

**Pima County Conservation Acquisition Commission Meeting  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Pima County Natural Resources Parks and Recreation  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room  
Thursday March 4, 2010  
2:00 p.m.**

**MOTIONS**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Marian moved, seconded by Commissioner Wilson to approve the October 29, 2009 meeting summary. Motion approved 8-0 (Commissioner Smith abstained; Commissioners Corey and Prouty absent).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Sheridan moved, seconded by Commissioner Wilson to approve the July 9, 2009 meeting minutes. Motion approved 9-0 (Commissioners Corey and Prouty absent).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Pettis moved, seconded by Commissioner Sheridan to recommend adding the 1,700-acre Winterhaven Ranch, located north of Marley Ranch in the southern foothills of the Sierrita Mountains, to a future Conservation Acquisition Bond Program. Motion approved 9-0 (Commissioners Corey and Prouty absent).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Hare moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson to accept the 1997/2004 Semi-Annual Bond Program report. Motion approved 9-0 (Commissioners Corey and Prouty absent).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Sheridan moved, seconded by Commissioner Marian to recommend acquisition of the Treehouse Realty LLC properties, totaling 13 acres, located along Oracle Road. Motion approved 9-0 (Commissioners Corey and Prouty absent).

**DIRECTION TO STAFF**

Provide a map showing the Avra Valley/I-10 corridor, including ownership and currently conserved properties.

The Commission will submit a statement letter to the Bond Advisory Committee regarding bond funding for State Trust land.

SunZia power line proposals should be brought to the Commission for discussion. This is part of a larger challenge involving power line issues and solar farms.

1. Roll Call

The Commission meeting began at 2:26 p.m.

The Commission unanimously agreed to appoint Commissioner Hare as pro tem Chair in light of a quorum being present and both the Chairman and Vice-chair being absent.

Commissioners Present

Trevor Hare  
Jan Johnson, Vice Chair (arrived at 2:30pm)  
James Marian  
Rob Marshall  
Chuck Pettis  
Bill Roe, Chairman (arrived at 2:35pm)  
Tom Sheridan  
Corey Smith  
Helen Wilson

Commissioners Absent

Les Corey  
Tim Prouty

2. Executive Session

None.

3. Approval of the October 29, 2009 Meeting Minutes

**MOTION:** Commissioner Marian moved, seconded by Commissioner Wilson to approve the October 29, 2009 meeting minutes. Motion approved 8-0 (Commissioner Smith abstained; Commissioners Corey and Prouty absent).

4. Approval of the July 9, 2009 Meeting Minutes

**MOTION:** Commissioner Sheridan moved, seconded by Commissioner Wilson to approve the July 9, 2009 meeting minutes. Motion approved 9-0 (Commissioners Corey and Prouty absent).

5. Update on 1997/2004 Conservation Bond Program Expenditures

Diana Durazo reported that the remaining balance for the 1997 Conservation Bond Program is \$116,992. The 2004 Conservation Bond Program has remaining balances in both Community Open Space, with \$89,000, and Jurisdictional Open Space, with a balance of \$10.2 million. All monies in Habitat Protection Priorities have been spent. Ms. Durazo noted that staff would provide a more definite number at the May Commission meeting since any final charges not reflected in January will have posted by then.

6. Update from County Administrator on Future Bond Election Timing

County Administrator Chuck Huckelberry said the Bond Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet on March 19, 2010 to discuss the Board of Supervisors' recent vote to not hold a 2010 Bond election, given the current economic conditions. The Committee is to continue work on identifying the community's highest priorities in preparation for a 2011 Bond election.

Mr. Huckelberry discussed his recommendations for open space, which he increased to \$120 million for both Habitat Protection Priorities and Community Open Space, and indicated that as the debate continues, the Committee may increase the amount he has recommended.

Mr. Huckelberry touched upon agenda item 7C., and discussed the need for the County to position itself to be able to react to State Trust land reform. He recently met

with Carolyn Campbell and discussed the possibility of introducing a separate ballot question or a subcategory solely for State Trust lands, with specific language stating that it would only be sold if reform or another method to acquire State lands becomes available. Mr. Huckelberry has no problem with this concept, and would recommend allocating up to \$100 million above what he has already recommended for open space.

Mr. Huckelberry also briefly touched upon agenda item 10, informing the Commission of the development of a comprehensive open space report currently being developed. The report will cover every acquisition and its costs, discussion on urban form, economics associated with open space, tax base consequences and a recap on previous open space bonds passed. It is expected to be completed within 60 days.

The Commission asked whether the issue of State Trust land should be a separate question. Concerns were expressed in regard to the complexity of State Trust land issues and whether voters would understand this issue, as has been the problem in the past. Mr. Huckelberry responded that that is the question that needs to be addressed. He indicated that it could be a part of the Open Space question as a subcategory or a separate question altogether, but the Commission would need to determine what the best alternative would be.

Chris McVie, representing Carolyn Campbell, expressed concern with tying this new pot of money to State Trust land reform. If an opportunity outside reform efforts arises, the County would not be able to respond. Instead, the monies should just explicitly be for acquisition of State Trust land in general.

Mr. Huckelberry said that in 2004, categories in the ballot were introduced for the first time, and indicated that now is a good time to introduce a new category for State Trust land.

(Mr. Huckelberry left meeting)

Commissioner Marshall discussed tactics used in 2004 and felt that tying open space to State Trust land would create problems.

Commissioner Sheridan asked Chair Roe if he could contact Project New West, for a presentation on current trends, voter opinion on open space and economy.

Commissioner Smith added that he sits on the Wastewater Advisory Committee and shared that there may be serious backlash from the public as the County prepares to issue \$850 million bonds without voter approval for sewer, with the repayment plan calling for a 50 percent increase in rates. He indicated the County may need to push General Obligation bonds further out.

Chairman Roe suggested a statement be sent to the Bond Advisory Committee on the Commission's discussion on the introduction of State Trust land as its own category with an allocation of up to \$100 million.

7. Future Bond Election Planning

A. Review of Past Commission Recommendations

Diana Durazo summarized the Commissions' actions and recommendations on planning for a future bond election since May 2006. The current proposed future bond program asks for \$285 million and identifies approximately 700,000 acres in eastern Pima County.

B. Request for addition of the Winterhaven Ranch

Diana Durazo reported that AV Holdings, LLC, an affiliate of Diamond Ventures, submitted a request to add the 1,700-acre Winterhaven Ranch as an eligible property to acquire under a future bond election. The property is located adjacent and north of Marley Ranch in the southwestern foothills of the Sierrita Mountains. It is within the Biological Core designation of the Maeveen Behan Conservation Lands System, with two Important Riparian Areas running through it. Staff recommends approving the addition of this property to the future bond election Conservation Acquisition Program map.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Pettis moved, seconded by Commissioner Sheridan to recommend adding the 1,700-acre Winterhaven Ranch, located north of Marley Ranch in the southern foothills of the Sierrita Mountains, to a future Conservation Acquisition Bond Program. Motion approved 9-0 (Commissioners Corey and Prouty absent).

C. Request for a new recommendation for a separate ballot question for bond funding just for State Trust land

Discussed under Item 6.

8. Accept 1997/2004 Semi-Annual Bond Program Report

**MOTION:** Commissioner Hare moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson to accept the 1997/2004 Semi-Annual Bond Program report. Motion approved 9-0 (Commissioners Corey and Prouty absent).

9. Treehouse Realty Property – Oracle Road (Catalina/Tortolita Wildlife Corridor)

Diana Durazo explained that the Commission recommended amending the 2004 Bond Ordinance to add the Treehouse parcels to OS1.18 Kelly Ranch project under the Jurisdictional Open Space category per the Oro Valley Town Council's request, and approved starting due diligence on the 13 acres. Ms. Durazo reported that the County negotiated an acquisition agreement to acquire the two parcels for the appraised value - \$920,000. Staff recommended approval of this acquisition.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Sheridan moved, seconded by Commissioner Marian to recommend acquisition of the Treehouse Realty LLC properties, totaling 13 acres, located along Oracle Road. Motion approved 9-0 (Commissioners Corey and Prouty absent).

Chris McVie provided an update on the discussion with the adjacent church property. The Church's concerns are about traffic flow and their need to redirect it to the

southern portion of the property. They do not have any plans for additional activity in the area north of the Treehouse parcel. The church is willing to work with the County, the Coalition and the State regarding the large parcel to the north. Coupled with the open space within Arroyo Grande, the County's intent to revegetate the waster transfer station when closed, ADOT's land bridge, and the Treehouse parcels, this area will be a significant wildlife linkage.

#### 10. Update on Conservation Acquisition Program Report

Diana Durazo showed the Commission the sample draft spreads on the conceptual reserves being developed. The report outline was also distributed to Commission members for input. Comments from Commission members included:

- Include something similar to Commissioner Prouty's fly-over tour, including incorporating permits and planning activities in the areas
- Discuss dynamic of increase in property value when adjacent or in close proximity to open space
- Mr. Huckelberry's suggested length of 200-300 pages is not practical
- Report should discuss future uses available to the public on acquired properties
- People who have been involved in this process should be recognized

#### 11. Updates

- Proposed Development Activities on Bond Parcels: Clarification on the Canoa Hill tentative plat was provided. The plat was submitted in 2008, and a new submittal has not be received since then.
- Arroyo Grande Conceptual Land Use Plan – Discussed under item 9.
- Valencia Archaeological Site – The County successfully bid for the 67-acre Valencia Site for \$940,000. the County received the 50 percent match Growing Smarter grant from Arizona State Parks and closed on the property on December 25, 2009. The patent is in the mail.
- Terra Rancho Grande – The County closed on the 72-acre property on January 12, 2010.
- Dos Picos – Payment was issued in July to stop accrual of interest. Other aspects of the property are still under litigation, and once resolved, the County will close on the 60 acres.
- Clyne Ranch – The County closed on the second phase on January 8, 2010 for the remaining 210 acres.
- Boa Sorte – Back in 2006, the owners offered to sell the property to the County for \$16 million. The initial appraised value came in at \$7.65 million, and the owners decided to hold on to the property. In March 2009, the owners expressed interest in selling to the County for \$6.88 million. A bond ordinance amendment was required since the only monies that would be available would have to come from the Jurisdictional Open Space category under the City, if the City Council approved this amendment. After the ordinance amendment was approved by the city and Board of Supervisors, staff ordered an appraisal. The appraisal of December 2009 came in at around half of their new offer price. The County explored different scenarios for purchase, but in the end, an agreement could not be reached.
- Stonehaven – No update.
- Saguaro National Park Boundary Adjustment Act H.R. 715 - Congressman Grijalva's office indicated that it passed in committee hearings and is waiting to be scheduled on the floor for final passage. The bill would most likely not stand alone

and will be part of a public lands package sent from House to Senate. No timeline was given.

Catalina/Tortolita Connection - Discussed under item 9.

- Rosemont Mine - The Tohono O'odham Nation formally joined local governments in opposing the mine. The County Administrator went to Washington and testified on the mineral withdrawal bill. The draft EIS is now scheduled to be released in April 2010.
- 2010 Bond Election Update - Discussed under item 6.

Chairman Roe reminded staff to include the Avra/I-10 Corridor discussion in the Updates section for the next meeting. Mr. Roe also let Commissioners know that Arizona Land and Water Trust will be hosting their annual event on April 17, 2010, and the County's Canoa Ranch.

#### 12. Next Commission Meeting

The next scheduled Commission meeting is on May 13<sup>th</sup>, at 2 p.m., at the Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation first floor conference room. The following meeting is scheduled on August 12, 2010, with the location to be determined.

Chairman Roe requested that all SunZia power line proposals be brought to the Commission for discussion. This is part of a larger challenge involving power line issues and solar farms.

#### 13. Call to the Public

No one spoke.

#### 14. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:37 pm.

#### **Reminder:**

Scheduled Conservation Acquisition Commission meeting dates:

May 13, 2010	Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation
August 12, 2010	TBD