



**Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 11, 2021**

Members Present: Ron Ilgen, Carol Beckman, Dr. Daniel Bowan, Larry Bogue, David Siegel, Sarah Bryarly, Greg Thornton

Members Absent: Abby Simpson, Jason Rupinski

Alternates Present: Andrea Perry, Lisa Weiland

Staff Present: Karen Palus, Kurt Schroeder, Kim King, Britt Haley, Anna White, Connie Schmeisser, Matt Mayberry, Scott Abbott, Pat Gentile, Andrew Rummel, Dennis Will

Called to Order: Board Chair Ron Ilgen brought the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m.

Citizen Discussion

Susan Davies, Executive Director for the Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC), said about \$60,000 had been raised in support of Ballot Issue 1A on the April ballot. She listed a variety of organizations that had endorsed Issue 1A and shared her gratitude for their support. Susan's next comment was that City Council President Richard Skorman and President Pro-Tem Tom Strand were working together to create a commission to study and facilitate parks funding. Finally, Susan mentioned that it had been exactly one year since the Board last met in person due to COVID-19, and commended the Department for how well they handled the changing restrictions over the last year while keeping parks open and citizens safe.

Bill Beagle, citizen, shared that the Incline Friends received a \$400,000 donation from the same trust they had received a \$100,000 donation from in February. The Incline Friends Board is discussing what projects they would like to use this money for. Options they are discussing include building a trail to connect from the top of the Incline to the Northern Return Trail, new signage, and potentially restrooms at the base of the Incline. He added that the Incline Friends had two new Board members, to make nine total. Board member Dr. Daniel Bowan asked if there was anything the Board and the Department could do to support the Incline Friends. Bill responded that they are reviewing the Incline Master Plan, and also working with Emily Duncan, Trails Development Coordinator.

Cory Sutela, Executive Director for Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, said his organization has been working with Ranger Wes Hermann on changes to trails in Red Rock Canyon.

Jennifer Peterson, Executive Director for Rocky Mountain Field Institute (RMFI), said her staff has been completing training before they begin their 2021 year of projects. Of their 280 planned projects this year, 260 will be on City Park property.

Aaron DeVandry, citizen, lives near Laura Gilpin Park and said people rarely follow the posted hours of operation signs for the park and create a lot of noise and sometimes damage to the park. He suggested moving the signage closer to the parking lot so people can see the signs easier.

Approval of Minutes – February 11, 2021 meeting minutes.

Motion – To approve the February 11, 2021 minutes.

1st – Carol Beckman, 2nd – Greg Thornton, Approved, Unanimously.

Action Item

Supplemental Appropriation for Pikeview Properties (Presented by Britt Haley, Design and Development Manager)

Britt Haley, Design and Development Manager, presented the Committee with the Phase II Acquisition of the Pikeview Quarry Buffer Property. This presentation included a photo of the property; the Pikeview Frontage Phase I; the Pikeview Frontage Phase II; the Donation Property; and finally, a timeline and cost breakdown of the acquisition.

[Link to PowerPoint Presentation here](#)

Board member Carol Beckman commended Britt for her work on moving this supplemental appropriation forward quickly to save the interest money. She mentioned that at the TOPS Working Committee meeting, there was discussion about a master plan and the timing of the process. There was a decision to put money toward this effort in the 2022 budget request. Carol asked if we will have the staff capacity to plan this in 2022. Britt said she felt confident that there will be staff capacity for this, and ranger capacity to supplement as well. Interim discussions have been discussed for this property and the Blodgett property.

Susan Davies, Executive Director for TOSC, gave kudos to staff and the TOPS Working Committee for their efforts with this acquisition.

Motion: To recommend a supplemental appropriation to complete Phase II of the Pikeview Quarry Buffer Property open space acquisition in the amount of \$2,797,113 to include the purchase price, interest payment, and associated transaction costs from the TOPS Open Space Category.

1st – Carol Beckman, 2nd – David Siegel, Approved, Unanimously

Fred Darpino Sculpture Proposed for Bancroft Park (Presented by Matt Mayberry, Cultural Services Manager)

Matt Mayberry, Cultural Services Manager, presented the Board with the Fred Darpino sculpture proposed for Bancroft Park. This presentation included the park location; area context; master plan; site details; site photos; and the artist's (Fred Darpino) comments.

[Link to PowerPoint Presentation here](#)

Board Vice Chair David Siegel commented that this is a very nice piece of art, and a great addition to the current collection. He added that this highlights the opportunity to implement the Public Art Master Plan, when we accept pieces by donation. When there is not a process about creating art and we receive donations instead, sculptures like this are great, but we could use a more thoughtful and proactive process in implementing art in the City.

Board member Greg Thornton thanked Fred for this piece of art, and loved the tie-in to the farmer's market. Greg did have a question about how the self-cleaning bathrooms in the park are operating. Kurt Schroeder, Park Operations and Maintenance Manager, responded that the bathrooms are operating well. They were closed during the very recent deep freeze, but are now open again.

Board member Carol Beckman asked if the Public Art Commission had any comments on the location of this piece of art. Matt Mayberry responded that they made no specific comments. Fred Darpino commented that they chose the placement to balance out the other art in the park, along with choosing a place it would be easier to implement.

Motion: To approve placement of the sculpture in an appropriate location near the southeast corner of the park.

1st – David Siegel, 2nd – Sarah Bryarly, Approved, Unanimously

Presentation Items

Greenways at Sand Creek Park Design (Presented by Chris Lieber, Principal at NES Landscape Architects Inc.)

Chris Lieber, Principal at NES Landscape Architects Inc., presented the Board with the Greenways at Sand Creek Park Design. This presentation included the park location and site data; development and maintenance responsibility; timeline; approved concept plan; the overall site plan; and finally, the Hub landscape plan.

[Link to PowerPoint Presentation here](#)

Acacia Ice Rink – End of Season Update (Presented by Andrew Rummel, Park Operations Administrator)

Andrew Rummel, Park Operations Administrator, presented the Board with the Acacia Ice Rink End of Season update. This presentation included information about what was new this season; the 2020-

2021 season versus previous seasons; future plans for the ice rink; and finally, photos of the citizens enjoying the ice rink.

[Link to PowerPoint Presentation here](#)

Golf Annual Report (Presented by Pat Gentile, Golf Superintendent)

Pat Gentile, Golf Superintendent, presented the Board with the Golf Annual Report. This presentation included 2020 golf operations; 2020 financials; 2020 rounds data; 2020 golf revenue; days closed; 2021 budget; visitation metrics from the county, state, and nation; community engagement through social media; 2020 projects and purchases at Valley Hi Golf Course; 2021 projects at Valley Hi; 2020 recognition of Patty Jewett Golf Course; 2020 projects and purchases at Patty Jewett; and finally, 2021 projects at Patty Jewett.

[Link to PowerPoint Presentation here](#)

Forestry Annual Report (Presented by Dennis Will, City Forester)

Dennis Will, City Forester, presented the Board with the Forestry Annual Report. This presentation included City Forestry responsibilities; an overview of staff; urban forestry metrics; items of interest; forest management projects and removals; right-of-way metrics; other programs; and finally, tree challenges.

[Link to PowerPoint Presentation here](#)

Staff Updates

E-Bike Study Update (Presented by Scott Abbott, Regional Parks Supervisor)

Scott Abbott, Regional Parks Supervisor, presented the Board with the E-Bike Study Update and survey results. This presentation included the State of Colorado's e-bike class distinctions; a quick history; current Front Range policies; survey results; supporting themes; opposing themes; the proposed policy change; and finally, proposed policy companions.

Board suggestions were to obtain some metrics from this pilot program to determine whether this policy is successful, as well as talking to e-bike vendors on helping to educate the public. Staff hopes to educate people on e-bikes and their effects on resources during this pilot program, and then make adjustments as necessary.

[Link to PowerPoint Presentation here](#)

Sustainable Parks Funding

Karen Palus, Director for Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services, informed the Board that City Council President Richard Skorman and City Council President Pro-Tem Tom Strand are working to put together a commission of individuals from different organizations, boards, and committees to study and discuss sustainable parks funding along with potential renewal and increase of the TOPS tax. Eventually, two representatives from the Board will be needed to participate in these discussions, but no one has to commit today. Board member Dr. Daniel Bowan expressed interest in being a part of this Board. Karen did ask for consensus on whether the Board would like to have a separate meeting or workshop to discuss their position on renewing and potential changes to the TOPS tax. There was Board consensus of having a separate meeting, preferably in person if possible. Karen said she would look into this. Karen also asked if there were any specific topics Board members would like to add to the agenda to discuss during this workshop. Board member Carol Beckman commented that it would be great to see some of the various revenue amounts in relation to different tax increases, and what staff would recommend as a good allocation. Britt Haley offered to invite the TOPS Working Committee Chair to this workshop to discuss the stance that the Working Committee had taken.

Lastly, Karen Palus announced three staff members in new positions in the Department. Josh Gainey is the new Park Operations Administration at Hillside Community Center, John Weaver will be serving as the new Park Construction Supervisor, and Anna White is now the Staff Assistant to Karen Palus. She welcome the new staff members and expressed excitement for them in their roles with the Department.

Board Business

Carol Beckman – Carol updated the Board on the TOPS Committee meeting presentations, which included the Pikeview Properties Supplemental Appropriation request, information about El Paso County Parks' 50 Year Celebration, and an update on the Red Rock Canyon trail projects. She noted proposed changes in the Metro Transit schedule in Manitou, eliminating the second bus on weekends for the Incline Shuttle, as well as cutting back hours of operation. Kurt Schroeder responded that Manitou had been paying for an additional bus to run from Hiawatha Gardens to the Incline on weekends, but he did not know the reasoning of why they would be eliminating this service. She also stated that the Westside Community Center RFP is still in evaluation. Finally, Carol mentioned that she had listened to the City podcast, where Danielle Summerville, Diversity and Outreach Manager, talked about creating and recruiting diversity throughout Boards and Commissions. Carol asked if staff had reached out to Danielle about upcoming vacancies for the Board. Karen responded that she had spoken to Danielle about this, and is working with staff in City Council to begin this recruitment process. Board Vice Chair David Siegel said he would also be interested in this as part of the selection process. Carol said Myra Romero, Organization, Development, and EDI Manager, was also on this podcast and discussed training for City employees with different racial and diversity issues, including training on unconscious bias. Carol asked if Park staff had been trained on this, which Karen replied that we had about 125 employees trained on this at our most recent Department meeting.

Sarah Bryarly – Sarah said there was an Incline Friends meeting the Tuesday before the Board meeting. The group is very interested in possible alternatives to the reservation system, and while they understand this won't go away, they are hoping restrictions can be lifted on the Incline. The system currently has a 30% no-show rate, and is also difficult for tourists to use when visiting who may not know their itinerary before booking. She said if Kurt and staff need any support, the Board is very open to meeting with Kurt. Kurt said he would be more than happy to visit with the Board, but reminded her that Manitou does remain an equal partner. Board Chair Ron Ilgen asked Sarah if she had any insight from the Incline Friends on how they wanted to spend their new donation money. Sarah responded that the meetings have not centered as much around this money, and instead the amount of people on the Incline, but they have discussed some projects, which Bill Beagle discussed earlier in the meeting. Britt Haley gave a brief update about the projects in regards to the Northern Return Trail. Board member Dr. Daniel Bowan reiterated if the Board can do anything to help the Incline Friends leverage funds for projects, to let them know.

Dr. Daniel Bowan – Daniel gave a shout out to Kurt's staff for cleaning up a downed tree near Thorndale Park very quickly and efficiently. He said the larger discussion about sustainable funding is a very positive direction that came out of difficult conversations surrounding PLDO and he is pleased to see this moving forward, and thanked Karen for all of her hard work.

David Siegel – David informed the Board that he was going to the LART meeting later in the afternoon. For supplemental 2021 appropriations, there is about \$1,400,000 in available funding and about \$2,000,000 were received in requests. There were several requests concerning the Sesquicentennial.

Adjournment

Motion: Move to adjourn the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board meeting at 12:40 p.m.

1st – David Siegel, 2nd – Carol Beckman, Approved, Unanimously.