

## Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes, May 7, 2019

Attending: John Parker (Chair), Jim Daniel, Tom Bredenberg, Tom Brimacombe (Vice Chair), Mary Clark, Elizabeth Maclaren (ECIA Board Liaison), Mark Young (representative of HOAMCO), Carol Beidleman (recording secretary)

The meeting was called to order by Chair John Parker at 7:03 p.m.

1. Approval of Agenda: Approved on motion of Tom Bredenberg, Jim Daniel second.
2. Appointment of recording secretary: Carol Beidleman volunteered to record minutes for the meeting.
3. Approval of the April minutes: Approved on motion of Tom Bredenberg, Tom Brimacombe second.
4. Excused absences and introduction of guests: Paul Butt is excused. Guests included Betsy Walker, John Reynolds, Paul Fink, Andra Nyman, Justin Robison, and John McCarthy.
5. Report from the Board Liaison: Elizabeth Maclaren said there is a new Board member, David Sorkin, and another person was interviewed today. There were lots of items on the Board meeting agenda: approved new stable rules (with fines); pool update; David McDonald and Elizabeth Maclaren found common ground in discussing the proposed civil conduct policy, and together wrote the ECIA Community Standards for Communication (see May Vistas); discussed recall petition for David McDonald (see May Vistas); re ECIA Drone Task Force (Mark Young is on it, trying to come up with recommendations); and website work by ECIA Information Committee (Courtney Handy resigned, replaced by Ashley Springer). Elizabeth worked with Julie Navarro and other HOAMCO employees Leonard, Joey, and Angelo to chip (mostly) Siberian elm on Saturday; Mark said he will be using the wood chips as mulch around the ECIA grounds. The stables have asked for \$125,000 to redo a broken water system.

Additions to Agenda: Carol added a brief discussion of the new Environmental Stewardship Committee, after reading in the May Vistas that the former Environmental Advisory Ad-Hoc Committee was dissolved and a standing Environmental Stewardship Committee was created, with their charter approved (not on ECIA website yet). Carol wondered what the purview of this new committee was and how their work might overlap with that of the Conservation Committee. Elizabeth said they are promoting green building, working on pesticides, etc. She will send CC members their charter.

6. HOAMCO report: Mark Young said Ashley Springer was new, as the Community Relations & Events Coordinator, otherwise same staff. The pool will open 7/4; the new pool manager is Mike Rogers (worked at hardware store).

7. Participation in upcoming events (Explora, Garden Fair, Earth Day, MTB): Regarding the MTB race, John Parker wondered if the Board had heard from the race coordinator. They had talked about using one of the Greenbelt trails, but may have chosen an alternate area. It is coming up this month. Mark Young will check on the status and report back.

### Open Forum:

John Reynolds: The Melado trail [=the Biblioteca trail which runs between Avenida Torreon (across from the Senior Center) to Melado Drive] is 6" wide and needs to be mowed. He's not sure if a gas mower is acceptable; can HOAMCO staff do it? John Parker said we had recommended mowing once a year and this is usually not our growing season, but there has been more moisture. Mark Young said there is no prohibition on using a gas mower. John Reynolds said there is a company that has a battery-powered mower (walk behind, weed

trimmer on wheels), and Tom Bredenberg said it is quieter and not polluting. Mark Young asked John Reynolds to send him an email regarding that mower.

Andra Nyman: Just interested in trail maintenance.

Justin Robison (The Housing Trust), and John McCarthy (La Pradera): Mark Young suggested they come to this meeting. They said The Housing Trust owns 121 acres, which they have had for 15 years, contiguous to the Eldorado Community Preserve, and they are trying to figure out what to do with it. [Note: This parcel is north of the northern sections of the 101 and 301; see attached map.] They want to monetize that land, but be good neighbors. They would like whoever purchases this land to have legal access to our Preserve, for walking access/horses, as this would enhance its saleability, and asked about whether this could be possible. They were told that since this property is not in Eldorado, it would not be possible. Their asking price is negotiable and they would like to get back their historical cost, but it would be about \$600,000. Mary Clark asked if EAWSD might be a possibility, for the water. Jim Daniel said there are all kinds of restrictions including not allowing nonresidents to use the land, even though we don't enforce it. The sellers wanted to know if we wanted to change that law so anyone could use it. Mark Young said if someone has a lot in Eldorado and is paying assessments, they could use the amenities, including the Preserve. A trade might be possible. Carol Beidleman suggested they provide a brief written description, to be shared with possible interested entities like Santa Fe County (protecting contiguous land) or Santa Fe Conservation Trust, etc. John Parker said he appreciated not subdividing this area, but is unable to render a decision; he asked for a copy of the deed restrictions. The real issue is that they want the legal ability to cross the boundary and walk/ride in the Preserve.

8. Library Trail completion (Hire equipment operator? Are known boundaries adequate to blade entire length?): Paul Butt had the surveys done. Tom Brimacombe said we need an operator with tractor and blade. Jan-Willem Jansens (JWJ) gave us the name of a contact who would be willing to work on the 401; see the April 2 minutes (Gary Bates, first choice; Jeremiah Kidd, backup choice). Mark Young said there was no project manager (Russell Winslow, only for the pool). Elizabeth Maclaren said they are trying to find someone to replace Mike Bullock. Mark Young said the new person, Joey, knows how to drive Kubota. Tom Brimacombe said it would be nice to do in-house, although John Parker thought contractors would be more beholden. Mark Young said HOAMCO might pay to help out. Tom Brimacombe thought it would be good if Committee members would be on scene, with guidance. Elizabeth MacLaren thought Julie Navarro from HOAMCO wouldn't object to having Committee members supervise the operator. Tom Brimacombe estimated we would need somebody for half a day. Mark Young will talk to Julie, about the Kubota and blade. John Parker offered to come with one HOAMCO employee, and wanted to have this work down before the rainy season (and per John Reynolds, before school starts again).

9. Review and discussion of Landscape Practices Document: John Parker needs to shop this around; he ran it by a Master Gardener and it needs work. He asked if this might fall under the purview of the new Environmental Stewardship Committee (Chair, Karen Murry). It wasn't a how-to, what we really want, just informational. He mentioned that people can create a berm on their property, but they should stabilize it with native plantings, and there is a list of recommended plants from the Architecture Committee. He prefers not to invest a lot of our time on it. Mark Young will send the documents to Karen.

10. Preserve Trail work schedule [JWJ projects and committee work days]:

- Work day on 401 bypass, and remaining rock work on 404

- 401 head cut remediation project status

On April 13th a small group worked hard on the 404, including Justin Poehnelt. Tom

Bredenberg said the corridor is clear, you can follow the flags. Tom Brimacombe did grubbing at the south end, and all that is left now is some more grubbing; we need to send in crews from both the north and the south until they meet. John Parker said there is one gully crossing (4' deep) with a steep bank. He'd be willing to help. Tom Brimacombe said we don't need JWW for this extension bypass trail; if we had 6 people could get a lot done. The date for this work was set for Wednesday, May 15th to meet at ECIA at 8:30 a.m.; probably can finish by 1 p.m. We need to grub tufted grass, with McLeods, and create some one-rock dams (or can do later), for the 401 bypass work. John Reynolds will try to come. We received a hiker compliment that it was a really nice trail, a good addition. Tom Brimacombe put up green stake signs on both ends, and they work well. John Reynolds said they are simple but clear. John Parker said we should redo the Preserve map in the fall. John Reynolds said PNM has been driving on the 404 in areas that are not in their right of way. Carol Beidleman suggested John Parker talking to PNM to prevent that detrimental activity in the future.

We still have work on the 404 rock work in Cougar Canyon; we need to get a group out to decide on the wash crossing. John Parker thought we also need some more one-rock dams (marked on map sent by email), which would take about a half day of work plus time hiking in. The date for this work was set for Saturday, June 1st to meet at ECIA at 8:30a.m. There was no discussion on the 401 head cut remediation project status.

11. Visit to Holian Ranch: This visit is scheduled for Thursday, May 9th, meeting at ECIA at 1:30 p.m. for carpooling. The site is past Trailhead 4 on the County Road up on top of the mesa. The purpose of this tour is to see some erosion control work JWW did that we could apply on the 404 meadow where the head cut is. Rain predictions may cause a postponement.

Old business – PNM Notification: John Parker and Mark Young met with PNM's contact, Tom Dominguez, about the remediation of the 401 head cut near the 403 junction, since PNM has a right of way through this part of the trail. Tom, who is the regional rep for PNM for northern NM, assured us that he was going to talk to his superiors and would get back to us, and we gave him copy of JWW's proposal (without budget page). He wanted to see a copy of the agreement with PNM, which has a 5-year term. He would like to come out with others at PNM and look at the site. We would need their input on the remediation project before we went further. JWW has contacted the person who is willing to do this work. John Parker said the only other question is if they have grant money to help defer part of the cost; nothing has been firmed up. We had some assurances that we could pay part of it out of the budget, and because it is a two-year budget we could add more next year. Mark Young suggested we contact Tom Dominguez again soon.

Old business—Amelia Adair's (Stable Committee Chair) request for new trail

Mary Clark met with Amelia and was shown the two projects requests related to horse trails. The first problem is crossing 285. There is a property right on the edge of 285 at the entrance of Avenida Eldorado that goes almost all the way to Vista Grande that would give them access, away from but north of the stables and about 50' wide. Mary said the need is for a direct approach; there is a bridge on Vista Grande where it would require cutting away chamisa, and coming through this other way would make it more convenient. There is a portion to the north which are private stables, owned by someone from Kansas. The idea would be that stables people could ride north on the western side of 285 and then cross at the light. Mark Young thought the property in question was owned by NMDOT and is a right of way, so suggested the Stable Committee would have to contact the NMDOT office on Cerrillos Road.

Mary Clark also talked about Amelia's request for a new trail near Highway 51. She said on 51 there are two parking lots, and they prefer trailhead 2 but it is difficult to cross to the 300 trailhead. There is a social trail opposite trailhead 2, which if improved would allow horses to ride up on edge of the preserve, then they could go back to 301, making it less of a social trail. John Parker rejected this out of hand, as we don't like creating more crossings, even though the

one we have is not ideal, with an unstable slope, and we recognize the need for better space to put a trailer. John Reynolds suggested instead of crossing the road, they could ride along the 201 trail from parking lot 2 to parking lot 3, which we could improve. John Parker said we have a good trail between those parking lots, and we don't want horse riders to go along the road or encourage more crossings. The land along the west side of 51 is unstable, so creating a trail on that side may not endure. He asked Mary to tell them about the existing alternatives that they could use.

Old Business –Jim Daniel's status of the signs: Tom Brimacombe talked to David at Fast Signs; it is easier to go with a whole order. We have noted the 200 trails (just a little faded), and Jim Daniel said the 400 trails will need new signs, and the 300 and 100 trail signs could need improvements because they are faded. John Parker said we could get more of the numbered stickers for junctions, as a temporary remedy, and can just put fresh dots on until new signs are ready to be made.

There was a motion to adjourn (ca. 9:05 p.m.) by Jim Daniel, second by Tom Bredenberg.