

**Pima County Conservation Acquisition Commission Meeting**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Pima County Housing Center  
801 West Congress Street  
Thursday, August 21, 2014  
2:00 p.m.**

**MOTIONS**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Hare moved, seconded by Commissioner Pettis to approve the July 3, 2014 meeting summary. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Corey, Gardner, Marshall and Roe were absent).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Marian moved, seconded by Commissioner Sheridan to accept the conservation portion of the 2004 End of Year Bond Program report for Fiscal Year 2013/2014. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Corey, Gardner, Marshall and Roe were absent).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Prouty moved, seconded by Commissioner Pettis to approve the addition of the 80-acre Las Lomas property, located north of Speedway Boulevard and east of Camino de Oeste, to the Community Open Space Priorities category for a possible 2015 bond election. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Corey, Gardner, Marshall and Roe were absent).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Marian moved, seconded by Commissioner Prouty to approve the updated Open Space Bond Program narrative for a possible 2015 bond election, subject to minor edits by staff. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Corey, Gardner, Marshall and Roe were absent).

**SUMMARY OF MEETING**

1. Roll Call

The Commission meeting began at 2:05 p.m.

Vice-Chair Johnson introduced the newly appointed District 1 representative, Chris Laria.

Commissioners Present  
Trevor Hare  
Jan Johnson, Vice-Chair  
Chris Laria  
James Marian  
Chuck Pettis  
Tim Prouty  
Tom Sheridan

Commissioners Absent  
Les Corey  
Helen Gardner  
Rob Marshall  
Bill Roe, Chairman

2. Approval of the July 3, 2014 Meeting Minutes

**MOTION:** Commissioner Hare moved, seconded by Commissioner Pettis to approve the July 3, 2014 meeting summary. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Corey, Gardner, Marshall and Roe were absent).

3. Update on 2004 Bond Program Expenditures

Nicole Fyffe reported that after the purchase of the Painted Hills property, which is scheduled to close in September, there will be \$1.5 million remaining under Jurisdictional Open Space earmarked for the Town of Sahuarita for land purchases along the Santa Cruz River.

4. Accept the End of Year 2004 Bond Program Report

Diana Durazo briefly summarized the conservation portion of the End of Year report materials and indicated that no additional land purchases were made since the last report to the Commission in February 2014, except for the anticipated purchase of the 286-acre Painted Hills property in September 2014, as an addition to Tucson Mountain Park using \$3.5 million of the remaining \$5 million 2004 bond authorization. Staff recommended the Commission accept the End of Year report for Fiscal Year 2013/2014.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Marian moved, seconded by Commissioner Sheridan to accept conservation portion of the 2004 End of Year Bond Program report for Fiscal Year 2013/2014. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Corey, Gardner, Marshall and Roe were absent).

5. Planning for Possible 2015 Bond Election

A. Northern Altar Valley Properties - Proposal to move properties from Community Open Space to Habitat Protection Priorities

B. Double X Ranch - Proposal to move property from Community Open Space to Habitat Protection Priorities

(Note that these items were on the agenda separately. The Commission began discussing the Northern Altar Properties, and then decided to table both items.)

Staff reported that at a previous meeting, Commissioner Gardner had expressed concern that these properties were in the Community Open Space category. Staff reviewed the properties and assessed whether these properties met the conservation goals and selection criteria used by the Arizona Land and Water Trust (ALWT) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for the original Habitat Protection Priorities (HPPs). The list of goals and criteria developed by ALWT and TNC was provided to the Commission. The Northern Altar Valley properties fall under the Conservation Lands System Special Species Management Area for the Cactus ferruginous pygmy owl, contain priority conservation areas for several species and met other goals and criteria.

Commissioner Hare and Carolyn Campbell expressed concerns over moving these properties into Habitat Protection Priorities without further review by Rob Marshall

and Diana Freshwater, both of whom were involved in the development of the original HPPs, and possible review by another outside group yet to be identified.

Commissioner Sheridan stated that conservation of these properties is critical to the main stem of the Brawley Wash.

Staff reported that Commissioner Gardner submitted an email in support of staff's recommendation.

The Commission agreed to postpone items A and B until the next meeting so staff can seek input from Rob Marshall and Diana Freshwater on whether the Northern Altar Valley and Double XX Ranch properties meet the HPP criteria for inclusion.

- C. Las Lomas – Staff recommended that the Las Lomas property, located north of Speedway Boulevard and east of Camino de Oeste, be added to the Community Open Space Priorities category. The property is located adjacent to the County's Feliz Paseos Park, and 80 acres of the property is predominantly undisturbed land and can be purchased in fee to be managed as part of Feliz Paseos.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Prouty moved, seconded by Commissioner Pettis to approve the addition of the 80-acre Las Lomas property, located north of Speedway Boulevard and east of Camino de Oeste, to the Community Open Space Priorities category for a possible 2015 bond election. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Corey, Gardner, Marshall and Roe were absent).

- D. Cochie Canyon – Staff recommended that the remaining property retained by the former owner of the County-owned Cochie Canyon property, plus additional properties totaling 90 acres, be added to the Habitat Protection Priorities category.

Commissioner Hare asked that staff research this parcel retained by the former owner of the County-owned Cochie Canyon property since he thinks it was already an HPP and defer until the next meeting.

- E. Open Space Acquisition Program Narrative for Possible 2015 Bond Election – Staff reported that the narrative was combined into one project sheet and integrated language the Commission provided at the July meeting. Commissioner Marian and Doug Laney, Chief County Appraiser with County Real Property, worked with several groups to come up with an estimated land value of \$4,800 per acre for the entire 10-year program. This depends, however, on where purchases occur, such as urban areas versus ranch lands.

Commissioner Prouty suggested that language in the narrative emphasize that these lands are needed for the County's federal permit.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Marian moved, seconded by Commissioner Prouty to approve the updated narrative for the 2015 Bond Open Space Acquisition Program and eligible properties, subject to minor edits staff will complete. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Corey, Gardner, Marshall and Roe were absent).

- F. Bond Request Allocation – The Commission decided to not amend their original bond allocation request of \$285 million.

## 6. General Updates

- A. Proposed Development Activities on Bond Parcels: Sherry Ruther updated the Commission on the last 3 plan amendments presented at the July meeting, with the Board of Supervisors approving the plan amendments. An updated development table was provided.
- B. Painted Hills: Already discussed.
- C. State Trust land application and State Parks grant application for Tucson Mountain properties: The Trails End and Robles Pass parcels, identified as State API lands adjacent to Tucson Mountain Park, were appraised by the Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) for \$1.175 million. The County applied for a matching fund grant from Arizona State Parks in August. ASLD has scheduled the auction for early November.
- D. Land conservation efforts within the Town of Sahuarita: There are \$1.5 million remaining for the Town of Sahuarita, but they are having difficulty in identifying land along the Santa Cruz River for acquisition.
- E. Catalina/Tortolita Wildlife Corridor  
  
The County acquired the right of way for the footholds for the wildlife land bridge to be constructed as part of ADOT's Oracle Road widening road project. The footings have already been placed by ADOT.
- F. Avra Valley-Interstate 10 Tucson-Tortolita Mountain Wildlife Corridor: Carolyn Campbell, with the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection, said the offsite mitigation for the recently approved project would be done here.
- G. Marley Ranch: No update.
- H. Recent offers to sell to the County: No update.
- I. Rosemont Mine: The Forest Service reopened the Biological Assessment regarding groundwater impacts in Las Cienegas.
- J. Saguaro National Park Boundary Adjustment Act H.R. 715: No update.
- K. SunZia Transmission Line Project: The Department of Defense has expressed serious concerns over impacts to their mission at the White Sands Missile Range and submitted 4 mitigation requirements. The Bureau of Land Management is currently doing an Environmental Assessment on the underground segments requested as one of the mitigation requirements.
- L. Sierrita Pipeline (formerly known as Sasabe Lateral Project): In June, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issued the Certificat of Convenience and Necessity for the project, and approved Kinder Morgan's request to begin

construction activities in July. Kinder Morgan has projected a service date of September 2014.

M. Pima County Multi Species Conservation Plan Update: The County is waiting for the Fish and Wildlife Service to complete their review. We project a completion date of March 2015.

7. Next Commission Meeting

The Commission's next oversight meeting will be in February 2015, but there was discussion on the possible need for a meeting in late September or early October to deal with outstanding issues.

8. Call to the Public

Commissioner Sheridan shared that the Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance was hosting their Santa Cruz Harvest Dinner in October and handed out flyers. He also noted the publication of his book on collaborative conservation with a chapter on the County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

DRAFT