

San Miguel County Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 12<sup>th</sup> 2021 - 5:30 PM

(meeting held via Zoom)

Attendance:

HC Members: J.J. Ossola, John Wontrobski, Ted Wilson, Jonna Wensel, Bob Mather, Amy Levek

Absent: Kiernan Lannon

SMC Staff Liaison: Janet Kask

- J.J. Ossola called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
- Ossola - First order of business is to adopt the 11/10/20 HC meeting minutes.
- John Wontrobski made a motion to approve the minutes from the 11/10/20 HC meeting.
- Ted Wilson seconded the motion and all voted in favor to approve.

Matterhorn Mill – Conveyance - Update

- Ossola – Not much on our agenda - Janet Kask and I, well Janet mostly, has been managing the Matterhorn Mill conveyance project and he can't remember – he feels the last time we got together was for the Schmid Ranch on 12/2/20. He can't remember - had the MM been cleaned up by then?
- Kask – Yes, the MM clean-up project started on 10/5/20 and was well underway – Nico was on site and the contract had been awarded to him/Access In Motion (AIM).
- Ossola – He's only seen pictures, but it looks like the MM is very, very clean at this point – you can almost eat off the floor – he has seen pictures. To Kask – We should do a site visit – he really wants to see it without excrement and the dust removed – probably won't even recognize it.
- Kask - Sure - anytime. Kask sent an email to all on 1/13/21 with updated progress photos of the clean interior of the MM and a tentative date for a potential site visit on 1/14/21.
- Ossola - It was a last minute decision to save the Wilfley table – roof collapsed on top of it – they extracted the table and secured that whole area. To Kask - Anything else to add?
- Kask - The Wilfley shed collapsed around the Wilfley table. Kask sent an email to all on 12/16/20 with photos of the table. It was a great collaborative effort between the USFS, DRMS, Nico/AIM and the County. Everyone jumped on it within days before the next snow storm hit – as seen in the photos – constructed another shed and moved the table – it's huge. Just had another meeting on Friday, 1/8/21 with DRMS, USFS et al – approx. \$18K-\$20K (\$17,352.) change order to move that table. The USFS approved and paid for costs associated with repositioning and reassignment of Nico's AIM crew – they had him stop what he was doing. Kask thought they were going to ask the County to kick in some dollars.
- Kask - She, Ossola, Amy Markwell, Camille Price, Megan Eno and Nick Szuch, USFS Forest Lands Program Manager, participated in the 12/30/20 BOCC meeting via Zoom. It's sort of a circle jerk – need to cut to the chase – the USFS is looking for the County to provide details as to conveyance and land – 20 acres – how much does the County want - all or part of it? At the same time, they need to provide the County with direction in what they're looking for in return for the conveyance. In meetings dating back to 2018 with Corey Wong, who has since retired, he said the USFS would want fair market value – sort of a topic that's been glossed over for months now – maybe a land exchange, maybe this. In all fairness to the BOCC – before providing County staff with direction, we need the USFS to dictate to us what they're going to want in return. Sort of where things are at now. Like she said, Ossola was on the call. How to establish fair market value on this structure and the land – remember there are tailings on this property and it isn't prime real estate as far as development is concerned – we're sort of in that position now.
- Kask - Also, Commissioner Cooper is working with John Whitney from Senator Bennet's office, and this also dates back to 2018 when Corey Wong and Steve Zwick were both still here, we had started conversations with Senator Bennet's office to see if we could have the MM conveyed to the County

through a legislative process with the Wilderness Bill and with the CORE Act. That has just come to light again to be a potential possibility, which then means if it does go through with this legislation and it's conveyed to the County through a legislative process, we don't pay anything for it. If the USFS is told they need to give this structure and whatever land we want to the County, well then they just convey it and there's no money changing hands, there's no land exchange – nothing of the sort. Therefore, Commissioner Cooper has requested we proceed forward with parallel paths – let Senator Bennet's office proceed with a legislative action, which may or may not happen, it's just a potential that may exist for us, and/or let us still proceed on the path that Ossola, Markwell and myself have been working on as far as just working together with the USFS and DRMS. So that's pretty much where we're at - we're kind of proceeding forward with these parallel paths to see which one may happen sooner than the other. To Ossola - If you want to take it away and add anything to that.

- Ossola - No, that was a great synopsis. As a Commission where we left it off was how much would we as a Commission want the County to take and we all said as much as they'll give us. Right? I think that was our approach. One thing that came out of one of our meetings with the MM group – the monthly conf. calls Kask and I are on every month – the tailings down below that are going to be encapsulated with dirt and then covered with matting and/or grass will never be able to be used or walked on or used. It's kind of like the tailings at the east end with Idarado just beyond town park – it's not going to be usable land for us.

- Kask – Yes, it'd just be capped and sealed and not to be touched or utilized.

- Ossola - We all thought that maybe it could be an extra recreation area for those coming to see the Mill building, but that cannot happen so we kind of reverted back to – Kask, Marwell and I – was let's focus on the Mill building and let's focus on the surrounding areas around the Mill building so we can have parking, restrooms, interpretive signage and then we'll be leaning on the County Commissioners to see how much they want to take on beyond that. Kask's right – it's been this back and forth with the USFS and I think the County just has to take a position and say this is what we want, let's focus on this and then we'll go down a path to see how much it's worth. It's either an appraisal on how much it's worth and we acquire it or as Kask said – there's a legislative route, which will concurrently follow that route. So lots of information. Anyone have any questions or comments? Please, the floor is yours.

- Wontrobski - Just one question – this is the first he's heard that the MM – is it part of the CORE Act or is it proposed to be part of the CORE Act?

- Kask – This is something that we started the conversation back in 2018 and nothing – there weren't really any conversations since then so Commissioner Cooper just mentioned this a week or 2 ago saying they've started up this conversation again and this might be a true possibility to pursue this through the legislative process. I think there's still a lot that needs to be done with Senator Bennet's office, but they have been sort of willing to do this since 3 years ago, but it's just that it was kind of a moot point since then, but all of a sudden, this might be a true possibility for us. But we don't know where it's going to lead and how far through the process they are, it's still in the conversational aspect but again, we're still letting the process we're currently in proceed forward.

- Wontrobski - But, my question is is it in the legislation now or is it something that's sort of proposed to be added on when the orchestrating goes on? If the CORE Act miraculously gets passed tomorrow, does that mean the MM then gets transferred? Is it part of it?

- Kask - I honestly don't know that answer.

- Wontrobski - Ok

- Ossola - I don't think so, but I don't know that answer either.

- Kask – When we initially discussed the MM – when I brought it up with the HC when Ossola and I discussed it at the last meeting in November (11/10/20) – we needed to define how much land it is we wanted. I know initially everyone said they wanted all of it and then we got into the issue of liability and what that would mean for the County, but Price makes a good point that the County land already has

tailings on it so technically we're liable in perpetuity regardless of whether we take it all or we don't. Then the tailings pile is going to become what they deem a Joint Mine Waste Repository, but all the waste is going to be limited to the site itself whereas in the past they had talked about doing regional mine waste from elsewhere – be it the Valley Floor or the East End – but now it will just be limited to the MM site. Based on the tailings that come from the County's portion and the MM USFS portion, responsibility down the road would be broken out as to the percentages of waste contained within the JMWR. So whereas the USFS would be on the hook for everything the first 3 years according to the MOU we're trying to finalize, after 3 years, then it breaks down to the percentages contained therein. So the County would obviously have less than the USFS – I think we'd have 17%, but that's how responsibility would break out down the road. It's just based on the contents of the JMWR.

- Ossola - Kask is working on the RFP – our next action item for the MM is to engage an architect or architectural team to basically draw up some construction drawings of what the phases of the rehabilitation of the Mill building could be – so we can start the process of getting some estimates for work and starting to plan this out. The plan would be to submit for a grant with that information this summer.

#### Placerville RGS Depot Project -

- Ossola - Moving on – he ran into Wontrobski the other day – Ossola really likes this project.

- Wontrobski - Before the holidays, he met with Cindy McClure, owner of the M&M Mercantile in Placerville, as she just bought the property that has the smaller portion of the depot on it. He laid out the entire project for her and she seemed interested, noncommittal at that point – it was all new information for her. He sent her contact information for Kristin K., who owns the other part, and is hoping they can get together and talk about it. In the meanwhile, he and Wilson have been communicating with CDOT mostly to set up a meeting where they can walk the property down there and they can talk to us about the ROW issues. They've had 2 meetings set up and both of them were cancelled due to the 2 small snowstorms we had. The next meeting is set for Friday, 1/22/21 at 11:00 a.m. in front of the M&M mercantile. Does Kask want to attend?

- Kask - Yes and should I bring Kaye Simonson or anyone from the Planning dept. with me? Initially, Simonson and Troy Hangen were involved in the preliminary discussions when we walked the site.

- Wontrobski - Yes, probably wouldn't be a bad idea. At one point CDOT was talking to him a little bit about negotiations, but he told them, "look I'm from a volunteer recommending board, I can't make any sort of promises on behalf of the County" so he thinks they want to talk to somebody who has a little bit more power at the County. After that meeting, he'll then get together with Kask to discuss an RFP for a feasibility study, which is in the budget for this year. That's basically where things stand.

- Kask - It is a very exciting project.

- Ossola - If CDOT cooperates – drove by there the other day – there are 4-5 curb cuts – from what he knows of CDOT, they like less curb cuts – not more – access points to the highway – maybe that could be a play there. Maybe make it a more safer situation down there.

- Wontrobski - Yes, he agrees - could be something they're interested in.

- Ossola - Anyone else have anything they want to discuss? Next meeting is March?

- Kask - Yes, the next HC meeting is Tuesday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

- Ossola - If anyone has anything in the meantime, please feel free to email the group.

Meeting adjourned 5:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Janet Kask

\*Next HC Meeting - Tues., 3/9/21 at 5:30 p.m.\* (VIA ZOOM)