

MINUTES OF C4 BOARD MEETING, JANUARY 12, 2009
1:30 p.m., LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM

Present: Board members Lockett Pitman (Chair), John Brandenburg, Paul Snyder, and Margaret Karsten. Visitors Tim Kelling, Mark Smith, Jerry Lacey, Doris Dembosky, Sue Pitman, and Dee Hoag.

Lockett opened the meeting at 1:30 and invited visitors to introduce themselves.

Water (Paul).

1) Round Mountain lease of water to Upper Ark. Reviewed proceedings of recent Round Mountain Water and Sanitation District Board (RM) meetings and public hearing regarding its proposed lease of water from the Johnson Place to Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District (Upper Ark). RM had rescinded the signed Letter of Agreement and agreed to hold one or two public hearings for citizens to voice their views about the proposal, particularly as it could affect the towns of Silver Cliff and Westcliffe.

The public hearing was very well attended, and numerous citizens did voice concerns about water and future development of the two towns. Representing C4, Paul prepared and distributed relevant questions to C4 members, the RM Board, and others to focus on. He also made numerous legal requests for documentation to be made available for the public hearing. These were not properly forthcoming and, in the end, Paul retrieved them himself at the last minute from the RM files. In particular, a report written in November 2006 by Crabtree water engineers, which RM had requested, revealed the estimate that, with the Johnson Place water and at the current growth rate, RM would have only enough water to supply 500 new households and meet demand until 2023.

The RM Board stated it had proposed to lease the water in order to raise money from its potential current excess water supply and to avoid “spilling it down the river” without any RM profit. Terms already discussed had proposed leasing 20 acre-feet annually over 25 years, with options to renew each 5 years thereafter. To address concerns over those long-term proposals, Paul suggested an alternative action of leasing excess water in small amounts on an annual or short-term basis to private buyers who, he said, advertise for water regularly.

At the very end of the meeting and after addressing its other business, the RM Board agreed to a redesigned letter of intent. It was drafted by its lawyer, Greg Watkins (in attendance), and eliminated the former words of obligation.

Paul stated it was a positive thing that RM had listened to the opinions presented and was willing to reconsider the original proposal.

2) Proposed Upper Ark augmentation plan. Paul said he knew of no further discussion by the board of Upper Ark regarding the plan. He asked the C4 Board to consider three questions: what is the problem? why is a water augmentation plan important to the county? and where is growth going to happen? He stated that the proposed augmentation plan could generate competition for growth anywhere (towns, new subdivisions), and he advocated working to create live, vibrant towns of Westcliffe and Silver Cliff through

public discussions to help Custer County steer growth with its water resources in accord with citizens' preferences for growth.

The Board agreed that C4 could take a leadership role in that regard. Sue Pitman suggested that C4 could write a position paper, and Dee Hoag said the towns would be able to benefit from C4 action.

3) H2O – Status of town meeting: group to look into ranch use for the good of the community. Paul said that Terry Scanga of Upper Ark had stated “some or all” of the H2O water would stay in Custer County and that the buyers from Widefield and Security will try to work out something to guarantee that. However, Paul added, despite the present mantra, “Do not let the water leave the county,” the really key factor is how that water is used if it remains in the county.

Lockett said he and Jim Austin plan to organize a group to determine what the community would like to see done about the H2O land.

Further, regarding water, Lockett announced two upcoming events people may be interested in attending: 1) Arkansas Valley Farm/Ranch/Water Symposium and Trade Show, in Rocky Ford, February 5, and 2) Nestle presentation and discussion to Salida residents concerning their purchase of water to use for bottled water on Thursday, January 15.

Land Use (Lockett)

Master Plan & Land Use Code. Reported that Joe Arbuckle has been working on a draft model use code, drawing from the newly completed Model Land Use Code prepared by the Colorado Office of Smart Growth.

1) Smart Growth. The CD with the entire code is now available, and copies can be made. Joe's draft model code is being prepared in the form of a slide show.

2) Presentation to new Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and Planning Commission (PC). Joe hopes to present a briefing to the BOCC and PC on the Model Land Use Code, possibly with the slide show, to demonstrate how it may be used by Custer County. He has requested the C4 Board to provide feedback on the draft, so far.

BOCC meeting on January 13th (Lockett)

Reminded the Board of the upcoming BOCC meeting and encouraged attendance.

New Business and Next Meeting (Lockett)

Briefly reviewed the list of issues C4 intends to focus on in 2009 and stated it would be sent to Board members. Water will continue to be the main subject to address.

Announced that Tim Kelling and Robin Young will be joining the C4 Water Committee.

Jerry Lacey reported that he has been looking into the State 1041 powers and suggested Custer County should investigate adopting the 1041 process as a tool for controlling its water. He has also discussed the idea with Paul and Lockett. He also stated that Widefield and Fountain do not want to see the H2O property dry up.

John suggested C4 should try to enlarge its membership in 2009. As Treasurer, he reported C4 has approximately \$900 in the bank.

The Board agreed to a suggestion from Paul to present its 2009 goals to the C4 membership. It may also be discussed at the next general meeting. The slide show being drafted on a Custer County land use code might also be shared.

Jerry Lacey asked C4 to look into the availability of electrical power in the valley, where currently there is only one transmission line.

The tentative date for the next C4 Board meeting was set for sometime during the week of February 9-13. The exact date will be confirmed soon.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Karsten, Secretary