



**MEETING OF THE PARKS & OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**BOULDER COUNTY, COLORADO**

**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**July 24, 2025, 6:30 p.m.**

**Third Floor Hearing Room**

**County Court House**

**1325 Pearl Street, Boulder**

Members Present: Janet George  
Tony Lewis  
Trace Baker  
Kristine Johnson  
Derek Turner  
Carol Byerly  
Joan Lutz  
John White  
Viki Lawrence

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- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Approval of Last Month's Minutes**

Kristine Johnson requested an edit.

Carol Byerly and Trace Baker both abstained because they were not at the last meeting.

**Moved by** Derek Turner

**Seconded by** Joan Lutz

**APPROVED**

#### **4. Presentations**

##### **4.1 Kestrel Property Acquisition**

Staff Presenter: Aaron Clark, Land Officer

**Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC**

Q: Are the building rights not included in the total cost?

Response: A building right in this part of the county is valued at around \$1.5 million and so that's how we come to the value of the property and what we will offer.

Q: Are the water shares the driving interest for acquiring this property?

Response: Being this is irrigated farmland, the water is very important.

Q: What is the current fund balance?

Response: We have \$17 million allocated for purchases this year with sales tax money. The Cliffside purchase, which was approved last month, will use Conservation Trust fund money in the amount of \$1.8 million. We have plenty of money for this purchase. Before we bring a property acquisition to you, we already have it worked out how we will fund the purchase.

Q: I think it would be helpful to see those numbers when we are considering a purchase.

Response: We can include that in our memo form for future purchases.

Q: When do the leases expire for the current lessee? Do you think the lessee is interested in renewing?

Response: The leases are on a year-to-year basis. The lease is up Dec. 31, and I know the lessee is interested in renewing the lease.

Q: What is the crop grown on this property?

Response: Corn.

Q: Is the Preble's meadow jumping mouse habitat on the plowed fields?

Response: Their habitat is along the riparian area.

Q: I know there are past issues with drainage on this property and crop damage due to elk. What are some plans to deal with those issues?

Response: We don't have the time to plan how to manage properties before we acquire them. That planning will happen later and other workgroups will be involved.

Public Comment:

Tess MacDonald, Boulder County. She spoke against the use of pesticides near this property, including on Rabbit Mountain.

**Moved by** Tony Lewis

**Seconded by** Trace Baker

**APPROVED**

#### 4.2 Gateway Property Acquisition

Staff Presenter: Melissa Arnold, Land Officer

**Action Requested: Recommendation to BOCC**

Q: Are those prairie dog holes on the aerial view?

Response: Yes, there is a population of prairie dogs on the property.

Q: What is the advantage of a conservation easement between the cities?

Response: It ensures protection of this land. The CEs layer restrictions on the land and the cities, as partners, stay apprised of any decisions or changes. This is a joint partnership that ensures stewardship into the future.

Q: Based on the proximity to a business park, the NW Parkway, residential neighborhoods, and prairie dog colonies, this doesn't seem like a high priority to me.

Response: In 1999, growth was happening and the county didn't have confidence that surrounding cities would be able to have their own open space programs.

The county worked with surrounding communities to create Intergovernmental Agreements [IGA] to create community buffers by protecting certain properties from development. This property was a priority for Louisville and the county shares open space tax money with the cities for their priorities.

Q: I think it would be valuable to have an executive session mid-year to consider those priorities again and see the properties that you've passed on.

Response: Yes, we can do that.

Q: I'm surprised there is a rush by the seller for this type of deal. Is there another offer being considered?

Response: We were able to negotiate a very good price on this property, with the seller requiring a 60-day closure. I can't speak to why they are on a short timeline.

Q: You are still waiting to know if the mineral interests have been severed. Could there be oil and gas drilling on this property if someone else owns the interests?

Response: Yes. We have made the decision that it is more important to protect the land as we can. Mineral owners would need to come to us as the landowners to have conversations and make an agreement, so we can mitigate the harm.

Public Comment:

Catherine Smith, Louisville. She is representing Louisville Open Space Advocates. They are very supportive of this acquisition.

**Moved by** Kristine Johnson

**Seconded by** Viki Lawrence

**APPROVED**

#### 4.3 Limber Pine and Bristlecone Pine Conservation in Boulder County

Staff Presenter: Shane Milne, Forest Planning Supervisor

**Action Requested: Information Only**

Q: Are you checking the genetics of the seeds to determine if they are rust resistant before replanting?

Response: We want to get in on rust-resistance trials. Two out of 10 trees could have complete resistance. We are trying to find that out.

Q: What is your rate of success planting seedlings?

Response: We have a volunteer who goes out in the spring and fall to check every tree. We are seeing 85% survival.

Q: Is there any plan to do conservation on the bristlecone pine?

Response: We know that we do not have white pine blister rust in that population. It's a unique population that we want to monitor, but we don't know what we want to do beyond that.

**5. Public Comment Period for Items Not on Agenda**

Elle Cushman, Hygiene. She spoke about an ongoing lease dispute with the department.

**6. POSAC Members Comment Period for Items Not on Agenda**

Kristine Johnson commented on an email submitted by Mark Guttridge at Ollin Farms regarding a lack of scaling back on pesticide use by the county. She shared Mark's concern.

Staff response: The plan was signed in Nov. 2024, so it's been less than a year that this has been in effect. Staff is planning to return to POSAC in the 3rd quarter to give a report. Our reporting has increased, so that is why you see an increase in the numbers. Regarding water contamination, we follow all label directions and laws. Staff is working to finalize our perimeters on testing water in the area of spraying. We have approximately 3,000 acres that have high infestations of cheatgrass. We need to get those 3,000 acres under control with a one-time treatment to hit our 2030 mark. We will be able to reduce spraying at that time and just do spot treatments. This was in the plan that POSAC approved.

**7. Director's Update**

- CPW is launching a beaver management study and BCPOS will collaborate. We've been doing Beaver Dam Analog (BDA), relocating beavers and trying to improve beaver habitat on our open space.

- The Society for Ecological Restoration Conference coming to Denver. BCPOS will host a field trip to our St. Vrain Restoration Site for the conference.
- Rangeview Property, located on Gunbarrel Hill (the formerly proposed tennis facility), will close on July 30, 2025.
- We've selected a contractor for the SW quadrant of Prairie Run open space, which includes the parking lot and 1-mile trail connecting to Erie.
- Legion Park parking lot resurfacing work is starting soon.
- BOCO Youth Corps is ending for the season on Aug. 6.
- Work has started on the Lagerman Agricultural Preserve parking lot area improvements and expansion. The trailhead and Lagerman Trail will be closed for up to 6 months.
- An extension of a .15% open space sales tax will be on November's ballot.

**8. Adjournment**

8:51 p.m.