

RIO GRANDE BOULEVARD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Semi-Annual Membership Meeting

12/3/2013

Los Griegos Center
Called to Order: 6:36 PM

Jack Taylor, President, and Susan Johnson opened meeting.

John Kelly, MRGCD Board of Directors.

There is a transition in the board, Mr. Shea will terminate his tenure after 37 years, in 2014. The board will look at board structure, the way things work, will conduct a search. Ours is the biggest conservancy district in the State.

Levis: FEMA is not around, and will probably not be here for another ten years. There are some projects, Core of Engineers is ready to go for flood plane removal project, also feasibility project in Bernalillo, engineering and studies; the Bernalillo Belen levees, no levees there. Biggest challenge is working with the city as the improvement in the Bosque moves along. He went to meeting, there were 400 angry people; the City's staff has been doing a lot of restoration. Hopes for balance between access and preservation.

Susan: at what time will new CEO Engineer starts; Answer: there is a discussion between overlap for several months and Shea is on call, vs. new person is in charge from day one.

Q: were there any floods in last storm

A: no flooding. Water was high enough to reach levi, but not saturated.

Q: flooding in Bosque.

A: If we had Cochitti access we could do it, but it's not possible. He participated in a tour of some restoration projects.

Q: FEMA not back, does it mean that we don't have to worry about flood insurance?

A: It depends on FEMA' approach, vis a vis what to do with the levees, are they certified. Until they re-map the flood plane, there's no worry about insurance, and if this is done in the future there will be plenty of warning.

Beth Dillingham, in charge of the Nature Center. State park is an enterprising agency, they have to generate 67% of the budget. The Center was started 32 years ago, she grew up in ABQ, went to Valley High School. Third generation NM. Worked at APS and Nature Museum, Bio Park. Nature Center, the Bureau of reclamation was going to cut the trees: citizens worked for years to save the forest, as part of it they wanted to create a nature center. The site was formerly a slaughter house. Her piece is doing a lot of educational programs. We had 197,000 people visited last year, there are people from all over the world, somehow people learn about it. But also from

NM. We serve a lot of people with disabilities. Adult day care, etc. broad range. Lots of schools. 10,000 kids a year programs. Also teachers programs. Water conversation project is also there. Have 200 volunteers, 1/18/14 starts new volunteers training. We built a new education center. She has been there nine years. Mission is, the Friends of the NC is non-profit. There's a bird study which started before the center was there, banding, tracking, etc. This year was the lowest ever. The animal rescue is separate entity, through the state. 330 species were identified.

Q: about volunteers.

A: like to have people go through training. Broad range tasks: water quality monitoring, Silvery Minnows research project, gift shop, information desk, and working with all the school groups, going out to school.

Q: The machinery seen there.

A: the endangered species issue, a channel for water flow which the Silvery Minnows needs, as well as everything else.

Q: Park boundaries.

A: it was much bigger. We lost 44 positions, budget problems, 38 acres now, but we use the trails. Work in partnership, a bit tricky now, jurisdiction issues because of budgets. It is city land except for one acre. It is the city plan, lease agreement. Has 14 years left. Partnership with City and Conservancy.

Q: do you all sit together, or just contact

A: hosted some events to share information and results, but generally informal, but frequent

Dan Shaw. Teach at the Bosque school. Half of the day teaches half EMP, environmental monitoring program, many stations. from Espanolla, 27,000 students involved: how ecologically driven, floods, fires, human alteration. We use school kids for projects, involve student in science beyond classroom. Published by University.

Rio Grande is 1876 miles long, start in Colorado, the part they study is middle, start with Cochiti, there is Bosque in the north part too, down to elephant butt, through El Paso, to Texas. In a stretch it is dry and then gets more water. 1.6 million years, beginning of humans. At 25 million years ago, the RG ruff occurred tear in earth. RG continues to cut its head up to the north. Also there was the emergence of cotton wood trees, 10 million years, cranes-like birds emerge. Humans 50,000 years modern, so the way hollo sand, incredibly stable environment in the last 10,000 years. General drying up and warming up, they are mega fauna hunters, slaughtering the animals. Agriculture in RG valley early Pueblo recent. RG it was not one channel river, curves and flood plan, sedimentation. 1940's big floods, established the Bosque, WWII, one generation, they are dying and senescent trees. This forest is not what we would have seen many years ago. MRCD removed most of the wetland, Cochiti Dam. This last 60-70 years, it was very hemoginized, but it is still a wild place. Fire is a new ecological factor here, there was no canapé. We are still above average in the last 2000 years, and not in drought.

Showing plastic bag with samples. Cutting Russian Olives a salt cedar would cause more fires, and hotter fires, more damage to cotton woods, discovered by the monitoring program.

Eurasian bugs damage the salt cedars. Mission is to learn the ecology and understand it so can inform decision making. We don't know the kind of killdeer. 416 species of wild life in the Bosque. The most important thing is to keep the dogs on leash. Reduce pollution, dog poop. Limit dog's impact is very important. Put out publications. New book, one of the kids wrote and illustrated it. As we leave the holocene era: CO2 is way above 350 parts per million, we have to look to future, human alterations. We have to think in patches, preservation, mosaic, resilience.

Ike Benton: list of questions. Corridor, Near North Valley, North Valley design. He will be briefed on that this week with Planning. They are not interested in moving forward with these plans. The administration is interested in having a big effort, million dollars, and they want to put everything to put on hold. He wants to move forward. In regard to RG Corridor, he wants to move it away . The roundabout bill was killed last night 7-2. He thinks it needs to be looked at in the context of the corridor. We had a great start North Valley Designer Relay, he doesn't know much about. Concerned about development in (Municipal development), North Fourth Street corridor, very large project. He wants to look at priorities and start work bit by bit that benefit for everyone, pedestrians, bikes, traffic. Same approach. Worked well on Central. Montano Rail Station will start next year. Water conversation. He was on the board, but didn't find it useful. We need to re-consider the way this run structurally. The board is very administration driven, it's not very open to public. Appointees.

Q: how will follow board

A: Talk to colleagues, and sometimes go. Meets are televised.

Q: CMD, City Municipal Department.

A: build roads, Planning dep. does the planning.

Q: Bicycle.

A: bicycle communities prefer to close the missing links and close the biking system.

Q: about the contamination

A: questionable about how they do it.

Q: about the RG corridor.

A: one scenario is north of candelaria going down to three lanes.

Dr. Matt Schmader: worked on this 30 years, 22 years in City. Archeologist in training. As archeologist got him into how to conserve a site. Open space has 29,000 acres, the Bosque 4200 acres, plus agricultural is 400 acres, most endangered. 1 acre for every 20 people. It's one of the highest ratio in the country. People in this community resisted development, like in the Volcanos, the Bosque, Elena Gallegos. OSD is City owned and operated agency, it doesn't include national forest, etc., with all of them it's huge. Hybrid between the forest service and the park service, no federal involvement. Main responsibility is for caring for the natural and cultural resources. Wanted to do research on west mesa, petroglyph monumnet 1990. Habitat management, trying to do a balance between encouraging people access the space without damaging it. A lot of habitat restoration. Work with ABQ police, used to have own police, but now it's part of APD. There was a lot of abuse that happened in 50's 60's, there were camps,

wood poaching, trash. It's owned by the MRGCD and run by the City, Work with other agencies, Game and Fish, etc. The oldest fossils we know of 1.25 million years, bog deposit there. The Bosque is very diverse, 2750 acres of wooded areas, very diverse. Bosque is both very fragile and very resilient. Cottonwoods don't live very long, so it's going to change. Every winter Open Space plants 1000 trees, so we some intervention can improve. Many restoration techniques. This is a flood adopted area, not fire, and we altered it by dams, etc. Park idea has been around for a while, Aldo Leopold and proposed the RG park in 1917. We interact with school, nature space, etc. Have volunteer program. 110-120, 8-10,000 hours a year. Have adoption program, groups. Geographically, east mountains, sandia, to the west mesa. There is about 85 million dollars worth of land and budget is 1.5 million dollars. ABQ continues to grow.

Q: about dollars, priority

A: acquisition priority list, 12,000 acres still to acquire at \$7000/acre rate, there are areas with other values. ABQ comprehensive plan includes all of it.

Q: did you try the different techniques

A: yes, advocating the surface of the soil, if goes close enough to water in summer the cottonwood will sprout. Mosaic approach is the main idea to restore the bosque. It has to be sustainable, have species. Dan: the mosaic is advocated by different people.