

Snowmass Capitol Creek Caucus Board Meeting May 21, 2019
Snowmass Fire Station Annex

CALL TO ORDER

Board Members present:

David Chase, Chris Collins, Glenn Russell, Vicki Treece, George Johnson, Molly Child, Jill Sabella

Guests: Jeffrey Woodruff, Mike Bouchet/CORE, Scott Gilbert/Habitat for Humanity, Steve Child, Kurt Russell, John McBride

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to accept the Minutes of the meeting of April 16, 2019 was made by Chris Collins. Seconded by George Johnson. All approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Vicki went over the expenses, being fees for WIX.com for the website fee, the annual expense for the web domain, and the annual fee for PayPal. The first invoice from LOTIC will come after their work begins.

Unrestricted fund are \$20,271.76; restricted funds remain at \$24,980.51, for a total of \$45,252.27.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Communication

Molly reported the annual Capitol Creek Road cleanup on May 4 was well attended - 10-15 volunteers. There was less to pick up than last year.

Annual Caucus picnic

The McCabe Ranch will again host the picnic, scheduled for Saturday, August 10, 5-8 pm. The Wooden Nickel will play country music. An email will go out to all caucus members with a save-the-date. Roadside posters again will be made at the time of the picnic. This annual event is primarily for caucus members, but also open to the Upper Snowmass Creek caucus as well as Lazy O and Lazy Glen residents if they wish to come. McCabe Ranch will do the set-up and clean-up; Bubba's will provide burgers; caucus board members will bring dishes and guests are welcome to bring potluck. The caucus will provide soft drinks and wine. The Capitol Creek Brewery has offered again to provide one pencil keg of their beer. There will be games and hayrides, weather permitting.

Water

The Caucus has signed a contract with LOTIC. They will start their study of Capitol Creek in June and work through the summer at certain stations along the river. George will get permission from any landowners where LOTIC will need to access. Steve speculated the peak run-off will be the third week in June.

Joint Caucus

Vicki reported the Joint Caucus wants feedback from all the caucuses and to hear their concerns. There are 8 active caucuses presently in Pitkin County. The Joint Caucus has asked each caucus make a \$50 donation to cover their expenses. All were in favor. Steve added that the County would be willing to pay for the Joint Caucus expenses as well.

Community Solar Project Presentation

Jeffrey Woodruff gave an in-depth presentation on a solar array in Capitol Creek Valley with assistance from Mike Bouchet of CORE and Scott Gilbert of Habitat for Humanity. Jeffrey lives in Gateway, has been a Caucus Board member, is a working architect and presently is on the P&Z Committee.

In light of recent discussions about the county encouraging the installation of alternate energy production - micro grids - in case of electrical shutdowns, like fire danger, Jeffrey has researched the idea in collaboration with CORE, Holy Cross and Pitkin County, to install a solar array on upper Light Hill, which is BLM land. These micro grids are part of the net-zero aim, with or without batteries, to give electrification and resilience. Jeffrey feels this is an opportune time to seriously consider such an installation which would be located on the Light Hill trail, on BLM land, not visible, and where there already exist two dirt roads, and which could provide electrical power to Gateway, Little Elk Creek community, as well as others interested in buying into it. There are tax credits, assistance from CORE and Holy Cross and the County. Such an array now exists at St. Benedict's Monastery and in process at the McCabe Ranch. Mike Bouchet stressed the solar installation panels basically last forever; the batteries have a shorter life.

Steve said one aspect of a community grid is to cut down on transmission losses. Currently Roaring Fork Valley power originates in Pueblo. Also, if you have a battery on site, there is no need for a large power line.

Discussion followed about if there was an array on BLM land above Gateway, how would three parties, such as Gateway, Little Elk Creek and Lazy O connect to the main power array and how would this be financed. It could be done as a cooperative, such as the Clean Energy Collective in Rifle, where individuals bought solar panels to finance the array and then get credit on their electric account. Such a cooperative would not necessarily be limited to the three communities, but available to the entire Capitol Creek Valley.

Scott spoke on how funding would come largely from grants and that Holy Cross, as well as CORE and Pitkin County; each entity wants all renewable energy possible. Scott/ Habitat for Humanity is presently involved in the new housing community of 27 homes that are "net zero" and are being built behind the Basalt High School with the energy coming mostly from solar.

That community will have 85% lower utility bills if they go with renewable energy with grants from CORE, HC and Pitkin.

There were suggestions that this effort begin with providing energy to Gateway, and then add on additional communities, and to research the cost breakdown of such an approach where individuals could buy into what one's needs are. CORE would do a feasibility study on our valley and design a study grant for the Caucus.

David proposed a resolution that the Caucus support a community solar system array and that the Caucus encourage Jeffrey to continue to work with CORE to do a feasibility study and get back to the Caucus with more information and try to create a venue for real community involvement. George seconded the resolution. All were in favor.

Steve commented: "You get more miracles with partnership."

Thanks to Jeffrey for all the time and passion he has put into this concept, and also thanks to Mike and Scott for their participation.

Follow-up on Huts for Vets teepees

Steve reported that the County voted 5-0 to support Paul Anderson and the Huts for Vets use of Light Hill this summer with the teepees as long as they meet the conditions of having a toilet system, removing the cooking/kitchen area after the season, have fire extinguishers and darken the color of the white teepees.

Steve also reported that on June 17 there will be available a new high-speed broadband, Visionary, which is a subsidiary of Mammoth, which has towers on Williams Hill. They are at www.vcn.com (970.279.8447).

Chris moved to adjourn the meeting. Molly seconded. All in favor.