Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus Board Meeting of February 15, 2022

Zoom meeting

Board members present:

Ned Andrews, Molly Child, Chris Collins, Sierra Flanigan, Michael Kinsley, Judy Lovins, Johno McBride, Pete McBride, Jacqueline Russell, Jill Sabella, Helene Slansky, Vicki Treece

Guests:

David Chase, Steve Child, Aubrey Epstein, Garland Lasater

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Molly suggested organizing the new committees first and add a committee to review the Master Plan. Ned agreed to setting up the committees first.

Michael’s email suggestions apply to revisions to the Master Plan. The Proposed Amendments to the Pitkin County Land Use Code deal with fencing, setbacks in riparian zones, and landing zones for aircraft. Chris commented that the County Land Use Code and the Master Plan are two separate things and that the Land Use Code items will be coming up for a Commissioner’s vote soon.

The scheduled time of Caucus meetings for now will remain from 7-9 pm on the third Tuesday of the month. That time is established in the bylaws. Helene moved that the next meeting, March 15, be held at the Old Snowmass Fire Station, in person. Judy seconded the motion. All in favor.

TREASURER’S REPORT

The Treasurer’s Report shows a total of $38,261.45 with $9,490.51 in the restricted water study account and $28,770.94 in the unrestricted account.

The bank balance from 12.31.21 was $27,597.82. The income of $11,866.82 from this month’s period was from donations. The total income from donations in 2021 was $17,137, with $600 of that coming from the County caucus annual allocation. Major expenses in January were $348.75 for insurance and $687.50 to Devon Child for over four months of website work, including Caucus elections.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the 1.18.2022 Caucus meeting were approved by Ned and will be posted on the website.

COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION

With the current size of 13 Caucus Board members, the Board has decided to organize several new committees.

In general discussion, Vicki said our major costs are for insurance and website, that the annual picnic, generally held in August, needs to be advertised as a fundraiser, and that there is need for another major fundraiser for unexpected things, like the water study.

Helene said the Master Plan committee essentially would be a one-shot deal, not really a dedicated standing committee.

Molly asked David Chase, former Caucus President, his opinion about the website coordinator position. David said Devon has done an outstanding job and should be retained. Devon’s hours are passed directly on to Vicki. Ned, as president, can pass on to Devon what needs to be posted - like meeting agendas and zoom links - and work to be done to the website. Others can contribute but that should be channeled through Ned. Vicki added that tracking public responses to Constant Contact are important because more and more the website will be a primary means of communication with caucus members. Ned said his working with Devon on setting up the agenda and zoom was easy to do.

Jill offered to work with Ned as a website coordinator and said that with a new committee like the Natural Resources Committee the website will need some reorganization.

Molly suggested the Natural Resources Committee could have subcommittees - primarily Biota and Water and other topics. Climate Change is one of the topics we can focus locally and would like to address. Molly has been in touch with Mark Harvey, who originated the Biota committee. Mark Has offered to make a presentation at a Caucus meeting of his vision of the Biota committee.

Michael has been involved with “CLEER” (Clean Energy Economy for the Region - a regional organization which offers technical energy services and rebates).

Molly said the Welcoming Letter could address conscientious water-wise gardening, and a presentation on gardening efficiency.

Jacqueline recommended Biota look at the 30 square mile area of our Caucus and do an environmental assessment which we could post on the website - plants, birds, mammals, insects.

Molly said a lot has been done on that already. Garland Lasater commented on Tom Cardamone’s project up in his area in Nicholson Creek - especially with beaver and plants, and also the Roaring Fork Watershed in general.

Ned said we will have these new committees to make recommendations on studies to do.

Johno felt the Natural Resources Committee should include water, energy and biodiversity.

Ned re-defined the previously designated committees into the following committees and asked caucus members to choose a committee to join and to share responsibilities with others:

1. Fundraising: Judy Hill Lovins has a good plan and had a good start and offered to continue her efforts. Aubrey Epstein, new owner of the Weiben Ranch and Caucus member, also volunteered

2. Web Site Coordinator: Ned offered to be the focus-person, and Jill and Molly offered to enlist their help

3. Community Functions: events like the spring clean-up and the annual summer fundraising picnic. Sierra and the Child family

4. Land Use Committee: review new applications and keep abreast of new regulations. Chris, Johno and Pete McBride

5. Master Plan: to lead the review of the existing plan and make suggestions on revisions. Chelsea, Jacqueline, Michael, Helene and David Chase

6. Natural Resources Committee: which includes Biota, Water, natural history and other areas, like energy and climate change. Sierra, Johno and Pete, Jacqueline, and Molly, with possibly Mark Harvey’s input. Ned stressed that the wildlife corridors in the Caucus area be noted. Molly added that this site could also include a sharing of wildlife observations, in photos primarily, but not specific locations for fear of exposing habitat area to the curious public.

7. Community Response: to handle issues and concerns brought to the Caucus, managing elections and any bylaws changes. Also proposed amendments to the Master Plan and Pitkin County Land Use Code comments. Michael

COMMUNICATION

Proposed Amendments to the Pitkin County Land Use Code

As to fencing - Chris said Colorado is a “fence out” state. There was discussion about residential vs. agricultural rights. Steve said if one has an agricultural designation on land, they have an exemption to height of fencing, be it over or under 6’. This is for land use for hayfields, gardens, orchards and beehive/bear issues. Steve said there will be a public comment time at the 2nd County reading on February 23rd. Garland questioned why put on any restrictions at all.

As to Setbacks in Riparian Zone - this distinction is to preserve riparian areas, as long as not manmade, for natural uses.

As to Landing Zones - there are to be no new landing zones for aircraft - planes or helicopters - and the County oversees regulation of this. The only commercial airport is Pitkin County Airport/Sardy Field. The only private landing zone is the McBrides, which is grandfathered in. Steve commented an airfield has to have continual usage, and there is no other legal private landing zone in the County other than the McBrides. Helicopters can land anywhere in an emergency situation.

As to TDR’s - Ned noted that emails exchanged among some Board members in recent days have indicated an interest in reconsidering the past Board’s vote on what acreage is required to apply for a TDR - a 30-acre minimum, or to change it to a 40 acre minimum or more. There was discussion about the Caucus survey that was taken on this issue and about some confusion about the survey and it’s flaws and conclusions.

Molly felt there is more work to be done before the Board can make a decision and proposed establishing a Master Plan committee to come up with different choices. Michael seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Vicki questioned whether basements were considered part of the overall sf of a house size, also a garage and CDU.

Johno said if a basement is unfinished and not over 5’6” in height it’s not part of the house sf. A finished basement, over 5’6” is part of the sf.

Michael added that basements take energy consumption, so the criteria/concern is not only it’s visual impact.

Helene made a motion to adjourn.

All in favor.