

Falls Creek Ranch Board Minutes

Status: Approved

Date: Mar 27, 2025

Time: 4:30 PM

Location: Zoom

Attendees

- **Board Members:** Paulette Church, Charlie Simons, Justin Poehnelt, Robin Lucie
- **Members Absent:** James Tramell
- **Guest:** Mark Smith, Joe Scarpino

Approval/Changes to the Agenda

- None

Conflicts of Interest

- None

Open Period Comments

- Mark Smith:
 - Access Road -> See Old Business
 - Mitigation grants are still coming (from Colorado state)
 - Volunteers activities:
 - Use weed eater with circular blades to cut oak
 - Pull oak out to road side

Approval of Previous Minutes

- No objections, minutes have been accepted.

Treasurer's Report

Capital	112,118.37	Bank of San Juans
	70,699.99	Bank of San Juans - Water Reserve
	52635.72	Vectra CD

Operating	97,623.93	Bank of San Juans
Grant	1000,12	Bank of San Juans
Total Cash	334099	

Our expenses have slowed down a bit in March so we're looking better about staying within budget overall. We received all HOA assessment payments for this year. The new water billing system has sent a pre-notice of our first month's reimbursement from the Feb 11 billing, but payment has not arrived yet (payment arrived March 28). I'm working toward electronic funds transfers with them. We learned this week that Submeter Solutions has been purchased by Pioneer Energy Management so Peter & I are trying to learn more about that.

As I've been learning my way around the Buildium accounting process, it is significantly more streamlined than the multi-step process we had with FredrickZink. I'm able to set up shortcuts in the system because a lot of our transactions are repeat transactions each month, so that will make it easier to transition to the next Treasurer. I recommend we have an external review of the financials before the annual meeting. I am preparing budget files for the Committee chairs and plan to distribute this weekend or early next week. FredrickZink is working on our tax file for FYE 7.31.24, which is due by May 15.

Buildium saves a significant amount of time and cost. Data is available in real-time.

No objections, the treasurer's report has been accepted.

Committee Reports

Common Property – Lack of snow this year has driven up the wildfire danger to a challenging level. Please take this seriously and be extra careful regarding pine needle removal around homes, thinning of vegetation, bbq grills, power tools and other possible sources of ignition.

We have learned this week that Colorado State Forest Service Grant funds will be reimbursed, though it will take longer to receive them. As a result, we will be using our equipment and more volunteer manpower to get the mitigation work west of the horse stables along the boundary with the Forest Service property done. The same goes for work down the hill to the east of the homes along the ridge top. Fortunately, we did get a significant firebreak cleared in that area at the end of last year.

We are working to plan our grant work and the spending rate for this year and hope to reach agreements on hours with our summer crew soon.

Please take it upon yourselves to address the areas around your homes on your own property. There are multiple meetings and opportunities for learning how to do that which Paulette has

arranged in the next couple of months. Take advantage of them. This is going to be a dangerous fire season.

Community Garden – No report

Architecture – We currently have 7 open projects. Our annual reminder of ACC requirements will be sent out to members early April.

Bees and Chickens – Chickens are coming in April.

Dam – On March 15 our lake was mostly full. We have started spring maintenance work, tested water release systems, and beginning in April will release water as contractually required at a rate of .25 CFS, or about 1.1 million gallons a week. We expect very little spring run-off from Falls Creek and so as summer progresses, the water level in our lake will certainly fall. Here in the Southwest, we could still use snow, a lot of snow.

In April, San Juan Wildlife will be working on the dam and spillway to eliminate gophers, and they're back. This summer we will also be required to do a monument survey (it's important that these things don't move), and an internal video inspection of our water discharge pipes. Routine stuff required to ensure dam safety.

As in the past, Kern Rucker & his team will help with much of the hard work that goes into dam maintenance. When you see these guys dragging power tools around the Ranch, say Thanks!

Entrance Gardens – No report

FireWise – I have submitted two reimbursement requests for work we have already done and paid our crew. We had very few volunteer hours tuned in last fall and this winter to use for the match, so I am using Ranch funds spent on payroll. Each grant is a separate program and it seems possible we can get the funds in a few months. Our work is being inspected this Monday, March 24, as part of the reimbursement requirements. I am continuing to work with the USFS and two collaborations to maintain our relationships. Meanwhile, all partners are doing what they can with funds already received or building their match. The USFS work on our J-FIRM project has stopped, but much of it was completed.

Wildfire Adapted has lost its BLM funds, since their funds were cancelled, which paid for lot assessments so that service is not available. The Cost Share program that provided matching funds to homeowners is also not funded this year. BLM funds paid for the chipper rebates, so those are not available this year.

Durango Fire Protection District is providing wildfire assessments, so contact them soon to schedule an assessment. <https://www.durangofire.org/wildfire-risk-assessment-request-form>

Horses – No report

Lake – No report

Roads – After this year's winter season, the roads are in good condition. We received a call from the chip seal contractor advising that he will arrive in the spring to continue major warranty repairs on Falls Creek Main. Residents will be notified when this is scheduled.

Utilities Committee - The meter reading system seems to be performing properly. The billing system has started with most residents signing up for electronic billing. The transition is going along as planned. The data from the transceivers has allowed us to quickly locate two frozen pipe leaks and three running toilets before they became a major problem for Creekers' homes. We will begin planning to replace the five non-working meters this Spring.

Welcome Committee – No report

Ranch Manager Report – Here is a list of the work Bill has been doing:

- Shop/equipment yard cleanup
- Equipment repairs/maintenance
- Clean interior of tractor, utv, backhoe
- Pothole repairs on main(multiple times)
- Plow Snow
- Install tire chains on Grader
- Install tire chains on Backhoe
- Cleanup cul-de-sacs after plowing snow
- Pickup slash piles & Christmas trees
- Burn slash piles
- Re-vamp spray system on water truck
- Clean/repair 3 chainsaws
- Work on fabrication of a log entrance
- Setup trash pump for use on ice rink
- Repair surface @ Charlie's culvert
- Replace damaged outlets in shop
- Supply runs into town
- Work on charging system for winch tower attachment on Kubota
- Install shutoff valves in order to isolate water leak @ corrals

Old Business

- Remind membership that we need at least three Board member candidates for our three Board openings beginning August 1, 2025, two are for 3-year terms, one is for 1-year term. Leaving the Board are Paulette Church, Robin Lucie, and Charlie Simons.
- Firewise work to resume below Oakcrest. More volunteer hours are needed for funds match.
- Discuss entrance structure
 - Working with the gate manufacturer on hinges and planning work for when gates arrive.
 - Working on divider between gates and lighting.

- Access road upper tank after lot boundary changes, starting very soon, trees cut as moving down hill with machinery. Renting a large excavator. Bill will run the excavator. Budget - $\frac{2}{3}$ paid by Randall/Barbara, $\frac{1}{3}$ by FCR. About \$20,000 but also used for mitigation work across from stables allowing it to be reimbursed. Rented for one month.

Surveyor to mark elevations, centerline, and edge. The road will be hidden from nearby lots. Mark will walk markings with lot owners nearby. Will rent a truck and hire a driver to haul material away and get road base material. Last year's budget had \$5k for this. New Business

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Executive Session

Announcements

- Home Hardening Meeting – FireWise – April 5 – 9 to Noon – Bryant's
- FireWise Workday morning below Oakcrest - April 6 – 10 to 1 – lunch provided
- FireWise Mitigation Meeting – May 10, 9 – Noon with potluck to follow - Firehouse
- FireWise Workday morning below Oakcrest – May 11 – 10 – 1 – Lunch provided

Required Board Actions

- Begin planning the budget for 2026 – 2027 – Robin, Committee Chairs, and Board
- Get budget summaries to Committee Chairs – Robin
- FireWise meetings planned – Committee Chair
- Begin planning of Annual Meeting, July 12, 2025 – Board and volunteers
- Encourage members to run for open Board positions – President and Secretary

Adjournment

- The next meeting is scheduled via Zoom for Thursday, April 24, 2025 at 4:30pm.