

EQUINE & AGRICULTURE HERITAGE COMMISSION: MEETING MINUTES

Virtual Meeting via WebEx on Tuesday, March 22, 2022, at 5:30 p.m.

The Equine & Agriculture Heritage Commission met virtually on Tuesday, March 22, 2022.

Fairgrounds Staff Present: Brittney Rietveld - Fairgrounds Manager, Kirstin Brown - Event Coordinator

Parks & Conservation Staff Present: Tom Hoby - Director, Matt Robbins - Community Connections Manager

CSU Extension Staff Present: Jeni Carter - Director

County Attorney Staff Present: Steven Snyder - Assistant County Attorney Sr.

No Jefferson County Citizens Present

- I. **Call Meeting to Order**
 - a. Brittney called the meeting to order. Kirstin will record all meetings in accordance with the Colorado Open Meeting Law, in addition to sending out meeting minutes for members approval.
- II. **Roll Call and Determination of Quorum**
 - a. **Equine & Agriculture Heritage Commission Members Present:** Mike Skelton, Mary Miklos, Mark Skelton, Alejandra Major, Andrea Raschke
 - b. **Equine & Agriculture Heritage Commission Members Absent:** Lisa Stavig, Jaren Tolman
- III. **Welcome & Introductions**
 - a. All attendees introduced themselves.
- IV. **Public Comment**
 - a. No public comment.
- V. **Review of Equine & Agriculture Heritage Commission Roles & Responsibilities**
 - a. The responsibilities for this Commission were given by the Board of County Commissioners. There are three of them:
 - i. The first is to explore the ways to preserve equine and agriculture in Jefferson County.
 - ii. In an effort to identify those gaps, the second responsibility for this group is to focus on an inventory and cost analysis of equine and agriculture activities and facilities in Jefferson County.
 - iii. The County is looking for the members of this commission to engage with the community you represent to bring insight, questions, and issues forward, while also keeping the members of the community you represent informed on the content of our meetings.
- VI. **Review of Colorado Open Meetings Law**
 - a. Steve Snyder went over the Colorado Open Meeting Law as well as the Colorado Open Records Act. Colorado Meeting Law & Colorado Open Records Act continued after minutes.
- VII. **Review of Equine & Agriculture Definitions**
 - a. **Equine** - Any activity, business, or event that benefits or involves horses, ponies, mules, donkeys, or hinnies.
 - b. **Agriculture** - Any activity, business, or event that pertains to the science and art of the production of useful plants and animals for marketing or otherwise, and includes horticulture, floriculture, viticulture, forestry, dairy, livestock, poultry, bee, and any and all forms of farm products and farm production.
 - c. These definitions are being utilized to begin working on an inventory of equine and agriculture activities and facilities in Jefferson County. Fairgrounds staff anticipates needing this Commission's help and input on this list as it applies to the second responsibility.

VIII. Roundtable/Updates from Commission Members and Staff

a. Fairgrounds Updates:

- i. As of January 1, 2022, Jeffco Fairgrounds moved under Jeffco Parks & Conservation. Jeffco Fairgrounds will continue to be a part of the general fund. Jeffco Fairground's property operations and budget will not change. Jeffco Fairgrounds will continue to focus on preserving youth, equine, and agriculture activities.
- ii. The Pole Barn has been built out with 35 additional permanent stalls, in addition to the 26 pens, giving Jeffco Fairgrounds 74 permanent stalls on-site. The Fairgrounds team can build an additional 74 temporary stalls in an emergency.

IX. Adjournment

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 6:05pm.

EQUINE AND AGRICULTURE HERITAGE COMMISSION

COLORADO OPEN MEETINGS LAW (§24-6-402, Colorado Revised Statutes)

Purpose. Public business should be open to the public, not conducted in secret.

Application. All meetings of public bodies (boards, committees, etc.) of the State, and all political subdivisions such as the County, are subject to the Colorado Open Meetings Law.

Local Public Body.

- Any board, committee, commission or authority, or other advisory, policy-making, rule-making or formally constituted body of any political subdivision of the state.
- The Equine and Agriculture Heritage Commission is a local public body.

Meeting.

- Any kind of gathering to discuss public business – in person, by telephone, electronically or by any other form of communication.
- An exchange of emails, a phone call, a videoconference can be a “meeting” under the Open Meetings Law.

Local Public Body Meetings Open to the Public.

- If at least 3 members of the Commission meet to discuss public business, the meeting is a public meeting and must be open to the public at all times.
- Also applies to subcommittees with three or more Commission members.

Full and Timely Notice.

- Notice of a public meeting of the Commission must be posted at least 24 hours before the meeting.
- By motion the Commission will designate the posting location at the beginning of each year.

Meeting Minutes. Minutes are required to be taken and made available to the public.

Executive Sessions.

- Open Meetings Law allows the Commission to discuss certain topics without the public present.
- Common examples include negotiations, purchase of property, and attorney-client communications.
- The Commission cannot take formal action, such as voting, in executive session.

Noncompliance. Failure of the Commission to comply with the Open Meetings Law could invalidate Commission Resolutions and subject the County to lawsuits.

COLORADO OPEN RECORDS ACT (§24-72-201 et seq., C.R.S.)

Purpose. With certain exceptions, public records must be available for inspection by the public.

Application.

- What is a public record – all documents, recordings, and other records made or maintained by the County for public purposes.
- Public records include emails – such as emails between Commission members and emails between a Commission member and staff that relate to County business.
- Once a record is made public, it is available for inspection by everyone.
- Few exceptions to CORA. Examples include attorney-client communications and confidential commercial data.
- Responding to CORA requests is dictated by statute and can be time consuming.

TAKEAWAYS:

1. Email exchanges, phone and video calls, and in-person discussions between three or more Commission members could be a public meeting under the Open Meetings Law.
2. With few exceptions, the public can ask to view your emails, letters, and other records held by the County for its public purposes.
3. Adherence to CORA, Open Meetings Law, County Policies, and meeting protocols is important to the County, the Commission, and Commission members.