

Falls Creek Ranch Board Meeting Notes

Date: August 22, 2024

Time: 4:30 PM (Started at 4:40 PM)

Location: Zoom

Attendees:

- **Board Members:** Robin Lucie, Charlie Simons, James Trammell, Justin Poehnelt, Paulette Church
- **Guest:** Mary Ann Bryant, Mark Smith

Approval/Changes to the Agenda

- Vote on Erica Harrington as co-chair to the Architecture Control Committee

Conflicts of Interest

- None declared

Open Period Comments

- No comments

Approval of Previous Minutes

Robin motion, Justin seconded with corrections. Board approved.

Treasurer's Report

- Total \$272,000,
- Operating \$101,000
- Capital: \$118,000 at Bank of San Juans plus \$50,000 at Vectra
- Grant Account: \$1,000
- Renewed CD for \$50,000 at Vectra
- Contact Robin if any San Juan Basin Health claims
- Assessments of \$95,700 have been collected so far

James Trammell motioned to approve, Justin Poehnelt seconded. Board approved.

Committee Reports

Dam - Our Lake is full, Falls Creek is running at the picnic grounds and we are currently releasing about 2 million gallons of water a week to downstream water rights holders. That's 2 great years in a row at the lake and dam. An amazing community resource! Think Snow!

On July 26, Matt Gavin, dam safety engineer with the Colorado Division of Water Resources conducted Colorado's required annual inspection of our dam. The official inspection report is archived with ranch records and confirms we have a great dam. It is well designed, constructed, maintained & has a long record of excellent operating performance.

Ranch manager Bill Chambers participated in his 1st dam inspection. Like any large machine, our dam has an ongoing required maintenance schedule. Bill & his team will assist ranch volunteers with this work. Thank those guys when you see 'em on the ranch.

Entrance Gardens - In collaboration with the Roads and Community Property Chairs, we are working on a design for the front entrance median that would complement and enhance the log gate posts that are being installed. This median would include a tall sculpture or tree that would be visible in heavy snow conditions. This is a work in progress and nothing has been finalized as yet.

The gardens have been minimally tended due to a very small workforce on our committee. They have been kept tidy and, thankfully, the natural beauty of perennial plantings has kept the entrance areas looking welcoming and beautiful. There are hopes for some fall plantings, as this is a good time of year for many of our xeric and native flora to establish themselves.

The hope is to add volunteers to our committee and bring the gardens to true demonstration garden standards in 2025 with new plant signage and user-friendly walkways, making it a place of repose and ideas for our own properties that are deer and rabbit tolerant, water-wise, and bring more pollinators and birds to our community.

FireWise: Mark Smith, Kern Rucker, Bill Chambers, and Paulette met with two Colorado State Forest Service foresters based in Durango this week and toured the Ranch asking for their feedback on the work our team has done and for input on planned work on our higher risk portions of FCR. They praised the work the team and volunteers had done, and said work in the defensible space around homes was very well done. We will apply for another healthy forest/fuels reduction grant this October to be awarded next spring. Meanwhile, we are beginning work under our newest grant below Oakcrest Dr. in the steep "chimney's" that are high risk for our homes.

Mosaic approach instead of clearing all understory vegetation. State and Federal agencies do not differ in opinion. We do not need to accelerate tree removals within the neighborhood, but concentrate on the perimeter. Not expected to upset residents with trees to be removed. Very positive meeting. Charlie Simons asked about the area near the entrance. Grant funds available for just west of the stables/main. Scrub oak needs to be addressed. Not the area to be addressed first.

Lake - A lot has been going on at the lake! Our super lake committee (Barbara, Robin, Scott, and Jenny Whedon, Bonnie) along with lots of help from residents (thank you!) rebuilt the shady beach bigger and more beautiful than it was prior to the mudslide. We ordered replacements for the flotation devices on the sunny, rowboat, and shady beaches. We spread fresh sand on the sunny beach when the spillway was dry enough for the delivery. Bill is our superhero! He removed willows to expand our beaches to accommodate our increased lake-users in the neighborhood. We will be continuing to work toward building beaches on the expanded space over the coming weeks. We will have work trucks and tools on the beach. The beach is open, and we are happy to share the space. Please give our workers all the room that they need. We will also plan a community workday to complete the beach expansion work. Please come out to help!

Robin stated that we are possibly over projected budget due to the need of additional material to repair damage from slides. No insurance claims are applicable.

Roads - The welcomed rains brought with it issues that affected our Roads. The mudslide created a considerable amount of work for us on Falls Creek Main near the Ranch house and the mailboxes. We want to thank the residents for your consideration as we continue to work the berm and culvert area at that location.

The Chip seal contractor will return at the end of August to work on other areas of Falls Creek Main to improve the road surface and eliminate potholes. This warranty work is expected to continue into next year and as necessary over the next 4 years. This will be the third time this year the contractor has been back to perform the necessary rework.

Robin stated that expenses for culverts will be capitalized, specifically the culvert that goes under main and to the lake. Mark suggested putting a wide culvert or box culvert that can accept mudflows similar to the one that occurred due to their frequency. Work is ongoing. Charlie asked about large holes along the roads. Mark suggested an extension to the culvert, however it will be replaced with a large flow culvert.

Liaison - No update

Architectural Committee - We currently have 12 open projects. Nancy Peake is no longer serving on the ACC. We request formal approval from the Board to appoint member Erica Harrington as Co-Chair effective immediately.

Utilities Committee - Jayson Collins and Tom Allen have joined our utilities team. We still need a volunteer to serve as Committee Chair. A town hall was held Saturday, August 17, 2024 to discuss water usage rate options. Barry Bryant began by presenting an overview of our water system infrastructure and the need to plan for capital repairs and replacements in the short-term and long-term. Peter Sangas presented an overview of the proposed new water metering system we have been evaluating. The attendees asked a variety of questions which Peter will

bring back to the vendor for clarification on operations. A key component of this system will require a number of repeaters around the Ranch. Those present agreed to help with providing their home locations as needed. More information is being sought from the vendor. Mary Ann Bryant presented some options for new usage rates. The intent is to continue to encourage conservation but reduce charges at the higher levels of usage. This will result in lower revenue to cover our water operating expenses. Those present strongly supported another rate option that would still provide adequate revenue. Mary Ann will provide another option to the Board for consideration.

The Bryants, Chris Heine and Mark Smith met with an SGM Engineering representative recently to review another site for the proposed new south well. We are tentatively looking at the general picnic/garden area but we will still need to finalize the exact location and obtain a new well permit to drill. We will be contacting nearby neighbors to discuss as well.

We have completed our water service line inventory data collection from affected residents. We have confirmed the Ranch has no lead water service lines. We are providing this data to our Operator who will submit it to the State for compliance. We thank all residents for their prompt responses and cooperation for this project.

Tom Allen will begin working with Durango Fire to complete our fire hydrant inventory and testing/maintenance as required for fire department and insurance compliance.

Old Business

- Update on filing of Covenant changes with La Plata County Recorder - Paulette. Filing and notarized. Has been recorded with the County. When the final version is received, it can be added to the website.
- Update on entrance structure – Mark – Work led by Joe Scarpino with support from Bill. Logs are stripped and bound together. Foundation area cleared. Footers are being prepped. Equipment rental planned. Probably a couple weeks on expected work. Mary Ann suggested verifying property boundaries, but it was confirmed to be on Falls Creek Property. Can electricity be run from the Firehouse instead of the maintenance shop? Request will be withdrawn for future discussion.
- Update on two proposed boundary changes to provide space for service roads onto Common Property – Mark – Waiting on mortgage company to approve the move of lot and likely to be approved. Work can begin after this approval.
- Update on Utilities Committee proposed rate structure – Mary Ann Bryant.

The main feedback from the town hall was that revenue should cover operating expenses. Another option was constructed that more closely matches the existing revenues and provided to the board for review. Charlie stated that only 15 members attended the meeting and questioned if this represented the views of all residents

regarding affordability of proposed tiers. A new option was presented that more closely matched existing revenues and reduced the number of pricing tiers from 10 to 6.

A motion was made by Robin for option 3 to be effective on the first gallons billed as of the October billing period. Paulette seconded the motion.

An update on the metering system by Barry Bryant. Peter had a discussion with the new provider due to uncertainty around capabilities and range of the repeaters and transceivers. The providers agreed to send a number of transceivers and receivers at no charge to test the range and optimum locations for placement. Equipment should arrive for testing in the next few weeks. \$1700 in testing of equipment so far.

- Recruiting residents to isolate small fires and run the tanker truck – Paulette

Some residents have expressed interest in becoming certified (online training, “Red Card”) to be able to communicate more effectively with the official wildland firefighters and have the training to be able to use the fire trucks in the firehouse. This is an opportunity to get the training given our distance to a fire station with active resources.

The chance of fire hydrants failing is very low and should not be replaced if only usage is testing. Water is likely to be pulled from the lake and not the fire hydrants. Fire hydrant inventory was requested from the fire marshal.

New Business

- Vote on Erica Harrington as co-chair to the Architecture Control Committee. She has been on the committee for a year and a half. Robin motioned and Charlie seconded. Board approved.

Adjournment

- The next Board meeting date will be September 26, 2024 at 4:30 PM.