



**TOPS Working Committee Meeting  
Meeting Minutes - FINAL  
Wednesday, April 5, 2017**

**Members Present:** Jason Alwine, Becky Wegner, Cathy Grossman, Nancy Hobbs, Jeff Mohrmann, Joe Lavorini, Lee Milner, Sarah Blakeslee

**Members Absent:** Silas Musick, Sarah Blakeslee departed at approximately 8:30am.

**Alternates Present:** Jim Klever

**Parks Board Liaisons Present:** Scot Hume, Jason Rupinski

**Parks Board Liaisons Absent:** Charles Castle

**Staff Present:** Sarah Bryarly, Karen Palus, Christi Mehew, Kurt Schroeder, Kim King, Anna Cordova, Brian McCormick, Dennis Will

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Jason Alwine brought the meeting to order at 7:36 a.m.

**Agenda Preview** - Jason Alwine announced the agenda and the Sand Creek presentation will be presented before the budget presentation.

**Announcements**

**Sarah Bryarly**

- The Venezia Community Park dedication will be held on July 8<sup>th</sup> and the TOPS Working Committee will be invited.
- Bancroft Park Master Plan 1<sup>st</sup> public meeting will be held this evening at 5:30 p.m. at Westside Community Center.
- The Parks Department is still waiting to hear from the Community Development Block Grant program to see if we received the grant for the Manitou Incline Phase 3.
- Welcome to Council Member Tom Strand and to upcoming Council Member Richard Skorman who are present today.

**Karen Palus**

- The Parks Development Manager position will be posted by the end of the week.
- Congratulations to Richard Skorman, (who was in attendance at the TOPS Working Committee meeting) for winning district 3 on the Colorado Springs City Council.

**Approval of Minutes** – March 1, 2017

Modifications were suggested from Cathy Grossman and Becky Wegner to change the State of the Outdoors event date to March 20<sup>th</sup> and under Linda Hodges comment to replace ecologist with ornithologist.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the March 1, 2017 TOPS Working Committee meeting with the modifications stated above.

1<sup>st</sup> – Cathy Grossman, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Nancy Hobbs, Approved, Unanimous

### **Citizen Discussion**

Kent Obee, citizen, presented slides on Stratton Open Space mitigation work that was performed by the Forestry Department. He would like the mitigation to be conducted with more care and sensitivity to the land. There has been use of heavy machinery and he is concerned about the impact of the use of the machinery and many users are upset. His hope is that the remaining part of Stratton Open Space (the stream area) will be left alone and not mitigated.

Dennis Will, Forester, stated to be patient since the City has received a lot of moisture and warmth the area will see some significant green up.

Nancy Hobbs, TOPS Working Committee member stated the trail system has changed a little bit and it is difficult to tell where the trail exists.

Sarah Bryarly stated during the stewardship program work, RMFI is constructing and rerouting trails. They are working on signage and packaging which is a completely independent project from the vegetation work. They are looking at different options to make the wayfinding more intuitive.

Becky Wegner, TOPS Working Committee member stated it is difficult to find your way around the area trail recognition is difficult. Dead ends of trails are now going down to drainage areas. She does not think there should be this level of mechanical means for mitigation. She stated this is not in the ordinance. There is a need to protect public space as well as property owners.

Lee Milner, TOPS Working Committee member stated in the Northwest there is still a buffer left when performing fire mitigation. Visually buffers are important and would help a lot. The Committee is required to walk properties before they purchase them. They need to be proactive and sensitive to fire rather than reactive.

David ??, Fire Mitigation Forester stated that he is a taxpayer in this city and want to speak as a taxpayer. The rhetoric is strong and untrue. The City bought this property to be stewards to the property and it's neighbors. No one has spoken about fire protection and fires that can certainly happen. People are more interested in the visual look and the recreation in the area. The mitigation work was what was needed to take care of the property. Safety should be the first priority and not visual look and recreational use.

Richard Skorman stated there needs to be a compromise and there is a lesson to be learned by this project. The TOPS Working Committee raised a lot of money for this property. I've seen fire mitigation on properties that are less severe and effective.

Linda Hodges stated based on an email she received it was her understanding that the original plan said there would be a twenty foot buffer and this didn't happen due to cost not safety. She urged the TOPS Working Committee to visit this area and to take a strong interest. She asked if Dennis Will could supervise the mitigation crew more and Dennis replied "yes".

Ruth Obee stated the mitigation work has been extreme. She is concerned about the habitat in the area as there are five different ecosystem that exist and this is a precious and unique area.

Eric Eaton stated there will be conflict but he hopes to be proactive and use these management tools going forward.

Linda Hodges stated a Strawberry Hills Master Plan public meeting will be held on Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. at Cheyenne Mountain Junior high school.

Bill Koerner , Trails and Open Space Coalition, stated a Ring the Peak Proposal meeting will be held tomorrow. They expect proposals to be back by April 28<sup>th</sup> and hope to get a consultant on board shortly afterwards. Thank you to the City of Colorado Springs for being a supportive sponsor.

## **Presentations**

**Colorado Springs Utilities West Fork Sand Creek Stabilization Project** (Presented by Brian McCormick, CSU Senior Project Engineer)

[Link to PowerPoint presentation](#)

The PowerPoint presentation included: overview; project location; City of Colorado Springs Stormwater IGA; Colorado Springs Utilities SSCC program; West Fork Sand Dreek to include watershed, stream evolution, current conditions, assets at risk; proposed stabilization project to include scope, schedule and land acquisition. Map of Stormwater IGA; CSU Sanitary Sewer Creek Crossing (SSCC) Program; Before and after photos; West Fork, existing conditions, 4/2016; West Fork Sand Creek Watershed map; how does development affect runoff; Lane's stability balance; how do these changes flows affect streams; CSU West Fork Sand Creek Stabilization project details and land acquisitions.

Brian McCormick, CSU Senior Project Engineer, gave a presentation regarding the various upcoming Stormwater projects in the Sand Creek area. Construction will be done within the next two years to create stabilization.

Committee discussion topics included: efforts of revegetation; disturbance of species; projects occurring at different times so animals can migrate to other areas of the creek; possible flooding during construction; the costs of making it a more esthetically looking stream; the gasoline exposed in 2015 due to erosion and realigned and put underground; protections in

place to alleviate more structures being built on the land; CSU's need to conduct this work and trails being constructed without the Committee needing to purchase the land.

Bill Koerner (TOSC) He expressed that a change in landscape is the key driver. Brian McCormick also stated that hydrology plays a factor and the flood plain reconnection being spread out more can create areas for vegetation to reestablish. Space constraints exist in this area and there is a cost issue to do more vegetation pockets

Linda Hodges (Conservation Chair, Audobon Society) She is interested in this area as open space and concerned with this project. She would like to see a pattern change to be able to revegetate and focus on keep riparian habitat that is deteriorating rapidly.

Eric Eaton (Scientist/Citizen) He has lived in this area for the past six years and is the applicant that submitted the "application for funding" for this area. He has lived in this area for six years and has concerns regarding that the lawsuit is driving the project and that the same type of construction is used throughout the City. Questions need to be addressed as to where is the habitat going to go as the reestablishment of wildlife takes time. If these extremes continue there will not be habitat to migrate for many years. He asked as the applicant can he withdraw his application in the wake of this project. Sarah Bryarly replied yes.

**2018 Capital Improvement Project Recommendations** (Presented by Sarah Bryarly, Interim Parks Development Manager)

[Link to PowerPoint presentation](#)

The PowerPoint presentation included: 2018 budget process; timeline; funding sources; informing the budget process; estimated 2018 revenue listed by fund; TOPS Trails category recommended trail projects; Legacy Loop Trails; Cottonwood Trail at Academy; Chamberlain Trail; Sand Creek Trail Hancock Crossing to Academy; Sand Creek Trail Palmer Park to Constitution; TOPS Parks category; water footprint reduction irrigation replacement; ??: Bancroft Park master plan implementations; TOPS Open Space category; Red Rock Canyon master plan implementation; Valley Park Open Space master plan implementation; North Cheyenne Canon master plan implementations open space; Chamberlain Trail above the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo; stewardship program education; stewardship program ranger program; stewardship program land management; stewardship program resource management; TOPS Fund Summary 2017 estimated fund balance;

The following staff members were present for this presentation: Kelly Rajab (Parks Financial Analyst), Charae McDaniel (City Budget Manager) and Chris Wheeler (Accountant II) who has been assigned to the Parks department to assist with the budget process.

Thursday, April 13th the preliminary budget will be presented to Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

The figures presented in the PowerPoint is a draft/working document. Lee Milner requested the PowerPoint to be sent to the TOPS Working Committee for review. Christi Mehew replied she would email it to members.

Susan Davies (TOSC), inquired if it is possible to get a list of projects the Parks Department is working on for the future. Sarah Bryarly responded “yes”; however, the list is always changing.

Karen Palus stated the focus of the 2018 budget is finishing projects that have been started.

Committee discussion topics included: the Larry Ochs Sports Complex project is being funded by the Scott Hall Foundation; Bancroft Park renovations was in the queue and moved up due to the recent fire at the bandshell and \$225,00 has been appropriated for this project; Open Space dollars are appropriated as acquisitions occur and over the life of the tax the Committee can get up to the 60% on Open Space; the department is still waiting for the 2016 actual dollars spent in each of the TOPS categories;

Susan Davies (TOSC) inquired about the Chamberlain Trail being listed in the Open Space category. Sarah Bryarly replied this property needs to be acquired from the zoo through an easement and TOPS Open Space dollars can be used. She is pleased to hear that the stewardship dollars have only been increased by 10%.

Bill Koerner (TOSC) asked if the \$70,000 of the Open Space Acquisition account include the Dixon Trail and Corral Bluffs projects. Sarah Bryarly responded this account is used for expenses prior to acquisitions such as the costs for appraisals and surveys. The department needs a fund to go to rather than going to City Council for supplemental appropriations.

Scot Hume – qtn

Becky – Does look have in maintenance and stewardship.

**TOPS Stewardship: Archeological Updates** (Presented by Anna Cordova, Lead Archaeologist)

[Link to PowerPoint presentation](#)

The PowerPoint presentation included: What is archaeology; What does a City Archaeologist do; many ecosystems; what kinds of resources do we have; Stewardship at Corral Bluffs and Jimmy Camp Creek; Corral Bluffs Archaeology; Buffalo Trail site; Camp Creek work and mitigation and continuing stewardship of our archaeological resources.

### **Citizen Discussion**

No citizen comments were given at this time.

### **Adjournment**

Motion: To adjourn the TOPS Working Committee meeting at 10:44 a.m.

1<sup>st</sup> – Nancy Hobbs, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Lee Milner, Approved, Unanimous