



**Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 8, 2024**

Members Present: Abby Simpson, Larry Bogue, Greg Thornton, Steve Harris, Steve Lenzo, Amandla Atilano-Roque, Julia Sands de Melendez, Andrea Perry

Members Absent: Sarah Bryarly

Alternates Present: Kimberley Sherwood, Mike Sullivan

Alternates Absent: Debbie Swanson

Staff Present: Britt Haley, Eric Becker, Kim King, Lonna Thelen, Anna Bingman, Connie Schmeisser, Emily Duncan, Jake Butterfield, David Deitemeyer, Stephanie Adams, April Allen, Elizabeth Clark, Greyson Rowley, Blake Zink, Mark Snow

Called to Order: Board Vice Chair Abby Simpson brought the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

Citizen Discussion

Susan Davies, Executive Director for the Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC), informed the Board that El Paso County Parks and Leisure are receiving pushback on their proposed Fox Run Park Visitor Center. Ms. Davies asked the Board to continue sharing how visitor and nature centers are helpful amenities in parks. Next, Ms. Davies said that there are flaggers at the trail detour on the Sinton Trail where construction is being completed by CDOT. The flaggers are receiving harassment. If the harassment does not subside, the trail will have to be closed completely during construction, so Ms. Davies urged trail users to remain respectful of the closure and detour. Lastly, Ms. Davies asked if it would be possible to get an update on the status of Coleman Park, as her organization is getting questions.

Matthew Hadley, citizen, is a representative of the parkour community. He informed the Board that the parkour community had recently hosted two events, with six more to go between January and May. These parkour events are held at different facilities while he works on fundraising. The next event will be on Saturday, February 10th from 12:00 to 6:00 p.m. at Aerials Gymnastics. He invited everyone to attend the event to get a chance to see the parkour community in action. The event is open to ages six through eighteen.

Cory Sutela, Executive Director for Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, invited everyone to participate in Winter Bike to Work Day, which is on Friday, February 9th from 7:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Mr. Sutela's organization will be hosting two stations: one on the Popcycle Bridge and one at 720 W. Monument Street. Next, Mr. Sutela reiterated Ms. Davies' request for trail users to respect the closure and detour on the Sinton Trail. If issues persist, there may be a need for law

enforcement support. Finally, Mr. Sutela stated that his organization is pleased with the progress of the Blodgett Open Space Master Plan process, and that the plan is a good balance of recreation and conservation. Mr. Sutela said he would like to see some clarity around the “adaptive management plan” aspect of the plan, and if there would be additional public process if there were changes to parking lots or trails in the future.

Kurt Schroeder, citizen, stated that last month the Board were presented with the results of the recreation survey produced by the Department in 2023. He said one request that the Board will often hear is for more bathrooms. While Mr. Schroeder understood and agreed with the request, he informed the Board that restrooms are very expensive to maintain and are often targets of vandalism. He encouraged the Board and staff to consider port-a-lets where they may need additional restrooms.

Trish Stanley lives adjacent to Harlan Wolfe Park, and said that the park no longer has a community garden. She and her neighbors are interested in refurbishing the garden and offered to do the earthwork. Britt Haley, Director, said that Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, would be the best person to talk to about this project. Anna Bingman, Staff Assistant, let Ms. Stanley know that she would get her Eric’s contact information.

Approval of Minutes – January 11, 2024 meeting minutes.

Motion: To approve January 11, 2024 meeting minutes.

1st – Julia Sands de Melendez, 2nd – Greg Thornton, Approved, Unanimously.

Community/Partner Update

Rocky Mountain Field Institute Year-In-Review (Presented by Carl Woody, Program Director for the Rocky Mountain Field Institute)

Carl Woody, Program Director for the Rocky Mountain Field Institute (RMFI), presented the Board with the RMFI Year-in-Review. This presentation included an overview of RMFI; photos of 2023 projects; how work is accomplished; 2023 City projects; 2023 work objectives; volunteerism in 2023; 2023 labor metrics; 2023 work metrics; Austin Bluffs Open Space; Barr Trail; Garden of the Gods; Palmer Park; Red Rock Canyon Open Space; Stratton Open Space; Sunset Mesa Open Space; Pikes Peak Regional crew Leader Training; 2023 volunteer groups; and finally, 2023 work plans.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

Action Items

There were no action items on this agenda.

Presentation Items

Grey Hawk Park Master Plan (Presented by Connie Schmeisser, Landscape Architect II)

Connie Schmeisser, Landscape Architect II, presented the Board with the Grey Hawk Park Master Plan. This presentation included the project overview; site overview; themes and recommendations from the Park System Master Plan; neighborhood meeting #1; opportunity and constraints; public feedback from meeting #1; public feedback from online survey #1; neighborhood meeting #2; Initial Concept A; Initial Concept B; Initial Concept C; Initial Concept D; public feedback from meeting and survey #2; public meeting #3; final design; funding snapshot as of January 2024; and finally, next steps.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

Staff Updates

Community Engagement Update (Presented by Stephanie Adams, Senior Analyst – Community Engagement; Blake Zink, Senior Program Administrator; April Allen, Analyst II – Community Engagement and Multimedia; Elizabeth Clark, Analyst II – Special Events; and Greyson Rowley, Business Support Specialist II)

Stephanie Adams, Senior Analyst – Community Engagement; Blake Zink, Senior Program Administrator; April Allen, Analyst II – Community Engagement and Multimedia; Elizabeth Clark, Analyst II – Special Events; and Greyson Rowley, Business Support Specialist II, presented the Board with the Community Engagement update. This presentation included what the Community Engagement Team handles; information about the team members; community relations; IAP2 spectrum; public engagement in 2023; CAPRA; special events; volunteers; partner volunteer hours; Friends Groups; social media outreach; and finally, 2024 team goals.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

2024 Project Look Ahead (Presented by Lonna Thelen, Design and Development Manager; David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect; Emily Duncan, Trails Development Coordinator; and Jake Butterfield, Capital Projects Manager)

Lonna Thelen, Design and Development Manager; David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect; Emily Duncan, Trails Development Coordinator; and Jake Butterfield, Capital Projects Manager, presented the Board with the 2024 Project Look Ahead. This presentation included Grey Hawk Park; vertical facility projects; developed park projects; ADA projects; Legacy Loop; Sand Creek Trail – Airport Road to Platte Avenue; Sand Creek Trail – Palmer Park Boulevard to

Constitution Avenue; Rock Island Trail; Templeton Gap Bridge; Antlers Dog Park; Austin Bluffs Open Space; Blodgett Open Space; Fishers Canyon Open Space; Chamberlain Trail; Open Space Wayfinding and Trailhead Kiosks; Black Canyon Open Space – Snyder Quarry Reclamation; North Cheyenne Cañon Park; Limber Pine Trail Improvements – North Slope Recreation Area; and finally, Red Rock Canyon Open Space.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

Parks Redistricting (Presented by Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager)

Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, presented the Board with the Parks Redistricting presentation. This presentation included the previous organizational structure; new organizational structure; new district amenity evaluation; new structure; and finally, the benefits of the organizational changes.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

E-Bike Update (Presented by Lonna Thelen, Design and Development Manager, and Scott Abbott, Regional Parks Manager)

Lonna Thelen, Design and Development Manager, and Scott Abbott, Regional Parks Manager, provided a brief verbal e-bike update. They informed the Board that an e-bike task force had been assembled, with the intention of meeting over the next six weeks to discuss the following topics concerning e-bikes: definitions, jurisdiction, education, and outreach. The hope of the task force is to come to a conclusion on next steps in the e-bike process. Updates will be provided as staff have them.

Board Business

TOPS Working Committee Appointments

Lonna Thelen, Design and Development Manager, informed the Board that there were three vacancies on the TOPS Working Committee – one regular member vacancy due to a Committee member resigning, and two alternate vacancies. Lonna presented the selected candidates and background information to the Board. Additionally, she thanked Vice Chair Abby Simpson for participating in the interview process.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Emily Danti as a TOPS Working Committee member and David Bundrick and Randy Courduff as TOPS Working Committee alternate members as

presented.

1st – Steve Harris, 2nd – Julia Sands de Melendez, Approved, Unanimously.

Westside Community Center Working Committee Appointment

Mark Snow, Community Recreation Manager, informed the Board that there was a vacancy for the alternate position on the Westside Community Center Working Committee. Mark presented the selected candidate and provided background information to the Board.

Motion: To approve the appointment of Marjorie Valin to the Westside Community Center Working Committee as presented.

1st – Julia Sands de Melendez, 2nd – Steve Lenzo, Approved, Unanimously.

Other Business

Andrea Perry – Ms. Perry asked if there is an update on the status of Coleman Park. Britt Haley, Director, said staff is still working on the project and will provide an update at a future meeting.

Julia Sands de Melendez – Ms. Sands de Melendez said that the LART Committee is evaluating off-cycle funding. Next, Ms. Sands de Melendez suggested that perhaps students at a nearby school could help create signage around the Sinton Trail detour for trail users to respect the closure and detour.

Adjournment

Motion: Move to adjourn the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board meeting at 10:43 a.m.

1st – Andrea Perry, 2nd – Steve Lenzo, Approved, Unanimously.