an indication of watershed areas that needed to be addressed first, but the study didn't prioritize individual projects, so criteria were developed to prioritize the different elements in the recovery process. The list included:
 - Impacts to US Hwy 24, which has a heavy economic impact when shut down
 - Cascade-area projects (east of Hwy 24). Work included debris removal and structure protection in Sand Gulch and Wellington Gulch. Road water bars and rock and crib walls were also built or improved. The county put 36 drainage control structures into the area, right up to, but not including, national forest property, as well as grade control in drainage channels. Many catchment structures were designed to fill with sediment and then serve as grade control. About \$450,000 was spent on this part of the project. Using native material in the area saved a considerable amount of money.
 - The Rainbow Falls Basin clean-out project (in response to CDOT's box culvert project to channel flood waters under the highway). The one-acre, depression-era structure was cleaned out and rehabilitated by removing trees and about 3,300 cubic yards of decomposed granite that had accumulated over the years. This part of the effort cost the county less than \$300,000.
 - The county also did a lot of work in the Manitou Springs area. About 150 feet of protection work was done along Serpentine Drive and by the bottling plant. The county also did some preliminary work in Williams Canyon, although there was not enough money to do a serious geo-technical analysis of the complex geometry and geology of the canyon, and the county is no longer involved in work in that area. The terrain is not conducive to heavy equipment or water catchment. Manitou Springs is performing much of their work lower down. There is a plan to install an early-warning, flood detection system in the canyon, using wireless technology and cameras, although terrain issues are complicating it too.
 - Other areas were discussed, including residential non-compliant cesspools, efforts to buy a house located in the flood plain, and other issues.
 - John estimated that total project costs have run into the range of \$650,000 of the \$1.2 million grant award. Four more projects are anticipated; with the deadline for spending being in September (John will request a 220-day extension to allow Manitou Springs to complete their Phase 1 work, allowing the county to evaluate their approach to follow-on work in the area).
 - Referring to the subsequent September 2013 floods, John reported that the county submitted another Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) funding Request. However, because of the magnitude of the event and impacts up north, the Department of Public Safety – Office of Emergency Management entered into the agreement as the sponsor with NRCS. As good news, they will be covering half of the 25 percent local match. Following the event, the county planned the recovery work in two phases, but due to funding limitations, the second phase was not funded. The three funded projects are: Cascade middle channel work, work on the K5 Ranch off Old Pueblo Road, and work in Seven Falls. Unfortunately, lack of cooperation from utilities companies will likely scuttle the K5 Ranch work down south.
- Ross asked a question about the level of maintenance required for the projects the county has implemented. John responded that design and planning focused on minimizing follow-on maintenance, so the smaller catchment basins were designed to eventually fill and serve as gradient control. The large holding facility was designed to be pumped out (4-inch trash pump at less than \$350/episode), with sediment/debris being removed as needed. The county has also agreed with CDOT to perform maintenance on the Rainbow Falls structure.

- Terry Hart inquired whether water rights were a factor in any of the diversion or catchment structures rehabilitated or built. John answered by saying that all structures were at or below grade, so they drain; some were holding groundwater; and that the State Engineer's Office would be sending an inspector to all EWP projects to evaluate them for that issue. John went on to say that there are efforts being made to legislatively exempt below grade structures funded by federal EWP funds, from those issues. Larry Small added that the State Engineer's Office had ruled that these structures do require augmentation. There are groups working to reverse that decision, but at this point water rights are very much an issue. John added that early NRCS guidance was that above grade structures are impoundments; below grade are not.

5. Reports.

a. Governing Board Meeting. Larry Small reported that members of the Board met but failed to reach a quorum. No business was conducted. In related Board activity Larry reported as follows.

- The Cheyenne Creek Open House was held the previous evening. About 70 members of the public attended during the 2 1/2 hour period. There was also good coverage from local media. Citizen comments were good. Larry was pleased with the citizen interactions. Another open house will be next Tuesday (July 14) at Ute Pass Elementary School for upper Fountain Creek.
- Larry went on to report on his presentation to the Arkansas Valley Roundtable describing the next phases of Fountain Creek stormwater management study. The CAG received a similar briefing in previous meeting. The multi-phase study was to be funded by a grant that the Roundtable had to approve before going to the Colorado Water Conservation Board. Despite working with leadership ahead of the meeting, the issue of water rights took over the discussion and no resolution was reached. The upshot to the District is that we have \$50 million to apply to flood control and other needs per the charter, but to meet our mission we may have to fund a lot of legal work relating to water rights, something that could be resolved to everyone's benefit by working together. A lengthy discussion followed in which various alternate paths were evaluated, with the goal of balancing water rights and property protection.
- Dan Henrichs offered useful guidance in selling ourselves to the individual shareholders and boards involved in each ditch company. He thinks we need to be on the agendas of ditch company annual meetings, which occur in the fall. The advantage of our holding facilities and delayed release upon demand, despite evaporation and transit losses, should be communicated to the users, who should likewise be responsive to the idea.
- Consensus building was agreed to be key in this process.

b. TAC Meeting. Irene Kornelly reported that the TAC did not have a July meeting.

c. Outreach Group. Irene reported on Outreach Group activities.

- Jerry Cordova distributed handouts on Creek Week and the proposed citizens Storm Water Initiative.
- The group met May 12 and Rich Muzzy of PPACG offered ideas and suggestions to help the Outreach Group meet its goal of raising awareness of the District and its role. Topics included branding, messaging, newsletter, and funding opportunities.
- The group will have a booth/table at the El Paso County Fair on July 23. Volunteers Ferris Frost, Jerry Cordova, Jeff Besse, Allison Plute, and Jack Wallick will be manning the booth.
- Irene pointed the information sheet on Creek Week. She emphasized the importance of Creek Week and encouraged people to participate, particularly if they can organize a group to tackle a designated area of the creek, or even an adjacent park. The event runs from September 27 to October 5. Allison is heading up the project, and either she or Jerry can be contacted for more information.
- The group is looking into a speakers bureau and speakers kit, and the topic will be on the agenda for the group's next meeting.
- Next meeting is Monday July 14, at the Water Department on Alabama, primarily to become familiarized with the stormwater display for the county fair.

d. Citizens Stormwater Initiative. As reported above, CAG members received a handout for the

Stormwater Taskforce's public meetings on the proposed initiative.

e. Website and Facebook Page.

- Photos of the Frost Ranch Bank Restoration, showing the use of KoriWrap, are under the Progress Bar, in Sediment Control, on the website. Thanks to Graham Thompson of Matrix for the photos.
- An update on the SDS Fountain Creek Improvement project is also on the website, in Flood Control, under the Progress Bar. Again, thanks to Matrix.
- The interactive map button, on the website, now contains the animated Google Earth view of District projects.
- There is now a Creek Week button at the lower right of the home page.
- Larry commented on the many contacts the website brings in, often similar organizations want to emulate our programs and projects.

6. Old Business. There was no old business.

7. New Business. Irene announced that the Fountain Creek Nature Center is having a Fountain Creek Firelight Evening Friday July 18 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. There will be a presentation and discussion on the history of Fountain Creek and the Fountain area.

8. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

9. Next Meeting. The next scheduled CAG meeting will be Friday August 8, 2014 at 9:30 a.m. in the Fountain City Hall, 116 W. Main, second floor meeting room.

10. Adjourn:

Upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at approximately 11:12 a.m.