

MINUTES
OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING FOR REGULAR SESSION
April 22, 2021
Zoom Video Conference

OSTB Present:

Graeme Means Dist. 1	Howie Mallory Dist. 2	Amy Barrow Dist. 3, Chair	Michael Kinsley Dist. 4	Wayne Ives Dist. 5
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Staff Present: Dale Will, Kim Arensdorf, Paul Holsinger, Janet Urquhart, Richard Neiley

Others Present: Jose Miranda, Erin Cuseo, Alyssa Barsanti, Mariah Foley, Jennifer Ghigiarelli

Media Present: Geneviève Villamizar, Sopris Sun

Amy Barrow called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

Glassier Open Space Agriculture Lease

Dale Will explained that the OST agriculture program has expanded due to a resurgence in public interest in local agriculture production. Paul Holsinger commented that the purchase and initial programming Glassier Open Space significantly increased the acreage of fee owned agriculture land. In response to this increase in lease potential and an increased interest in leasing from the public, staff drafted an agricultural lease bid process to set a uniform process for obtaining an agricultural lease on OST property. Holsinger stated that the Glassier OS Agriculture lease process began with the adoption of the Glassier Management Plan. One of the first action items in the updated Glassier Management Plan was to release a request for proposals (RFP) for lease area B and F. He noted that as per the Policy, the leasable areas of Glassier Open Space properties were publicly advertised in the Aspen Daily News, via social media outlets, and direct email to agricultural producers. The bids were received Jan 15, 2021. A selection committee was created under the terms of the County Procurement Code to score the proposal based on the scoring criteria within the Agricultural Lease Bid Process and Policy, he said.

Holsinger provided the scoring criteria:

- Management Plan action item 4.1.2.b – “...lessees proposing organic or natural food production without the need of pesticides or herbicides, and local agricultural suppliers, will be given priority.”
- Management Plan action item 4.1.2.c - For the benefit of wildlife, lease area B shall be maintained to support transitional wildlife habitat and a minimum of 50% of the land area will not be grazed or have the vegetation cut or removed beyond Sept. 1st to allow forage to be present for wildlife. The lessee will be required to continue watering the lease area after last cutting of hay. The goal is to allow for about a month to 1.5 months of regrowth that serves as high-quality forage for ungulates in the autumn as they prepare for winter.

- Agricultural Lease Bid Process and Policy - Management Plan Priorities - If the agricultural lease area has been identified with a priority, any application meeting the priority use will be scored and evaluated as a potential lessee first.

Holsinger stated that seven proposals were received, (1 for Lease B; 3 for Lease F; and 3 for both). Based on the scoring (provided on the Glassier OS Lease Recommendation Memo), Marigold Livestock was selected for Lease B & F. Holsinger noted that Marigold Livestock's plan works for the County's objectives for the property. Marigold's light touch and stewardship based approach to the land fit with the Management Plan's overall wildlife, restoration, recreation, and improvement vision for the property as well as agriculture, he said.

Holsinger explained that Jose Miranda, Rocking TT Bar Owner, objected to the decision of the selection committee. In accord with the general intent to use the Pitkin County Procurement Code as a guide, the selection committee's decision was reviewed by County Manager, Jon Peacock. He noted that the County Manager found that Mr. Miranda's objections did not warrant reversing the selection of the Marigold Livestock Co., and that the selection was made in accord with the Policy. Holsinger explained that Mr. Miranda chose to appeal the County Manager's determination and requested that the Pitkin County Hearing Officer determine whether staff followed the Policy. The Hearing Officer found that OST staff and the selection committee followed the process and declined to reinstate the scoring process, He said.

Holsinger commented that based on the average criteria score and through the appeal process mentioned above, staff recommends the OSTB make a motion to recommend approval for a five year lease to Marigold Livestock Co. for Glassier Opens Space Lease Areas B and F at \$20/acre to the Board of County Commissioners.

Howie Mallory asked what annual interaction is taken by staff in regards to lessee performance with the landscape. Holsinger stated that the leases are drafted to encompass an annual operating plan. This includes weed management, that the property is well-maintained, and the production must be inline with the Management Plan, he said.

Amy Barrow asked if property adjacent lease holders are taken into consideration with choosing a lessee. Holsinger stated the agriculture program takes a holistic approach to the land, and also takes into account ditches along the properties.

Jose Miranda, Rocking TT Bar Owner, stated that he applied to the lease program as it is important to the future of the local agriculture production in the valley. Miranda explained that it was a very competitive bid process. Miranda commented that he had issues with the selection process with regards to calling references and scoring, as none of his references were contacted by the selection committee. He commented that there was not enough public notice in Garfield or Eagle County, nor was the notice available in Spanish. Miranda noted concern with the chosen proposal with regards to wildlife interaction with the sheep. He requested that the Board look into score cards and process, and welcomed improvements to the Agricultural Lease Bid Process and Policy. Amy Barrow thanked Miranda for his comments and welcomed future involvement in the lease process.

Holsinger stated that there was an open link for the Glassier RFP on the OST website, and noted that there was a Glassier OS lease page available on pitkinostprojects.com.

Alyssa Barsanti, Marigold Livestock Co. Owner, expressed her appreciation for the Glassier lease, and OST support of local agriculture.

Will mentioned the email comment sent to the OSTB by Jason Smith.

Mariah Foley, provided her support of Marigold Livestock Co. selection. She stated that Marigold Livestock fills a need of products that are high in demand in the valley. It is also important to improve the process, she said.

Jennifer Ghigiarelli, Rock Bottom Ranch, applauded OST prioritizing agriculture in the County. She commended Alyssa Barsanti as a local agriculture producer.

Erin Cuseo, local farmer, asked about the lack of contacting references within the process. Will stated that the process will be reviewed, however today's meeting forum is to discuss the current lease selection. Barrow commented that the Board and staff welcomes public input on the process when it is reviewed at a future meeting.

Michael Kinsley asked what authority OSTB has after an appeal has been made and what indication does the Board have that the appeal points were addressed. Will stated that the scope of the OSTB is to approve or disapprove the current staff recommendation and not provide input on the actual bid process at this time. Holsinger stated that the Agriculture lease bid process will be reviewed with the OSTB at the next meeting, May 6, 2021.

Wayne Ives thanked the Board, staff and the public for comments on this process. He commended reviewing the lease process to make sure it is fair and inclusive, as the agriculture lease process becomes more involved.

BOARD ACTION

Glassier Open Space Agriculture Lease

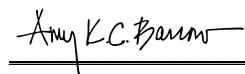
Michael Kinsley motion to recommend BOCC approval for a five year lease to Marigold Livestock Co. for Glassier Open Space Lease Areas B and F. Wayne Ives seconded. Motion Passed (5-0).

ADJOURN

The OSTB meeting of April 22, 2021 adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Approved:

Attest:



04/22/2021

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Amy Barrow, Chair
Pitkin County Open Space & Trails Board

Kimberly Arensdorf
Pitkin County Open Space & Trails
Administrative Specialist