

### ***Roll Call***

Jeff Cospolich called the April 13, 2009 BOSAC meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. Other BOSAC members present included Erin Hunter, Ellen Hollinshead, Dennis Kuhn, Monique Merrill, Peter Joyce and Scott Yule. Staff members present were Heide Andersen and Scott Reid. Brian Lorch from Summit County Government and Art Girten from OSAC were present. Audrey Huffa and Dennis Flanagan were also present, as were Mayor Warner and Mike Zobbe. Shelley Grail and Paul Semmer from the USFS were present for a portion of the meeting, as was Gene Dayton.

### ***Approval of Minutes***

The minutes were approved as presented.

### ***Approval of Agenda***

The election of the BOSAC chairperson was added to the beginning of the agenda.

Dennis Kuhn was unanimously selected as the new chairperson of BOSAC.

### ***Public Comments***

There were no public comments.

### **Staff Summary**

#### **Budget Cuts:**

Ms. Andersen outlined the budget cuts initiated by staff to address declining sales tax revenues.

Mr. Joyce: I am concerned about the 1% revenue growth assumption. You might want to have a contingency plan for the pro forma, in case the numbers go down.

Mr. Yule: Are we pursuing a grant for Turk's Trail? (Yes, but we are awaiting word as to whether the grant was approved.)

#### **Highway 9 Recpath:**

Mr. Kuhn: Should we plan a site visit for the Highway 9 recpath for next month? (Staff will schedule the site visit.)

### **Open Space and Trails**

**Mr. Warner:** Welcome to BOSAC Peter Joyce and Erin Hunter. I would like to see more interaction between BOSAC and Council. Council is eager to hear BOSAC's advice as an advisory committee. I support the idea of moving the meeting to an off week to allow Council to review the BOSAC minutes. Please thank Matt Stais for his tireless work on BOSAC. Thanks to Mr. Kuhn for stepping up as the new chairperson. Leadership means making sure everyone is heard. As you know, the economy is not in great shape. Council made tier 1 cuts in October, 2008. As we anticipated, it was not enough. Therefore we cut another 6%, another 1.3 million, from the Town budget, which is a lot. We may need to make tier 3 cuts as well, and we will discuss that topic in late May. The good news is that there are some strong local sectors. There are some bright spots, but we as Council plan to follow BOSAC's funding carefully. Being opportunistic is important, though. If we need to dip into the general funds, please approach Council if an open space acquisition dictates it. Let's not miss good acquisition opportunities. I

heard the retreat went well. I think another should be planned for this year, especially to benefit the new members. Consider the management of the open space parcels, especially as it relates to forest health considerations. We want to show the community that we acquire properties and also take care of them, with trails, forest health, etc. We need to walk the talk in terms of MPB and defensible space. Make sure you all are familiar with the open space plan. Refer to it often and revise it if we need to. The document outlines the acquisition and management priorities. Please make sure you read your packet in advance of the meetings. Make sure everyone is being heard and strive to reach consensus to be passed along to Council.

### **Cucumber Gulch Preserve monitoring**

Audrey Hoffa presented the results of the Cucumber Gulch Preserve monitoring program for 2008. Overall, everything looks pretty good, with a few exceptions.

Water surveys were performed three times last year (May, August, October) and only one site is of concern: Surface Water #9. This site, which is below Boulder Ridge and Glenwild, has shown elevated levels of suspended solids, dissolved solids and chloride. This indicator should be followed very closely, because results such as this could mean a reduction in native species and an infestation of invasive species, which are more salt tolerant.

Mr. Joyce: Is there an obvious repair to be made? (Not at this time, but monitoring of the construction and road runoff is important.)

Mr. Lorch: NWCCOG has a website for tracking water quality in the Blue River drainage and this could be useful for tracking long term trends in the area.

Vegetation: There were no significant changes to report this year. 114 plants have been identified in the Cucumber Gulch Preserve. There was a reduction in canopy cover, which is often correlated with a reduction in precipitation, which was the case this past year. Weeds continue to be a concern, particularly coast tarweed, dame's rocket, scentless chamomile and yellow toadflax. Ongoing eradication efforts have proved successful, but need to be continued. The impact of grooming activities on willow reproduction study revealed what we suspected: grooming and vegetation trimming reduces the reproduction and productivity of willows. The snow compaction from grooming shortens the growing season. This is fairly intuitive, but was proven by this study.

Avian: 55 avian species have been identified in the Cucumber Gulch Preserve. Birds are most active between May and July, which means reducing construction activities then is a good practice. One issue of concern is the increase in the presence of corvids (e.g. ravens, crows) and brown-headed cowbirds. This is not a statewide trend, and is likely related to anthropogenic disturbance and an increase in edge habitat from the construction of the gondola and the Peak 7 construction. We have seen a 500% increase in brown-headed cowbird populations since the gondola and Peak 7 construction started. This needs to be monitored carefully, but there is little we can do at this point to reduce this trend. The warbling vireo is back, which is great news because it was not found in Cucumber in 2006. Statewide, the warbling vireo numbers are declining, so this pattern is likely not Cucumber-specific. We have not seen an osprey in Cucumber since 2006. Violet-green swallow numbers rebounded in 2008, which is good news.

The green winged teal was not spotted in 2008, which is not huge cause for concern. We initiated owl surveys based on a long-eared owl sighting in October of 2007. The surveys revealed no owls, however. Overall, the avian populations are in good shape, but the increase in corvids and brown-headed cowbirds is cause for concern.

Mammals: Mammalian populations are doing well. The beaver population typically fluctuates, which is true in Cucumber, but the population looks strong. We noted an increase in the residential moose population in the Preserve to four individuals: a bull, a cow, a juvenile and a calf. These are permanent residents of Cucumber Gulch Preserve. Dogs present an ongoing problem. The motion detector cameras are yielding great results.

General Conclusions:

- Water quality mostly pristine
- Vegetation within Gulch uncompromised
- Weeds around perimeter need addressing
- Neotropical migratory bird species #s declined
- Violet-green swallow numbers declined
- Brown-headed cowbird density increased
- Abundance of corvids increased
- Beavers showed no response
- Moose showed differential responses

Recommendations:

- Educate the public on the value of Cucumber Gulch
- Continue to monitor water quality in Cucumber Gulch, especially because of the recent and future development upstream
- Prevent direct discharge of sediment-laden water into the Gulch, particularly where there is wetland sensitive vegetation
- Remove ripped stormwater channel in the Boulder Ridge development as soon as possible and eliminate any direct discharges of stormwater from the development
- Continue vegetation monitoring, in particular investigate the impact of nordic trail maintenance on biodiversity in the willow community
- Enforce dog restrictions
- Continue monthly songbird surveys throughout the summer months to get a more accurate estimation of population sizes
- Conduct dusk bird surveys to document those species more active at dusk than dawn
- Continue to quantify ungulate populations and habitat use
- Restrict anthropogenic activity from May to August in order to minimize the impact on breeding birds and mammals.

Mr. Kuhn: We still need to get a handle on the dogs in the Gulch. Perhaps it makes sense to print the fine structure on the portal signage.

Mr. Cospolich: A well-timed letter to the paper could also help.

### **Summit Huts Proposal**

Mike Zobbe presented on a preliminary proposal by Summit Huts Association to design and build a new hut on the joint Town/County-owned Florence Lode, located just south of Black Gulch. We would like to get a parallel route to get people off French Gulch Road, which gets plowed periodically and may get plowed more in the future. The proposed trail access would be over four miles long, and would require 1.75 miles of new trail construction along an existing ditch, pending NEPA analysis and USFS approval of the trail. Our goal is to construct a 1404 sq ft cabin, which could house twelve guests. This would meet the backcountry zoning requirements. We want to design the hut to get the best possible passive solar gain and the highest level of energy efficiency possible. We want to get away from firewood. The trailhead access and parking issues need to be resolved, but I think we bring good solutions to the table for all users. We are proposing removing the 'cat house' on National Forest and replace it with additional parking with at least five overnight spots for hut guests. We are offering to help develop a comprehensive parking plan for the Lincoln Townsite. If approved by both OSAC and BOSAC, we propose a lease agreement that allows for a percentage of gross income to go to the Town and County for use of the Florence Lode. We estimate that the project will cost \$600,000: \$300,000 for actual construction and \$300,000 for an endowment. We have not started fundraising yet and will not start until the Town and County discuss, evaluate and approve the proposal. We will also have to work through issues with the current alignment of the Black Gulch Road, which traverses a wetland.

Mr. Kuhn: BOSAC needs to discuss whether this is an appropriate use of open space. I propose we discuss this topic at the next BOSAC meeting.

Ms. Hollinshead: Perhaps this is a good topic for a joint BOSAC/OSAC meeting.

### **East Adams Trail**

In the interest of time, this agenda topic was tabled until the May BOSAC meeting.

### **2009 Forest health initiatives**

Mr. Reid outlined the open space forest health and wildfire mitigation projects for 2009. Council has reviewed these projects and indicated preliminary support for the efforts. We anticipate exhausting the \$150,000 budget line item for forest health measures in Town limits in 2009. We are targeting the highest priority forest health measures outlined in the 2008 forest health planning document.

BOSAC agreed with the goals of the forest health program for 2009.

### **Joint Town Council/BOSAC meeting**

BOSAC selected June 9, 2009 as the date for the joint Council/BOSAC meeting. Staff will send an email reminder out to BOSAC.

### **BOSAC date and meeting location**

Ms. Andersen outlined the rationale for potentially moving the BOSAC meeting dates and location. The primary reason to move the meeting date would be to be able to include the BOSAC minutes in the Council packet for Council review.

BOSAC agreed to move its meeting to the third Monday of every month.

BOSAC also agreed to move its meeting location to the third floor Administrative Conference Room in Town Hall.

Staff was directed to place signage at the door to Council Chambers to direct people to the new location in the conference room.

### **Executive Session**

Mr. Joyce made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss property acquisitions. Ms. Hollinshead seconded the motion. The executive session began at 8:20 pm. Mr. Cospolich moved to come out of executive session. Ms. Hollinshead seconded. The executive session concluded at 9:06 pm.

### **Commissioner Issues**

Mr Kuhn: I encourage BOSAC to review your open space plan in preparation for the Summit Huts discussion at the next BOSAC meeting. Is this a good use of open space? Does it fit within the open space guidelines? Also, parking in French Gulch is worth further discussion. Should we have a parking plan developed for the entire valley?

Mr. Cospolich: What is the update on the Snowflake trail? (Plan and work is up to the homeowners in the area.) How do you manage parcels that are not owned 50/50? (We have few examples, but tend to divide up tasks based on mutual agreement.)

### ***Next Meeting***

The next regularly scheduled BOSAC meeting is scheduled for 5:30 pm on May 18, 2009 in the Administrative Conference Room. BOSAC is also scheduled to meet jointly with Town Council on June 9, 2009 at 6:00 pm in Council Chambers.

Mr. Cospolich motioned to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Merrill seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

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Dennis Kuhn, Chair