

**Crystal River Caucus
Annual Meeting Minutes – DRAFT
November 9, 2017**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dee Malone at 7:00 p.m. The 70 attendees who signed in constituted a quorum. She noted that this was the annual meeting of the Caucus at which four Board members were to be elected to replace those whose two-year terms were ending.

Approval of Minutes:

The first order of business was to approve the draft minutes from the September meeting. No amendments were suggested and a motion for approval was made, seconded and approved with 56 in favor, no opposition or abstentions.

Treasurer's Report:

Phil Youngman presented a brief treasurer's report, indicating a current balance of \$1489.90. In response to a question, it was clarified that all Caucus operating funds are provided annually by Pitkin County. A motion to approve the report was made, seconded and passed with 53 in favor, no opposition or abstentions.

Announcements:

All are welcome to attend the annual community pot-luck dinner to be held in the Church at Redstone at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 19. A directory of Redstone residents has been prepared by Tammy Shirk and additions and/or corrections should be directed to her. In response to a request by the Redstone Community Association, Pitkin County has installed two new types of light bulbs in the first 6 light poles on Redstone Boulevard extending north from the Inn. The 3 closest to the Inn are designated type A and the next 3 are type B. The motivation is adequate illumination while minimizing light pollution of the night sky. Feedback from residents on a preference should be directed to Cathy Montgomery. Handouts presented on tables at the back of the room by Caucus members are informational only and do not represent the official positions of the Caucus or its Board of Directors.

Election of Board Members:

A poster containing a list of 5 candidates for 4 open positions was presented: Bill Argeros, Stacey Bernot, Edie Engstrom, Mark Hilberman and David Johnson. Argeros and Hilberman have completed two-year terms. In response to a call for additional candidates, John Chromy and Joe Gates self-nominated and were added to the list, resulting in 7 nominees for 4 positions. Candidates present were each allotted 3 minutes for introductions and explanations of their motivation to serve. A brief discussion followed concerning the role of the Caucus Board members, who some felt should represent the viewpoints of the Caucus as a whole, rather than advocating personal opinions. The bylaws are unclear on this matter but process is critical and voices of the membership need to be heard. Ballots were distributed containing 4 slots for names to be inserted. Stacey Bernot, Edie Engstrom and Bill Argeros were elected, with Dave Johnson and John Chromy tied. A runoff was held for the fourth position, resulting in election

of John Chromy. Chair Malone welcomed the new Board members and thanked those whose terms were ending for their service.

Crystal River Recreational Trail:

At the last meeting on September 14, the Caucus voted to request formation by the BOCC of a local steering committee composed of stakeholders. That request was rejected by the BOCC, which agreed to extend the deadline for receiving feedback and to delay any decisions concerning the trail until November 15. Because of the diversity of opinions, a consensus by the Caucus on this issue is unlikely. An objective of the present meeting is for the Board to gather input from the Caucus at large to communicate to the BOCC before the deadline.

Citing concerns about the process implemented by Open Space and Trails that solicited input only on options A and B, without a no-trail option, Bill Jochems introduced the following motion:

The Caucus shall request that the Board of County Commissioners have a meeting here in Redstone, for the purpose of discussing the trail proposal, and that this meeting occur before the BOCC takes any further action, or makes any additional decisions concerning the trail proposal.

The motion was seconded but several members felt that it was premature and that other speakers and viewpoints should be heard before a vote was taken on it. Diverse viewpoints were expressed:

- The online survey gives all Caucus members an opportunity to express their personal opinions.
- The “us versus them” mindset is troublesome.
- The Board should advocate the majority opinion of the Caucus to the BOCC.
- The BOCC should listen to opinions in a face-to-face meeting in Redstone.
- An extension of the deadline for input was already granted, and such an additional request has the potential to shut the Caucus out of the process.
- There is a perceived lack of transparency on the part of OST and the BOCC and a feeling that the Crystal Valley is neglected by Pitkin County.
- OST has conducted numerous public meetings on the trail already to inform and gather input.

Following a discussion about procedure, a motion was introduced by Peter Martin and seconded to postpone a vote on the Jochems motion pending further opportunity for input by Caucus members. It failed with 24 in favor, 44 opposed with 1 abstention. A motion was then made by Phil Gaylord and seconded to call the question on the Jochems motion. It passed with 61 in favor, 2 opposed with one abstention. The Jochems motion was subsequently re-read and approved, with 65 in favor, 2 opposed and one abstention.

The following motion was then put forward by Edie Engstrom:

Pitkin County should not develop any trails through sensitive wildlife habitat areas as identified by Pat Tucker and the DOW, Rick Thompson, and/or ERO including but not limited to McClure Pass, Bear Creek, Filoha Meadows, the Narrows, Avalanche, South and North Janeway and Red Wind Point.

The discussion that ensued encompassed a range of viewpoints:

- Removing the human footprint allows wildlife to prosper.

- The trail would offer ordinary people a means to explore the valley other than by car without adversely influencing wildlife.
- Homes and roads cannot be unbuilt but what wilderness is left should be protected.
- The river ecology as well as wildlife and vegetation would be affected by a trail.
- The evolution of technology (e.g. mountain bikes – fat tire bikes – night lights) will increase impacts.
- In addition to alignments A and B, “no action” should have been presented as an option in the trail survey.
- The effect of a trail on real estate prices could limit ownership in the valley to the wealthy.
- OST has already purchased land near Avalanche Creek to facilitate alignment B.

A motion was made to call the question on the Engstrom motion, which was seconded and passed with 56 in favor, none opposed and 6 abstentions. The Engstrom motion was then re-read and passed, with 55 in favor, 8 opposed and 4 abstentions.

The following motion was presented by Sydney McBrayer and seconded:

The Caucus shall oppose any takings of private property through the use of Eminent Domain or RS 2477, or any other takings strategy, to establish a trail easement through private property.

The following discussion included:

- Maps provided by OST contain errors concerning trail alignments on the railroad grade.
- There was no communication with property owners prior to proposal of alignments.
- Eminent domain should only be used in extreme cases based on essential public need.
- A job of government should be to prevent injustice.
- Trail alignments on the west side of CO-133 should be considered.

The motion was re-read and a vote was taken. The motion passed with 62 in favor, none opposed and 2 abstentions.

A motion was made by David Johnson and seconded:

The Crystal River Caucus recommends to the Pitkin County Board of Commissioners to scrap the public input gathered by Pitkin County Open Space and Trails up to now since there has been no option for the public to indicate if they are in favor of no further trail development, and that the public opinion process be started over with a determination first to be made whether or not the public believes any further trail should be built and is worth the cost of doing so.

This motion prompted considerable discussion:

- The Caucus Master Plan supports the concept of a trail.
- It is both possible and effective for individuals to make input to the BOCC via e-mail or letters.
- The BOCC will see all input to OST and elicits public comment at all meetings.
- A Board of Trustees consisting of volunteers oversees all OST functions.
- The impact on the valley of the trail construction process itself could be significant.
- The BOCC is unlikely to further extend the deadline for input.

A motion to call the question received unanimous support and a vote was taken on the Johnson motion, which passed with 56 in favor, 6 opposed and 3 abstentions.

The following motion was introduced by Stacey Bernot and seconded:

The Caucus requests further analyses of actual costs of acquisition, construction, management and operation of the trail, as well as further analysis of specifications of trail build-out. The Caucus also requests that the BOCC analyze bandit trail construction, trespass mitigation, de-commissioning of bandit trails and management practices.

It was noted that cost estimates in the OST proposal did not include the acquisition of property. A vote was taken and the motion passed, with 53 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.

Due to the length of the meeting, John Emerick proposed that a motion to consider the revised user agreement by the Church at Redstone and the siting of future Caucus meetings be tabled until the next Caucus meeting. Approval was unanimous. Peter Martin then moved to adjourn at 9:35 p.m., which also met with unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted by Ron Phaneuf 11/10/2017.