

**ORIENT LAND TRUST (OLT) BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SEITZ RESIDENCE BEHIND THE OLT WELCOME CENTER
SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 2010**

**MINUTES OF
Public Comment Forum (1:00 to 3:30 PM)
also broadcast live (by Rob Z)**

Dan introduced the Board and Amy. An unknown person entered at 1 pm; he did not sign in. Dan introduced the forum by talking about how everyone is here because they love the place and he spoke of Neil and Terry's vision. Dan mentioned how Neil took Dan aside shortly after he became Board Chair, and talked to Dan about finding an ED so Neil could step aside, which led to the hiring of Amy. The vision encompassed more than the hot springs. It's been a learning process for the Board as they expand OLT to truly become a land trust. The Board wants to hear from the public. Amy welcomed everyone and acknowledged that we all love it here. When she came here, she learned about the history and vision. Amy sees this as a starting point of working together. We all respect each other; we share the love of this place. One document that has guided Amy's actions is the Articles of Incorporation recorded nine years ago. She hopes that this forum fosters a new dialogue and thanks everyone in advance for whatever they have to say.

Dan reviewed the ground rules – go through points of Petition 1 through 9, people may comment on each point, a Board member may comment on that point, then open discussion, then questions.

Keno first visited in the late 1970's and now lives in Crestone; he moved here because he loves OLT. He has volunteered for OLT since it was formed. The reason for the Petition is to make VVHS/OLT a better place; we love this place. The Board does a great job; Keno doesn't think everyone realizes how much work the Board does; he knows it means well. Keno felt the public was not being heard. They're not interested in power. We want to be one again. Look at this as a positive. This was only an online Petition. As of 4/16/10, 100 signatures had been received. Approximately 150 emails were sent out about the Petition. Of the 100 signatures, 74% are members or former members. 49% are current members. 100% visit the hot springs. 52% left comments. Naturist point received the most comments at 20%. 15% commented on point 9. 11% commented on the price increase. Others asked Rob and Keno to put together a Petition.

Point 1: rate increase and committees. There are 1200 to 1500 individual contributor members. Keno didn't have the number of anonymous signers-maybe about 11. Their names are included in the hard copy of the Petition provided to the Board for the Board's record. Some people were concerned about signing the Petition.

Rob lives on the Front Range; was on the Board from 2003-2006. Summary: Board needs to be more in touch. Rob and Keno have been trying to attend Board meetings. Why was VEC

disbanded? Rate increase hurts a lot of people. John E. said his analysis of the rate increase is more around 15% rather than 8%, as he'd previously indicated. The Board took the advice of staff where it saw some elasticity, flexibility, where accommodations cost more than the revenue generated from it. Radar stated that non-Board members who were on the VEC were negative. Radar thought that the VEC was beginning to work better. He thought they were starting make progress on some issues and getting the information to the Board. Radar thinks this is the only way for members to communicate with the Board. Radar said that it's easier to have an hour teleconference monthly in committee. Agendas were changed without the committee's consent. Sarah, who was on the VEC, thought the VEC started working better, people were more apt to give their opinions; thinks people initially struggled. Seemed that they initially talked about the same things over and over; thought shortly before the VEC was disbanded, more suggestions were being voiced. For the final meeting there was an agenda change. No one met eye to eye. The day before the next meeting, she got an email that the VEC was disbanded.

Mike, former Chair of the VEC, said the VEC was created as a focus group to solicit member input for issues and ideas. He said the VEC had no power. If the VEC came to consensus, a recommendation could be made to the Board. Amy and John L. on staff were on the VEC. Mike said that the VEC exhausted itself after two years; everyone said what they could say. The VEC didn't seem to want to do 'what if' analyses. The professionalism and civility of the VEC were gone. Some VEC member said, "You're wasting our time". John E.'s understanding is that the VEC was suspended rather than disbanded – the major reason was that the Board was coming up on very intense changes in land conservation as a major part of its mission: Susman and Essen purchases, and the question of what are we going to do with the Ranch. We didn't want to get into promises about, e.g., Commons Bldg., doing something we couldn't afford that didn't encompass the entire OLT mission – speaking for himself, not for the entire Board. His understanding was that the VEC was suspended until we got a grasp on the reserves.

Radar: as an advisory committee, we weren't expecting anything. John E. was concerned about promises, like about the steam room. Now we know where we are financially. Amy tried to get us on a regular outreach program. Avenues for outreach: email, talk to us in the office, avenues are still there even without the VEC. Deb asked about what's in the bylaws about committees: how they're formed, disbanded, explanation if one is disbanded, merged, e.g., LAC and LMPC. Harold asked what remedies are available to us. Sarah said that last minute changes to a committee Agenda were made which some were not happy about.

John E. said that costs have increased; hence, the price increase. \$200,000 is needed for a wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). We're trying to afford those things that are necessary in order to fulfill our mission. If these price increases are not working, they'll be rolled back. If we're pressing against maximum capacity, then we're okay. If not, we'll look at it. There was consensus from the VEC to increase prices with numbers from staff. There was a suggestion to give a discount to members. Discounts are given now to The Naturist Society and Saguache County residents. How can we give non-members a discount and not give members a discount?

Low prices are not a reason to raise rates. OLT is supposed to be affordable. Consider a member discount for 2011. Annie would like to see a functional solution to keep lines of communication open between members/visitors and the Board. Rob feels that money should have been put aside over the years for the WWTP. Neil said that when OLT started taking donations, the organization said that every dollar donated would go to purchasing the Everson Ranch. Rob is saying that part of the allocation of donations could have gone for other assets. John brought up the Susman and Essen purchases that we had to act on at the time because we ran the risk of those parcels being subdivided. These are eight 40-acre tracts that we prevented. That 100% of donations go to land conservation is on our website. Rob said that this is not clear. Paul said there is an opportunity for more outreach. We had to keep discussions about real estate transactions in executive session. You'll see improvements in the Village starting this year. Mike said that the WWTP is more expensive than initially anticipated. Amy said we're constructing it over three years. Green, earth friendly products are more expensive. Amy feels the Board is working hard and trying to balance the necessary infrastructure, amenities, and prices. Annie said whatever the rate increase is, you can't put a dollar value on this place. We've been spoiled for 35 years. Several supported Annie in what she said. Norby said that when people speak to others about this, tell them to go to the Welcome Center, go onto the website, support OLT in that way.

Point #2: Terry said that a mission statement is an outreach tool. It is not a legal document. Dan said that the Naturist Deed Restriction is binding forever. Doug said that when we changed the wording of the goals from naturist to clothing-optional, it was to make the wording more understandable. John E. said about \$2,000 was spent during the 3-day 2009 Strategic Planning session.

Point #3: Keno said that naturism will always be here because of the Naturist Deed Restriction. The problem members see is that naturism is on the decline and naturists are not feeling comfortable. There are naturists who don't care whether others are clothed; other naturists feel like exhibitionists if they're around those who wear bathing suits. Keno stopped soaking here almost one year ago. Neil said that he and Terry back in the 1970's told people clothing is optional. It's a FREEDOM. You have the option to exercise that freedom. It has introduced more people to naturism. We encourage it with the \$3/person/day discount from The Naturist Society, but we do not restrict people's freedom. If we restrict the freedom, visitors who have not experienced it, may be reluctant to try it. One has to respect others' feelings about naturism, and we leave it alone. Keno doesn't feel that the current policy of freedom is working now. The Deed Restriction can be enforced by the members if at any time the Board or ED restricts naturism in any way. Terry said that up until 5-6 years ago, before the land trust was formed and when there were private memberships, we had a restricted membership of diehard naturists. Since then, more people are being exposed to naturism, and at the same time, there are more textiles here. Keno doesn't think this is a naturist resort. Neil said that in a naturist resort, you need to be exercising, eating healthy vegetables based on the definition of naturism by the Germans. Keno said that we need to do something to prevent people from putting their bathing suits on. Keno wants one pond/pool at VVHS where naturists can go where bathing

suits are not allowed. He suggested put up a sign. Maybe try it for a year. Dan said the Board will talk about it and get back to Keno. If that is not the solution, Keno would like another, so folks like Keno can begin coming here again. John E. decries the change in culture. John went back to Terry's comment that by opening up the membership, this changed the naturism aspect but brings more public here. Neil said that OLT has been written up four times in The Naturist Magazine. Neil suggested that Keno write up his own experiences about naturism at OLT and send it to media, including local media. Signs don't work. OLT gets 5 stars for staff, 4 stars for cleanliness on Trip Advisor. Get the word out to the public about naturism by getting more naturists knowing about OLT. You have to take positive actions.

Point # 4: Rob doesn't see that we're putting money into the hot springs, but acknowledges that we are now moving in that direction. John E. said that as a 501(c)(3), naturism does not qualify for 501(c)(3) status, nor does soaking in a pool. We had to exert ourselves through our mission statement and our focus on land conservation. There has to be a balance. There has to be a land trust as a major part of our mission. If we were not a non-profit, we would have to pay taxes and prices would have to go up. Sid said that we've made major improvements in the Village over the last couple of years. A lot of money has been spent in the Village. Neil said that land transactions were started before Amy arrived.

Dave M.: The newsletter with the annual report really helped with communication. Accolades to the staff for all their work on the newsletter.

Point #5: Steam sauna/room: Keno is not sure what this is going to be. Mike said that if hot rocks is a steam sauna, then that is what it will be along with piping for a mechanical sauna. Keno suggests polling the members to ask them what they want. People miss all-night parties in the steam sauna. This cannot be done in the steam room. Annie suggested we call this the hot rocks facility. Deb said that this is a perfect situation for a focus group. Mike said that this has been done with the VEC. Sid said that we're going to build a steam sauna. Dan acknowledged for the Board that the Board has more listening to do. Rob said that the design is for a steam room. Rob said to better communicate with the members. He wants to know why the astronomy task force was cancelled. Radar joined the VEC because he heard that the steam sauna was a top priority and it would increase revenue. Radar suggested deeper, hotter pools. Oak House kitchen and the living area are not big enough.

Point #6: Hot tub. Keno asked what is going on with the hot tub. Marilyn said it's in the works. Dan said we're working with Sid to allocate the power. Keno wants a deeper hot tub.

Point #7: Community Center: Neil said the real reason for a Community Center is not to have Board meetings. The Center may alleviate conflicts in Oak House. A Community building would cost over \$1,000,000 to build. We're working on fixes – outdoor sinks by restroom facilities for campers, adding laundry facilities and sinks in the basement of the Welcome Center. Doug said if you make a big improvement, you change the place. We need to keep this in mind when we talk about big projects. Betsy asked how the steam sauna came to the top of the list. Dan said

the electrical system under the main bath is being corrected. Terry said that a priority was to replace the old sauna. Deb said that maybe the Oak House kitchen should be for Oak House people only. Maybe campers should not be able to use the Oak House kitchen. Radar wonders if the steam sauna should be in the Community Center. Radar was told it will never be built. Radar said all we need is a place to hang out, a kitchen, the steam sauna, and an ADA bathroom. Radar suggests fewer buildings rather than a lot of smaller buildings. Radar thinks that one large building will extend the camping season. The site planning will involve discussion with the membership. Deb asked about soft walls for the pavilion that might extend the season for it. Harold said that he wants to know more about what experience the visitors want here. The Board needs to make a bigger picture decision, not decisions about building by building. Annie agreed with Harold, e.g., outdoor sinks that are inexpensive and simple and keep the long view. Rob asked how are priorities established and how are these communicated with the membership?

Point #8: Fireworks: Keno said that both fireworks shows were cancelled. His concern is how they were cancelled in a meeting that no one knew about. Keno feels that both fireworks shows were good community outreach. He would have liked it to be discussed. Amy brought up good points that we're not in the business of doing fireworks, it's not within our mission. Keno suggested that we get sponsors to do the shows in the future. Dan admitted the mistake made and that this decision was made during the strategic planning session. The decision was not intentionally made in secret. It came about during the planning process in connection with the budget. Amy stands behind the fireworks decision. Following the January meeting and hearing comments from Annie, Susan, and Keno, Amy contacted the Crestone Music Festival about it. OLT is now sponsoring the laser light show at the Crestone Music Festival, and CPI strongly supports it. Neil kept his license to put on fireworks. John E. said there are some regulatory issues for OLT in connection with fireworks. Keno said dialogue before decisions is important. Neil wanted to retire from putting on fireworks. Neil said he's talked for several years about how to do a laser show across the Valley. Neil is working for the suppliers who carry the liability.

Point #9: Board set-up: Some members don't understand the Board's work. Keno thinks communication should improve. He suggests this type of meeting annually. Most people with whom Keno spoke disagree with how Board members are selected. Keno asked if the ED should be on the committee picking his/her own boss. Keno suggests expanding the BDC. Keno suggests that members should be able to vote directly for Board members. Board members are overworked. Keno questioned why only one woman was chosen when 3 women applied and the Board had no women on the Board. There were two seats open. Keno suggests expanding the Board to 12 members.

Chris stated that when he was on the Board, he pushed for the BDC to work. It should be a committee driven Board. He suggested those anonymous people who signed the Petition come to Board meetings. Look at the current Board structure; the Board has been trying to get functional committees to give them guidance. There should be a lot of general public people on the BDC. Chris suggested more volunteers providing good insight in a funneled controlled

process. This is how to accomplish more and have better communication rather than expanding the Board. Betsy said the BDC was hoping to find people to feed into the Board. Betsy asked, How many of the 100 people who signed the Petition have ever been to a Board meeting? Betsy said build from a committee and attend meetings to understand how the Board works and begin to understand the history. Deb described the difficulty in getting members to vote for Board members based on her experience on other NPOs. Deb realizes that you need to bring some important skills to be a Board member. Amy pointed out that most NPOs are not involved in legal transactions, but land trusts are and also involved in due diligence. Land trusts are community organizations, and the Board needs farmers/ranchers on its Board and to be included as part of the community. We are making progress toward being able to fill the open spots on the Board with SLV farmers/ranchers. The community feeds into committees which feed into the Board, which Neil and Terry set up with the Articles of Incorporation. Norby said we must attach our professionalism to our communication. Broadcasting, web, newsletter, visitors talking to others must communicate what was considered, how a decision was made, and how it supports the purpose of OLT. This will help others understand along with the request to please stop by and give us your feedback. John E. said that perhaps the breakdown in communication may be because the Board has not effectively used the committee process and committees have not been as effective as they could be. The VEC got ahead of what we could do and where we could be at the particular time. Maybe that's where our best bet is with respect to communication.

Chris works for another NPO that has 400 volunteers who donate 4,000 hours per quarter, 7 or 8 staff members, and a volunteer manager – all are recognized regularly. He doesn't see a lot of volunteers at OLT. He suggests better communication, timely, quarterly newsletters. Chris hopes that the leaders of the Petition will go back to those who signed the Petition and tell them, You need to be involved and attend meetings. Member advocate is on the agenda following this Forum.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

_____ / _____

_____ / _____

Barbara Tidd, Secretary

Date

Dan Jones, Chair

Date