

Pima County Conservation Acquisition Commission Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

**Joel Valdez Main Library
101 N. Stone Ave.
Thursday, June 9, 2011
3:00 p.m.**

MOTIONS

MOTION: Commissioner Smith moved, seconded by Commissioner Hare to approve the February 17, 2011 meeting summary. Motion approved 6-0 (Commissioners Corey, Johnson, Marian, Pettis and Sheridan absent).

MOTION: Commissioner Gardner moved, seconded by Commissioner Prouty to recommend a bond ordinance amendment to transfer the remaining \$1,547,968 in OS1.18 Kelly Ranch to OS1.4 Tortolita Mountain Park API, for the acquisition of State Trust land to expanded Tortolita Mountain Park, consistent with the Arroyo Grande Planning Area. Motion approved 6-0 (Commissioners Corey, Johnson, Marian, Pettis and Sheridan absent).

MOTION: Commissioner Hare moved, seconded by Commissioner Smith to support the County's proposal to apply to both the Arizona State Land Department to purchase at public auction approximately 1,500 acres of API land adjacent to Tortolita Mountain Park, and to Arizona State Parks for matching funds in the amount of \$1,782,264. Motion approved 6-0 (Commissioners Corey, Johnson, Marian, Pettis and Sheridan absent).

MOTION: Commissioner Gardner moved, seconded by Commissioner Smith to recommend adding both the 3.65-acre private parcel along the eastern boundary and the State Trust land parcels identified within the boundaries of Saguaro National Park, to the proposed future bond program, as part of the Saguaro National Park West Expansion Area project under the Community Open Space category. Motion approved 6-0 (Commissioners Corey, Johnson, Marian, Pettis and Sheridan absent).

DIRECTION TO STAFF

Status report on all remaining active non-open space 1997 Bond Program projects.

Update on the remaining DM open space monies.

Report on the status of Saguaro National Park Boundary Adjustment Act H.R. 715.

SUMMARY OF MEETING

1. Roll Call

The Commission meeting began at 3:10 p.m.

Commissioners Present

Bill Roe, Chairman
Helen Gardner (formerly Helen Wilson)
Trevor Hare
Rob Marshall
Tim Prouty
Corey Smith

Commissioners Absent

Les Corey
Jan Johnson
James Marian
Chuck Pettis
Tom Sheridan

2. Executive Session

None.

3. Approval of the February 17, 2011 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Smith moved, seconded by Commissioner Hare to approve the February 17, 2011 meeting summary. Motion approved 6-0 (Commissioners Corey, Johnson, Marian, Pettis and Sheridan absent).

4. Update on 1997/2004 Conservation Bond Program Expenditures

Nicole Fyffe reported that the \$230,000 remaining in the 1997 Open Space Bond Program was reserved for the Dos Picos litigation. This case has been settled, and the County will not need to use the money towards this case. Under agenda item 6, staff recommends we use the money towards expansion of Tortolita Mountain Park.

The Commission asked for a status report on any remaining open or active non-open space 1997 Bond Program projects.

Ms. Fyffe further reported that there is \$7.4 million remaining in the 2004 Conservation Acquisition Bond Program under Jurisdictional Open Space between the City of Tucson, the Town of Oro Valley and the Town of Sahuarita categories.

1.15 City of Tucson Aqua Caliente - \$1.4 million remains

1.16 City of Tucson 36th Street Corridor - \$1.9 million remains

1.17 City of Tucson Habitat at Kino and 36th Street – Just under \$1 million remains

1.18 Town of Oro Valley Kelly Ranch - \$1.5 million remains

1.19 Town of Sahuarita Santa Cruz River - \$1.5 million remains

The Commission requested an update on the status of the \$2.3 million remaining in the DM Open Space Bond project.

5. Town of Sahuarita Jurisdictional Bond Monies

(This item was moved and heard after item 7)

A. Robson Properties

At the last meeting the Commission directed staff to begin due diligence on the Robson parcels in the Town of Sahuarita. The County received the Right of Entry recently, and Nicole Fyffe said an offer was made to the owners last week. Staff hopes to bring an acquisition agreement to the Commission at the next meeting.

B. State Trust land near Green Valley Wastewater Treatment Facility

Ms. Fyffe noted that the parcel north of the Robson parcels is State Trust land that surrounds the County's Green Valley Wastewater Treatment Facility. The Commission had asked staff to work with the Town to identify land around the treatment facility for possible acquisition. The County has a meeting scheduled with the Town on June 29th to determine the area to acquire, which would then be followed-up with the State Land Department.

C. FICO and Anza Camp Trailhead

Ms. Fyffe noted that at the last meeting, the Commission requested a map depicting the Anza trail, proposed trailheads and gaps along the trail. Roger Anyon gave a brief presentation on the progress on the trail alignment. The two gaps should be addressed fairly easily, and FICO has agreed to provide right-of-way for the Trail along various segments that cross their land. If the County is able to acquire Robson and State Trust land north of there, there will be a marked and usable trail from Elephant Head Road to Sahuarita Road.

Frank Thompson, with FICO, let the Commission know that a specific plan was submitted to the Town, a River Management Plan was submitted to both the Town and Pima County, and a comprehensive plan amendment was submitted to Pima County.

The Commission asked that updates on the processing of the submittals be provided.

6. Application to Purchase State Trust Land East of Tortolita Mountain Park and Transfer of Funding from Kelly Ranch

Diana Durazo mentioned the information provided at the last meeting on the remaining funds for Kelly Ranch for the Town of Oro Valley. At the time, the Town Council had indicated they would revisit negotiations with Kelly Ranch owners, and if unsuccessful, would consider using the remaining \$1.5 million towards acquiring State land within the Arroyo Grande Plan. Since then, owners of Kelly Ranch began exploring the option of annexing into the Town. On May 4, 2011, the Council approved a resolution requesting a bond ordinance amendment to transfer the remaining \$1.54 million from Kelly Ranch to purchase State Trust land within the Arroyo Grande Plan, with the intent that the County apply to Arizona State Parks for matching funds. County staff also supports the use of the remaining \$234,000 in the 1997 Open Space Bond Program towards this acquisition, bringing the total of bond monies available to \$1.78 million.

Ms. Durazo said the County proposes to acquire 1,500 acres of reclassified State Trust land within the Arroyo Grande Plan adjacent to Tortolita Mountain Park, and apply to

State Parks for a Growing Smarter matching grant that could result in a total of \$3.56 million for this acquisition. To qualify for the next cycle of the matching grant, the County would need to apply to the State Land Department by September 2011 and applies to Arizona State Parks by June 2012. Staff recommended the Commission support these applications.

MOTION: Commissioner Gardner moved, seconded by Commissioner Prouty to recommend a bond ordinance amendment to transfer the remaining \$1,547,968 in OS1.18 Kelly Ranch to OS1.4 Tortolita Mountain Park API, for the acquisition of State Trust land to expanded Tortolita Mountain Park, consistent with the Arroyo Grande Planning Area. Motion approved 6-0 (Commissioners Corey, Johnson, Marian, Pettis and Sheridan absent).

MOTION: Commissioner Hare moved, seconded by Commissioner Smith to support the County's proposal to apply to both the Arizona State Land Department to purchase at public auction approximately 1,500 acres of API land adjacent to Tortolita Mountain Park, and to Arizona State Parks for matching funds in the amount of \$1,782,264. Motion approved 6-0 (Commissioners Corey, Johnson, Marian, Pettis and Sheridan absent).

7. Update to 2012 Proposed Bond Program

A. Revision and proposed additions to Saguaro National Park West Expansion Project under Community Open Space

Diana Durazo indicated that at the last meeting, David Lutz had submitted a request for the Commission to consider adding two sections of State land to expand Saguaro National Park. Staff contacted Darla Sidles, Superintendent of Saguaro National Park, for review and input. Ms. Sidles concurred with staff on the first parcel, indicating that it would not be an advantageous addition, given that it is surrounded by high density development on all sides, and the road fragmenting the southern portion. Parcel 2, however, is highly supported for inclusion. Ms. Sidles then requested that additional parcels be considered for inclusion in the future bond program, and submitted a letter of support explaining these proposed additions. There was a correction made at the meeting, removing one of the private parcels along the Park's eastern boundary. Becky MacEwen, with the Park, was present and answered several questions. The State land parcels within the boundaries were deemed not protected, and Ms. MacEwen clarified that the State land is not considered protected or set aside due to their location within the Park boundary.

MOTION: Commissioner Gardner moved, seconded by Commissioner Smith to recommend adding both the 3.65-acre private parcel along the eastern boundary and the 8 State Trust land parcels identified within the boundaries of Saguaro National Park to the proposed future bond program, as part of the Saguaro National Park West Expansion Area project under the Community Open Space category. Motion approved 6-0 (Commissioners Corey, Johnson, Marian, Pettis and Sheridan absent).

8. General Updates

- Proposed Development Activities on Bond Parcels: Nothing new to report.
- Dos Picos: Already discussed.
- Arroyo Grande Conceptual Land Use Plan: Already discussed.

- Avra Valley – Interstate 10 Tucson-Tortolita Mountain connection: TEP does not want to finalize the conservation easement until they have completed construction of their substation expansion, which is still underway.
- Saguaro National Park Boundary Adjustment Act H.R. 715: The Commission requested that an update report be presented at the next meeting.
- Catalina/Tortolita Connection: The Arizona Department of Transportation held a public meeting on SR77, but no other updates.
- Rosemont Mine: The County received the draft EIS for comments, which are due in 30 days. The Oro Valley Town Council is considering a vote to rescind their opposition.
- SunZia Transmission Line Project: BLM said the draft EIS would be released in Spring 2011, but nothing more has been posted. SunZia's website said the draft would be released June 2011.
- BLM Solar EIS: The public comment period was closed on May 2, 2011. The County submitted comments supporting the concept of solar energy zones and requesting that local jurisdictions be included early on in the process.
- 2012 Bond Election Update: The Bond Advisory Committee will meet on June 17, 2011, at the Abrams Public Health Center at 8:00 a.m. to continue deliberation on projects. They will not meet again until September.

9. Next Commission Meeting

Staff will follow-up with Commission members for possible dates prior to the September 16, 2011 Bond Advisory Committee meeting.

10. Call to the Public

No one spoke.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.