

WILLOW CREEK RECLAMATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, January 3, 2007

1:00 PM, Creede Town Hall

Present: Ali Morse, WCRC Coordinator; Zeke Ward, WCRC Chairman and Mineral County Commissioner; Mark Walker, CDPHE (Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Environment); JB Alexander, Creede; Jim Matush, Creede; Jeff Graves, CDRMS (Colorado Dept. of Reclamation Mining and Safety); Les Dobson, USFS (US Forest Service); Don Dustin, Creede; Merl Jennings, Creede; Mike Wireman, USEPA (US Environmental Protection Agency) Region 8; and Tom Schillaci, Durango.

Approval of minutes: There were no corrections to the December minutes and the motion to approve them was made by Merl and seconded by Don. Motion carried.

Reports:

Coordinator's Report

Ali reported that she had received reimbursement (\$693.95) from Ben Poxson for the Commodore Gate repair. She followed up with a thank-you letter and in it outlined the committee's proposed work at the Commodore, Amethyst, and Last Chance sites, requesting permission to complete the projects. Ali also wrote a thank you to the City of Creede for the use of their office space for the past seven years.

Since we now have DSL with Century Tel, our email address with Amigo.net will cost \$2/month; we are paid up until June. Ali also asked if we might consider the purchase of a fax machine and speaker phone. Merl moved to table the discussion until the February meeting; JB seconded and the motion carried.

Ali attended the SLV Wetlands FAC (San Luis Valley Wetlands Focus Area Committee) and Rio Grande Basin Roundtable meetings. SLV wetlands FAC has suggested a field trip to Creede sometime in 2007. The possible dredging of the Rio Grande Reservoir and potential hauling of dirt to Creede was briefly discussed. Ali will request \$20,000 from the RGWCD (Rio Grande Water Conservation District) to help pay the WCRC Coordinator's salary at the board's January 23 board meeting.

WCRC was represented in Creede's Parade of Lights on December 15 and with a uniquely decorated tree in the Community Center for the last two weeks in December.

Chairman's Report

Zeke attended the Brownfield's conference in November and gave a presentation on Good Samaritan legislation. According to Mark Walker, Zeke received high marks from the regulators. Zeke made a good connection with the Washington DC office of Rural Development (USDA) and will follow up. He brought back a stack of information that he will share with the group.

TAC Report

The details of the Amethyst and Last Chance reclamation projects were discussed and fine-tuned, along with those of the Commodore. The group also decided that if the dredging of the Rio Grande Reservoir did take place, the committee would ask for approximately 300 acre feet (up to 0.5 million yards), contingent upon cost. The third topic concerned the upcoming January 17 deadline to submit our requests from the WQCC (Water Quality Control Commission) for changes to the water quality classifications, standards, and designations applicable to the Rio Grande. The hearing is June 11, 2007.

Old Business:Nelson Pilot Dewatering Project

Jeff said the project was on schedule for pumping in February and will have 6-7 people underground. He will use multi-parameter probes at the Berkshire and Del Monte shafts as well as the portal. Mike W. would like to take O^{18} and Deuterium samples before, during, and after pumping.

Underground Installation of Water Level Gauge

The multi-parameter probes that Jeff and Mike W. are providing will measure water level as well, making separate water level gauges unnecessary.

VISTA Position

Ali reported that she was still waiting to hear about revisions to the Team Goals. Training is scheduled for mid-Feb but Loretta Pineda with CDRMS is not available until April. She is still offering \$5500 to WCRC. Ali thanked committee members for their edits to her potential VISTA activity list.

New Business:Tom Schillaci video

Tom showed two short videos that he had produced concerning the Animas River. He would like to document the Nelson Pilot Dewatering Project and Jeff made it clear that it would have to be done before and after (not during) the actual pumping. Tom would not charge WCRC anything for his first video since he is trying to establish a business and get his name out in the field.

Mike Wireman

Mike will be attending Colorado Preservation, Inc.'s "Saving Places 2007" conference in Denver February 7-9. He asked for digitized photos of the Commodore and a map of Bachelor Loop for his presentation. On another note, Mike stated that Sarah Fowler from EPA will review Steve Yochum's report.

JB suggested organizing a subcommittee to conduct sampling on the Rio Grande to obtain a loading analysis before snow melt (during low clear water). Mike Wireman made the motion, Jeff seconded it and the motion passed. JB, Jim Matush, Merl and Ali will be on the committee.

The next meeting will be February 7, 2007. The meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Ali Morse