

Fountain Creek Watershed, Flood Control and Greenway District

Citizens Advisory Group

Meeting Minutes

November 13, 2020

The meeting was held online via Zoom

- 1. Call to Order, Establish Quorum and Introductions.** The November 13, 2020 meeting of the Fountain Creek Watershed, Flood Control and Greenway District (FCWD) Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) was called to order by Ms. Irene Kornelly, Chair, at 9:34 a.m. A quorum was noted, with the following CAG members attending via Zoom.

Irene Kornelly – Chair and CAG Representative to the FCWD Governing Board

Ian Hartley – Vice Chair

Mary Barber – Alternate Representative to the FCWD Governing Board and Web Manager

Annie Berlemann – TAC Representative to the CAG

Jack Wallick – Secretary

Nancy Bernard

Velma Campbell

Judith Rice-Jones

Jamie Valdez

David Woolley

CAG Members Not Present:

Tom Ready

Also in Attendance:

Bill Banks, FCWD Executive Director

Kevin Binkley, TAC Secretary,

Alli Schuch, FCWD Outreach Coordinator

Chris Wiseman, Pueblo County Commissioner and FCWD Governing Board Member

- 2. Approve Agenda of Meeting.**

Upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the November 13, 2020 Agenda was approved.

- 3. Approve August 14, 2020 Minutes.**

Upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the October 9, 2020 Minutes were approved.

4. Presentation: Creek Week Wrap-up, Allison Schuch. Allison presented her wrap-up of the Creek Week clean-up.

- With COVID challenges this year, the Steering Committee worked with Steve Attencio, advisor and Board member, on establishing rules and procedures to ensure that volunteers were not exposed to the virus. A video was produced to show crew leaders how social distancing and other measures should be applied to the Creek Week clean-up.
- The Steering Committee is made of 36 individuals representing 25 organizations throughout the watershed. They donated more than 1000 hours, at a value greater than \$25,000.
- There were a greater number of sponsors at the Champions level (\$2,000 or greater) than ever before. All together, we had 12 government sponsors, 22 businesses, 11 non profits. There were 42 repeat sponsors, 13 new.
- In-Kind donations included advertising, bags, water bottles, buckets, gloves, and much more. Total contributions, including cash and in-kind, were \$37,555, \$5,000 less than 2019.
- Expenditures were \$13,678, which included our CC Fellow, advertising, race expenditures, grabbers, sharps containers, gloves, bags, printing, and more. Expenditures per volunteer were \$9.12.
- Official proclamations were made in all eight host communities, some virtual, some in-person. The VP of Corporate Responsibility with the Kum and Go convenience store chain heard one of our media presentations and that corporation will now be supporting future outreach operations for us.
- This year we had 88 crews, comprising 1,422 people (about half of last year) who collected 2,087 bags of trash. Greater than 10 tons of litter and debris were removed, only 4 tons less than 2019, despite lower levels of participation. Over the seven years of Creek Week we have collected over 100 tons of litter.
- Altogether, Creek Week resulted in nearly \$140,000 of impact to our communities in just 9 days this year.
- This year featured the use of data collection tools, including Clean Swell to log trash items, and iNaturalist for biological observations.
- The Pub Clean and Crawl could not be held this year due to personnel gathering restraints, but the first year of the Virtual 5K attracted 47 participants and generated \$350 toward outreach.
- This year's Litter Letter was RESILIENT, which was on display in America the Beautiful Park.
- A new and ongoing activity was the Sondermann Park Forest Health Project, which seeks to remove invasive plants and return the area to more natural condition. Over three workdays 41 volunteers spent 164 hours to remove 3,300 non-native trees on 3 acres and perform other beneficial functions. UCCS has initiated a study of the project to track changes.
- In a final feature, Alli highlighted the work of Manitou Springs Elementary School. COVID restrictions prevented their usual Creek Week clean-up, so after Alli did a Zoom class on stormwater with the usual demos, the students made colorful chalk art decorations at storm drains around the school.
- Next year Creek Week Runs from September 25 to October 3, always the last Saturday of September through first Sunday in October.

On other outreach activity, Alli reported that:

- We participated in a fishing derby for the Boys and Girls Club of Pueblo at Anticline Pond in Lake Pueblo State Park. A few fish were caught, prizes were awarded, food was eaten, and fun was had.
- The Brewshed Alliance, currently 25 breweries/tap houses, is looking for (virtual) Liquid Lecture topics for 2021. Each member brewery holds an annual fundraiser for the watershed.

5. Reports.

a. Governing Board Meeting.

- Bill Banks reported on the October Governing Board meeting.
- He announced the 13th Street project in Pueblo is underway. Clearing and grubbing has been completed. To date the project is on track.
 - The 2021 Capital Improvement Plan will be presented at the MMF Committee's November meeting and then presented to the Board on December 4. He is looking at two and potentially three projects, the Pueblo Levee project to remove a pinch point and reconnect floodplain, the Upper Eagle Ridge project just upstream from Highway 47 to perform bank and floodplain restoration, and the Lower Eagle Ridge project which might include a water Quality component concerning urban drainage as well as bank restoration. The Pueblo Board of Waterworks has not responded to offers to cooperate with their infrastructure problems there.
 - Bill is looking into mitigation banking and speaking with Westerveldt Engineers and Colorado Springs Stormwater.
 - The concept revolves around a created asset, such as a mitigated waterway, and transfer of that asset to someone who needs it and pays for it.
 - It relies on either conservation easements or wetlands easements, where conservation refers to habitat.
 - If the District were to build or restore a wetlands, it could bank that area, and another entity in need of a wetlands credit would pay the District.
 - Downsides are that this falls under the Clean Water Act, and rules are changing in regard to the definition of Waters of the US, the Corps of Engineers is involved, bank restoration is not necessarily habitat, and more. Maintenance of the asset is likely involved, along with many other unanswered concerns. But the concept is one which holds promise for the District's work and funding.
 - Bill commented on how Creek Week is our most visible activity, followed by the Brewshed Alliance, and the Speakers Bureau, and all are highly effective at increasing awareness of the District. However, it's still a limited audience, and so he has been speaking with consultants on increasing visibility and community support before moving toward a tax initiative.
 - In response to Mary Barber's question, Irene reported that Fountain City Council had withdrawn their request to add Southmoor Drive to our project list, pending a source of funding.

b. TAC Meeting.

Annie Berlemann reported on the November Technical Advisory Committee meeting. The TAC heard two presentations, Alli's wrap-up report on Creek Week and a project report on the mitigation work that El Paso County is doing at the Riverside Mobile Home Park in Fountain.

c. Outreach Group.

Alli Schuch's report on Outreach activities was covered during her earlier presentation.

She also reported on the December 3 Wild and Scenic virtual film festival on which we're partnering with TOSC and possibly Palmer Land Trust. Alli also reported on her plans for 2012

which include more Liquid Lectures, the Children's Water Festival, a fishing derby, more Brewshed activities including a possible cigarette butt recycling project, Speakers Bureau activity, and much more.

- Bill added that we have applied for a \$200,000 National Wildlife Federation grant to help fund the Eagle Ridge project.

d. Monetary Mitigation Fund Advisory Committee. Irene reported that the MMF will meet in the coming Wednesday to finalize the 2021 CIP prior to taking it to the Board for approval.

e. Website and Facebook Page. Mary Barber reported that the website is doing well and asked for suggestions to make it even better.

6. Current Business. Irene commented that Current Business and New Business topics had both been covered in Bill's Governing Board report. Mary asked whether the Fountain Creek Chronicles will continue in 2021, and Bill replied that it will be looked at from a cost-benefit standpoint. Judith Rice Jones thought that Lisa Bachman might be able to expand the Chronicle's readership.

7. New Business. Irene announced she will not be continuing as Chair in 2021 and asked members to consider candidates for the position. Members were also asked to decide whether they will be continuing with the CAG. Additional members are needed, particularly from Pueblo County and from northern El Paso County.

8. Public Comment. Chris Wiseman, Pueblo County Commissioner, commented that Commissioner Terry Hart is term-limited and will leave office in January. Chris will begin representing Pueblo County on the Governing Board and attended today's CAG meeting as part of his familiarization with the Fountain Creek Watershed District.

9. Next Meeting. The next meeting will be held January 8, 2020, virtually via Zoom. Members will be notified prior to the next meeting, or may use the link, faithfully updated by Mary, on the web site calendar.

The next meeting will also be the annual meeting in which officers are selected for the coming year.

10. Adjourn.

Upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at 10:26 a.m.