

**Fountain Creek Watershed, Flood Control and Greenway District  
Citizens Advisory Group**

**Meeting Minutes  
October 11, 2013**

The meeting was held at:  
City of Fountain, City Hall  
116 S. Main Street, 2nd Floor  
Fountain, CO

**1. Call to Order, Establish Quorum and Introductions**

The October 11, 2013 meeting of the Fountain Creek Watershed, Flood Control and Greenway District (“FCWD”) Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) was called to order by Ms. Irene Kornelly, Chairperson, at approximately 9:30 a.m. A quorum was noted, with the following members of the CAG in attendance:

Irene Kornelly – Chairperson  
Ferris Frost – Alternate CAG Representative to the FCWD Governing Board  
John Chavez – TAC Chair and Representative to the CAG  
Jerry Cordova  
Dan Henrichs  
Mary Barber – FCWD Web Manager  
Jack Wallick – CAG Secretary  
Nancy Stone Bernard  
Lois Illick  
Ross Vincent  
Tom Ready

CAG Members not present:

Perry Cabot – Vice Chairperson  
Carol Baker  
Richard Skorman - CAG Representative to the FCWD Governing Board  
Jordan Vana

Also in attendance:

Larry Small, Executive Director Fountain Creek Watershed District  
Terry Hart, Pueblo County Commissioner  
Allison Mosser, Colorado Springs Utilities

**2. Approve Agenda of October 11, 2013 Meeting**

**Upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the October 11, 2013 Agenda was approved.**

**3. Presentation – September 9 and 11 Floods, John Chavez El Paso County Stormwater**

- John presented photos and a commentary on high water and damage to three locations (Rock Creek Road, Hanover Road, and Old Stage Road).
  - The biggest hits to County assets were outside the burn areas, primarily in the Cheyenne Mountain area.
  - Rock Creek Rd suffered roadway and bridge damage, in addition to, and likely as a result of heavy sediment deposition.
  - Hanover Rd was heavily damaged by what was a greater than 100-yr rainfall event which overtopped a bridge and took away half the roadway – all in one night.
  - On Old Stage Rd the Forest Service is taking the lead on repairs, although the County had to make some initial repair to regain access to a horse ranch and stables which had been cut off. The Forest Service will be starting work in the next week (wk of Oct. 14) and will repair the entire 3.5 miles of damaged roadway.

- John also gave an update on the City and County’s progress with the NRCS emergency watershed funding in relation to the July floods, as well as the more recent September events.
  - The county received a \$2.6M award for mitigation work, of which about \$1.4M has been received.
  - Although NRCS guidelines prevent these funds being used to *maintain* pre-existing mitigation structures, the NRCS advised that funds may be used for *repair*, so with that subtle distinction the county is preparing to request funding to put Camp Creek, Douglas Creek, and Ute Pass structures back into working order.
  - Also of significance, the NRCS will treat the September floods as a separate event from the Waldo Canyon burn. Accordingly, funding requests are being prepared, and John requested private property impacts in any county watershed areas, not just those impacted by the burn.
  - It was pointed out that NRCS takes claims for private property damage, while public infrastructure is primarily addressed by FEMA. FEMA is coming into town next week (wk of Oct. 14) for a preliminary assessment.
  - Dan Henrichs reported that the Highline Canal had a full ditch from the water coming down Fountain Creek, but no problems occurred directly from Fountain Creek water. However a subsequent rain event near Fowler overtopped the ditch, leading to a \$300,000 claim for a house that was completely inundated, and \$15,000 additional damage to a vet clinic.
  - Mary Barber reported on the effects of 13” of rainfall at Ft. Carson. Her preliminary information indicated damage on the west side from Rock Creek south. A prior event in August dropped 5” of rain, affecting some 20 erosion structures, requiring \$1.2M for repair. Turkey Creek Reservoir on the post’s southern boundary is full, having been dry 25 years. The water is being released, as they do not have a permit for storage.
  - It was also reported that Chico Creek was running for the first time in a long time.

#### 4. Approve Minutes of Prior Meeting

**Upon motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the September 13, 2013 minutes were approved.**

#### 5. Reports

##### a. Governing Board Meeting.

- Larry reported on the September 20 meeting of the FCWD Governing Board.
- The Board gave its approval of a grant application for a Phase 1 WARSSS (Watershed Assessment of River Stability and Sediment) study of the Fountain Creek corridor from Colorado Springs to the confluence with the Arkansas. The District will contribute \$25K, \$36K of in kind (volunteer labor) contributions will come from Perry Cabot’s students, with \$25K requested from the Colorado Water Conservation Board, for a total project value around \$82K. The application has been submitted and Larry feels very positive about its success. Award will be announced in December with funding in January.
  - Larry also reported on a conversation he had with Sallie Clark (EPC Commissioner) and R.C. Smith (Waldo Canyon Burn Recovery Coordinator) with regard to CUSP’s continued work on Waldo Canyon areas. As their charter is directed at the Upper South Platte, they have advised that there be a local coalition founded to continue work in this watershed.
    - Current thinking is that the District transition to CUSP’s role for entities including Green Mountain Falls, Manitou Springs, Colorado Springs, El Paso County, Fountain, and the District. Larry sees it as a natural function for the District.
    - There would be a large volunteer component, and intergovernmental agreements must be drawn up.
    - Larry has more meetings the following week on additional topics of interest to the Watershed.

##### b. TAC Meeting.

- John Chavez reported on the October 2 TAC meeting.
- The TAC did not have a quorum but listened to Allison Mosser’s presentation on the current SDS South 4A Central Work Package Land Use Application, to be heard by the CAG later in the meeting. The group would have recommended Board approval of the request if a quorum had been present.
  - John reported that he is the contract manager for CUSP-related projects and offered to provide Larry with insight into the workings of that contract, details of the actual work, and other information useful to an eventual District role in that work.

- The next meeting of the TAC is scheduled for November 6. There will be a need for election of a secretary and the addition of a new member from Ft. Carson.

**c. Pikes Peak Regional Stormwater Task Force.** Larry reported that there are now three potential storm water governance models being considered. The first is an authority, the second being a new district, and the third being to just use the District. Larry says he has made it clear that if the District is involved, he could not support splitting the Watershed into separate jurisdictions for management and/or funding of stormwater issues. Council President Keith King is supportive of that position, having written the bill authorizing the District when in the legislature. He went on to report on the joint Mayoral/Board of County Commissioners/City Council meeting on stormwater.

- CH2M Hill reported on their analysis of the City's stormwater needs, originally estimated at approximately \$700M in projects, scrubbing, prioritizing and categorizing them. They verified \$550M of the original \$700M in projects, some projects having already been completed, others being categorized as maintenance.
- The Regional Stormwater Task Force then gave their report, stating their position that they favor a regional approach, perhaps funded by an impervious surface fee. Larry emphasized that their funding preference is not final, but the one currently favored in light of known information.
  - They have not chosen a governance option; three are available as discussed above.
  - They discussed the way forward, including surveys, legal quantification of alternatives, town hall meetings, etc.
- The Mayor then gave his presentation, speaking without notes.
  - His plan is to issue \$175M in new (or repurposed) Springs Community Improvement Project (SCIP) bonds. The bonds, originally issued in 1999 at about \$86M, will be paid off in 2016. Their current obligation is about \$7.5M/yr. The Mayor would couple this \$7.5M with \$7 to 8M from the general fund to make a total bond payment of around \$15M/yr, for a 20-yr bond covering the \$175M. \$100M would go to stormwater, the remainder to transportation infrastructure. The bond would expire in 2026. The \$100M of stormwater work would be completed over five years.
  - The Mayor also indicated he doesn't oppose a regional approach as long as he can determine where the funding is directed. His proposition appears to be that the entire watershed would pay into a fund that Colorado Springs will control; performing the work with city resources so there is no cost to the City. Larry was dubious of the plan's viability or ability to address the entire \$550M project backlog, particularly the Mayor's plan to use increased revenue to pay the remainder of the bill. Current and anticipated growth do not appear to be sufficient to fund the plan.
  - Following the close of the joint meeting, the County Commissioners and City Council held a joint press conference to express their views, not having had the opportunity to do so in the meeting. Larry said two of the replies given to a reporter who had asked for one word comments were "debt" and "uninformed." "Fantasy Land" was another purported comment.
  - Irene, as a Communications Committee member, reported that they are pushing for community meetings first, followed by a random poll to gauge citizen sentiment, and then followed by focus groups before formulating an actual message. Several members have stated they do not want to be involved to merely be supporting the Mayor's plan.
  - Terry Hart reported that the Boards of County Commissioners of Pueblo County met recently with two El Paso County Commissioners and a Colorado Springs City Councilmember. The Pueblo County Commissioners were pleased to hear the northerners confirm that the stormwater debate is over, it should never have been a debate, that the best approach is regional, and there is an absolute need for a dedicated revenue source. He added that Pueblo said it wanted to see some activity, it having been years since agreements were made to confront the stormwater issue. He also asked what the fall-back plan is if the ballot question is defeated in next year's election. Apparently the three struggled with presenting alternatives, with the only likelihood being the fractured approach with a regional coordinating structure.
  - Terry also addressed the "big dam" concept, noting that the floods in northern Colorado wiped out all the smaller detention structures, with the only surviving structures being the big dams. Food for thought when planning for 500-year events. However, it was pointed out that planning guidelines and regulations only address 100-year events. Developers are likewise uneasy about longer term horizons.

- Dan Henrichs added his thoughts, referring to some of the big dams that were cited as not failing – they are fed from the south, not from the source of the floods. He went on to enumerate the many reasons that the big dam idea is riddled with holes. Others were in concurrence with Dan’s frank assessment of all the problems facing implementation of the big dam.
- John made the important statement that as members of the Watershed, we mutually bear some responsibility for renewed big dam interest due to an apparent premature release of confidential preliminary USGS study information.
- In a lighthearted moment, the tried and proven solution of an ark was floated about.

**d. Outreach Group.** Ferris Frost delivered the CAG Outreach Group report, which had also been delivered to the Board at its last meeting.

- She reported that she had met with a Colorado Springs group who are working to extend the Water 2012 momentum. They have a Water Warriors pamphlet with games and activities to teach elementary school aged children about water. Refer to <https://www.csu.org/CSUDocuments/waterwarriorbooklet.pdf>
  - They intend to revise and enlarge the pamphlet for the next year, as well as design one for older kids.
  - The pamphlet is produced through a consortium of groups including Colorado Springs Utilities, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, Science Matters, Catamount Institute, and many others.
  - The group suggested that the District join the group of sponsors, as well as provide a watershed map for the next iterations, familiarizing children with Fountain Creek and having them locate their homes or school in the watershed. Ferris wholeheartedly supports the idea as an extension of our outreach activities.
  - Larry re-affirmed the Board’s previous approval to proceed, Ferris already having been named as the Watershed’s representative to the group.
- Ferris also reported that she had met with Mr. Donny Roush, executive director of Earthforce, [www.earthforce.org](http://www.earthforce.org), a nationwide group that educates kids in environmental topics. They have a large program in Denver and would like to expand to Colorado Springs, working with members of the Water Warriors group. Ferris supports being a part of this program as well. Irene directed her to attend those meetings and report back to the CAG.
- Nancy Stone Bernard suggested the Watershed be a part the Fountain Creek Family Fun Day at the Fountain Creek Nature Center in May. It was hoped that the 3-D model might be ready by then, prompting discussion of how such a thing is made, etc. Someone in their office makes them from topographic maps, and she would look into it.
  - Larry reminded the CAG of scaling issues. The watershed has 51 miles of stream that would have to be reduced to a six foot length. The widest point of the Fountain Creek floodplain is less than a mile, likewise presenting resolution problems on a small model.
  - Nancy stated that the Fountain Creek Watershed portion of the new exhibit space is not designed yet, and that there is an opportunity for collaborative work.
  - It was agreed that more thought and research is needed on the topic of the model.
- The next Outreach Group meeting is October 14, in the small conference room downstairs.

## 6. New Business

**a. SDS South 4A Central Work Package Land Use Application.** Allison Mosser presented the major aspects of the SDS S4A Central Work Package Land Use Application, emailed to CAG members earlier in the week.

- Irene reminded everyone that the CAG is required to give its approval or disapproval to the Board following Allison’s presentation. Allison added that the District is also part of the new county administrative approval system, under the new 1041 process.
- The S4A Central segment will tie together the completed pipeline S4A East segment to the vicinity of Bradley Road with those to the south, crossing the Fountain Creek floodplain, our jurisdiction, tunneling under the two sets of railroad tracks, I-25, the floodplain, and all wetlands at an average depth of 45 feet, in the Pierre shale.

- Construction of the S4A West segment is complete, and the pipeline is all one piece from Lake Pueblo State Park to just west of the S4A Central, where it crosses the floodplain, the segment currently under consideration. Thus, this segment is the last major piece of the pipeline south of Colorado Springs.
- Allison presented details about the contractor team, location of the approximately one mile long, 66 inch diameter pipeline, construction details and the schedule, which anticipates completion of the segment in December of 2014.
- Allison further delineated the permits and easements being pulled or already in-place, and convinced the CAG members that the application should be approved.
- Allison also gave an update on the mitigation project, which was affected by the September floods. During the first event the stream channel moved to the approximate location of the planned relocation. The second, and larger, event saw the channel further erode the bank on the west side. As a result the design is being reworked, with changed material quantities.
- **Upon motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the CAG recommended Board approval of the SDS South 4A Central Land Use Application.**

**b. Website Update.** Mary Barber gave an update to the work she has been doing on the website, adding news clips, linking calendars and events, other newly uploaded documents and reports. She is working with Twitter for outreach, Dropbox for data upload, and other improvements. Mary received a well-deserved and hearty round of applause for her continuing efforts.

**6. Public Comment.** There were no Public Comments.

**7. Next Meeting.** The next scheduled CAG meeting will be Friday November 8, 2013 at 9:30 a.m., Fountain City Hall. Rich Muzzy of Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) will speak on the water quality of Fountain Creek.

**8. Adjourn:**

**Upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at approximately 11:34 a.m.**