

Red Feather Lakes Planning Advisory Committee

Documenter Name: Nanci Wendland

Agency:

Agency Website:

Date & Meeting Time: May 25, 2023; 1:35 PM

Members Present: Daniel Defibaugh, Patrick Grissom, Tamara Hadley-Riser, Ryan McAdams, Lora Mann, Don Rogers, Lucille Schmidt, Ryan Zigray, Vice Chair - Caryn Hughes, Secretary - Roger Svendsen, Chair – Janice Weixelman

Members Absent: Phillip Meyers (2nd time missed), John Johnson

Others Present to Note: Larimer County Commissioner – John Kefalas; Commissioner Staff Liaison – Tracy Hicks; Ted Carter, previous member.

Others Not Present: Administrative Contact – Christina Scrutchins

Relevant Document Links:

Meeting agenda:

<https://meetings.municode.com/d/f?u=https://mccmeetings.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/larimerco-pubu/MEET-Agenda-13bad085bb03453d93af58e4382e581e.pdf&n=Red%20Feather%20Lakes%20Planning%20Advisory%20Committee%20Agenda%20Document.pdf>

Meeting packet: Same as the Agenda

Recorded Meeting: <https://youtu.be/ZRwsWlx1YC0>

Meeting Notes:

The Red Feather Lakes Planning Advisory Committee (RFLPAC) is a committee of citizens who live, work/volunteer or own property within the Red Feather Lakes Plan Area, appointed by the Larimer County Board of Commissioners. Its purpose is to provide an organized forum to facilitate communication with the County and within the community on issues that impact Red Feather Lakes.

Approval of Minutes: April 27, 2023 – All Aye

Communication Items

#1 Committee Members:

Several committee members discussed the lack of meeting minutes not posted to the website since the January 26, 2023, meeting. They are also not receiving proper notification of meetings and agendas from Christina (Administrative Contact). Chairperson, Janice Weixelman, will talk to Christina about these issues and get all past meeting minutes posted to the website.

Committee member Ted Carter resigned in January, and this is his last meeting. Ted Carter has represented the Fox Acres community and wants the Larimer County Board to take a better look at working with the residents of Fox Acres.

(Fox Acres is a country club community within Red Feather Lakes with a professional golf course, tennis, pickleball, fishing, and a multi-station exercise course and fitness facility. Nearby equestrian activities and dozens of trails to challenge both novice and expert hikers. They boast unmatched cross-country skiing with some of the world's finest trout streams and public lakes just a short drive away. And for hunters, the region teems with deer and elk).

Several committee members praised Ted for his 17 years of service to this commission, commenting on how well he listens and responds. Ted encouraged everyone to work better with Fox Acres. Evidently, residents of Fox Acres were not included in a November 2022 community survey, and other areas of Red Feather Lakes have lost the support of Fox Acres residents due to lack of communication, such as restaurants, the post office, and two important town petitions circulating for entry on the November ballots (see below under Discussion Items #1). Ted encouraged another Fox Acres resident, James, to join the Advisory Commission. James has waste & water experience, which could help with Larimer County waste & water issues.

#2 County Communications & Updates:

a. Commissioner John Kefalas gave a list of updates.

1. The increase in property values and potential increase in 2024 property taxes has caused some uncertainty with the budget and other ballot measures. John is recommending tightening their belts (the budget) until the area knows what kind of revenue to expect.
2. He believes State Proposition HH may help (Senate Bill 303). Prop HH is a plan for property tax relief over the next 10 years with the issue to go before Colorado voters this fall. If voters approve Prop HH then revenues will remain the same or possibly decrease.
3. Initiative 21 could put a big dent in property tax revenue. Initiative 21 would put a limit on property tax increases for the 2023-2024 tax years.
4. If the above #2 or #3 do not get on the ballot in fall, there is a possibility of a Larimer County Mill Levy Tax Credit which could help, but not by very much.
5. There is already a county hiring freeze to save costs.

6. A reminder to residents of Red Feather Lakes they only have until June 8 to file a property tax value protest. He talked to the county assessors and there have already been 13,000+ protests and appeals.

Several questions were asked about how much revenue loss could be expected with Senate Bill 303 and Tabor changes. Commissioner Kefalas guessed about 1% revenue loss and Tabor refunds would still be issued but less than usual. Both issues are subject to lawsuits. What would happen to the Senior Homestead Exemptions? If seniors have been in their homes 10+ years, but due to increased property taxes must move or downsize, this will cause them to lose their exemption. This scenario or similar situations opens a door to potential lawsuits from the senior communities.

b. Staff Updates on Short-term Rentals

There will be new short-term rental regulations effective June 1, 2023. According to Commissioner Kefalas there has been an increase in rentals to get in the market before the new regulations begin. Under the new regulations the density of rentals was 500 feet, and it will change to 250 feet.

Janice (Chair) wants to know what happens when a property has multiple short-term rentals such as a Lodge or Resort like Beaver Meadows?

Tracy: there will need to be boundary adjustments. Owners and/or property managers will be responsible for a one (1) hour response time in case of emergency. The property must be licensed as a short-term rental and will be recertified every two (2) years. Any property management companies must be registered with the County and be a part of the approval process for certification. The information is posted on the Larimer County website, but Tracy said feel free to ask her. She has been studying the new regs.

Discussion Items

#1 Petition Updates – proposals for the November ballot issues

1. Tax Increase for road improvements – a lot of residents are against this tax increase. Taxes are always increasing with no increase in services according to one of the members. Currently, there are only 13 signatures. 125 signatures are needed to get this proposal on the November ballot.
2. Adding Public Restrooms – currently there are only 22 signatures, with another 8 residents scheduled meetings with the commission to discuss.

Several members voiced their opinions: this is bad timing for a tax increase due to the property value increase creating potential increases in property taxes. Other members haven't seen any petitions. Another member said yes, the petitions were sent out, posted on NextDoor, and have been slowly circulating around town. There is a Craft Fair on Saturday and summer residents are coming back into town. The commission is hoping more owners will sign and agree to go door-to-door if necessary.

#2 Waste/Water - Public Restrooms

The Larimer County Commissioner has approved \$500K for the construction of a public restroom in Red Feather Lakes. The funds from the ARPA grant must be allocated by Y/E 2024 and dispersed by Y/E 2026 and only used for construction. Funds for on-going maintenance must come from another source.

Several challenges were discussed:

1. The site/location has not been determined.
2. The type of facility is undefined.
3. Costs for construction are undefined.
4. Routine cleaning requirements are undefined.
5. Cannot have running water in winter. And running water requires testing, and well maintenance.
6. New state building codes require structures to withstand up to 175 mph winds.

The library has a restroom for public use as does the fire department, however these do not afford 24/7 availability to the public. The POA/CA has four outhouse stalls that are maintained by the association.

Site/location:

- The four outhouses on POA/COA property are a possibility. Caryn described some current conditions such as she is the one who supplies toilet paper and cleaning supplies. She performs cleaning when her time allows, and some cleaning is done by volunteers. Funding of the association is very limited. Rental funds come from the Red Feather Storage & Irrigation company for their office space. The remaining budget funds come from member dues and miscellaneous donations and fund-raising special events. Caryn said the association owns more than 2 acres. The location of the building leach field is unknown.
- Another possibility is on the property owned by Bill Mason's family on Main St. This is a good location, however the unoccupied land runs down to Ramona Lake. There is concern about proximity to the leach fields. Ryan will talk with Bill Mason to explore this possible option.
- No other options were suggested, and PAC members were asked to give thought to this subject.

Type of Facility:

Some residents would like a permanent building with flushing toilets. After some discussion with Chris Manley, Larimer County Water Quality Control Manager, two types of construction were suggested: a vault system and a septic/leach field facility. Mark Pedersen showed some typical vault buildings. Committee member Roger

asked Chris if he could recommend/suggest an optimum solution. Chris agreed to assemble and present a pros/cons list for each type of facility.

Members discussed items for the next meeting:

1. Have Chris Manley, Larimer County Water Quality Control Manager, come to the meeting to discuss potential restrooms and wastewater issues.
2. Roads & Forest Service maintenance
3. A member would like to start a punch list for projects and discussions to better track progress. This would be a checklist for prioritization. Suggested following LaPorte or Livermore formats. They are much better organized.
4. Building Permits: this is a painful process. How can it be expedited?
5. Larimer County has the original Planning document for Red Feather Lakes. Matt Lafferty, Larimer County Sr. Long Range Planner, was on the phone and gave his input.
 - a. The original plan is a 20-year plan which is a long time. Larimer County reviews their plan every 5 years.
 - b. Matt suggested taking the original planning document and reviewing it section by section at every meeting until all members have had input on what if anything should change. Then minor amendments could be made on an as needed basis. For a full revamp of the plan, it could cost upwards of \$100,000 to review and have a major overhaul.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:22 PM.

Summary:

There were several important issues addressed in this meeting. My first comment is that this is a large advisory planning committee for such a small area. At least four (4) of the members never spoke or gave input. No members had name tags or identified themselves when speaking so it was difficult to know who was talking or giving feedback. One of the members even admitted to wanting more organization with the use of a punch list or check list to track their discussions, projects, and progress. I must agree with him.

Red Feather Lakes, even though it is an unincorporated part of Larimer County, is struggling with the same Colorado issues of water, wastewater, and increasing property taxes. There are several State Senate bills that might help minimize property tax increases, but other issues arise mostly from the senior community.

Where to put public restrooms is a major planning issue for this community and the type of structure must accommodate new state regulations for increased wind speeds. While porta-potties are easier to maintain and are less costly, building structures with flushing water are preferred even though there is no public wastewater infrastructure.

There are several petitions circulating to get certain items on the next voting cycle ballot. Red Feather Lakes is struggling to get enough signatures. This advisory planning commission is taking steps this weekend and over the summer to get the necessary amounts of signatures for their 2 petitions: one a tax increase to improve roads and fire access; and another to determine where to put additional public restrooms, and what kind of structure.

Follow-up Questions:

1. Short-term rental regulations beginning June 1, 2023 – what are the new regs?
2. Why are there 13 people on the just the Red Feather Advisory Planning Commission for an unincorporated town of about 450 residents? This seems excessive in addition to having other Red Feather Lakes boards and commissions.
3. The four outhouses on POA/COA property are a possibility. A member, Caryn, said the association owns more than 2 acres. A POA is a Property Owners Association, and a COA is a Condominium Owners Association. Who are the associations, and why are there four outhouses on these associations' property? Is this open undeveloped acreage?