

**Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, October 14, 2021**

**Members Present**: David Siegel, Carol Beckman, Dr. Daniel Bowan, Larry Bogue, Sarah Bryarly, Greg Thornton, Andrea Perry, Steve Harris

**Members Absent**: Abby Simpson

**Alternates Present:** Stephen Lenzo, Chris Aaby

**Alternates Absent:** Julia Sands de Melendez

**Staff Present**: Karen Palus, Kurt Schroeder, Kim King, Britt Haley, Anna White, Melody Horbach, Connie Schmeisser, David Deitemeyer, Kelly Rajab

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**Called to Order**: Board Chair David Siegel brought the meeting to order at 7:32 a.m.

**Citizen Discussion**

Susan Davies, Executive Director for the Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC), reminded the Board that they have about three weeks left to vote. She added that TOSC will be supporting issues 1A and 2D, along with promoting 2C. 1A is a TABOR refund that would go to El Paso County Parks, and 2D would allow the City to retain funds to create a city and regional wildland fire mitigation and prevention program. She said it is up to all of us as citizens to be aggressive and spread the positive message of 2C, as this year is showing low voter turnout and there is some opposition. Finally, she noted that the Gazette had also chosen to support 2C.

Cory Sutela, Executive Director for Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, said that his Board would be supporting the 2C measure. In the hopeful passing of 2C, his Board would like to see an analysis of trail use similar to what was done in the Park Infrastructure Study. He said he had attended an Action Summit on Equity, Inclusion and Diversity in the Outdoors. He said it was a great event and his organization looks forward to putting those efforts into action.

Calla Balliett, President of Friends of Cheyenne Cañon (FOCC), presented the Department with a $55,000 donation check to complete a portion of Daniel’s Pass. Of the total donation, $30,000 came from Bristol Brewing, and Callie invited the Board to join FOCC’s event that evening at Bristol Brewing for the release of the Piñon Nut Brown Ale, which the proceeds of go to FOCC. Board Chair David Siegel said this donation was a critical component in completing this trail.

**Approval of Minutes** – **September 9, 2021, meeting minutes with proposed changes.**

**Motion – To approve the September 9, 2021 minutes with proposed changes.**

1st – Carol Beckman, 2nd – Steve Harris, Approved, Unanimously.

**Action Items**

[**Flying Horse Turin 2 Filings 3 and 4**](https://coloradosprings.gov/sites/default/files/2_nes_flying_horse_turin_2_filing_3_and_4_pocket_parksoct.pdf)(Presented by Connie Schmeisser, Landscape Architect II, and Chris Lieber, Principal at NES Landscape Architects, Inc.)

Connie Schmeisser, Landscape Architect II, and Chris Lieber, Principal at NES Architects, Inc., presented the Board with the Flying Horse Turin 2 Filings 3 and 4. This presentation included the Filing 3 development data; Filing 4 development data; the Flying Horse trail system; Turin 2 Filing 3 and 4 trail system; the Filing 3 master plan; and finally, the Filing 4 master plan.

Link to PowerPoint Presentation Here

Board Vice Chair Carol Beckman commented that she was happy to see the developer paying more attention to the surroundings of the park and incorporating and changing elements to fit the area.

**Motion: To approve the Flying Horse Turin 2, Filing 3 and Filing 4 pocket park designs.**

1st – Andrea Perry, 2nd – Larry Bogue, Approved, Unanimous.

[**Aspen Meadows Park Master Plan**](https://coloradosprings.gov/sites/default/files/4_2021-1005_aspen_meadows_park_slides.pdf)(Presented by Connie Schmeisser, Landscape Architect, and Jim Houck, Planning and Design Partner for Kimley-Horn)

Connie Schmeisser, Landscape Architect, and Jim Houck, Planning and Design Partner for Kimley-Horn, presented the Aspen Meadows Park Master Plan to the Board. This presentation included the project information; development, maintenance and phasing; feedback from the neighborhood survey; the overall site plan; trail and neighborhood connections; the Phase I site plan; playground equipment and vendors; and finally, continued phasing.

Link to PowerPoint Presentation Here

Board Vice Chair Carol Beckman asked if any additional parking had been added to the plan. Jim responded that they had agreed on parking with the gas company on some of their property. There will be a gravel lot and a paved lot. The dog park parking lot should accommodate about ten to fourteen spots. Carol’s next question was on the number of bike racks. Jim responded there would be about thirty total. Carol commented that the Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning seemed odd for the area. Jim responded that it meets the requirements of an annexation agreement to zone for PK, but that would be up to the Board of the Metro District. The District has three boards: a master district, residential, and commercial boards. Board Chair David Siegel asked if there was any disadvantage of zoning the entire area PK. Kevin Walker, Manager of the Metro District, said it could be zoned either way.

Board member Greg Thornton asked if the revenue to maintain the park will come from the Metro District. Kevin responded that the district receives about $1,000,000 in funding each year, and it will be maintained with that funding.

Cory Sutela, Executive Director for Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, said if the District follows through on a potential family biking area, his organization would be happy to help.

**Motion: To approve the Aspen Meadows (9.7 acre) neighborhood park design.**

1st – Sarah Bryarly, 2nd – Greg Thornton, Approve, Unanimous.

[**Fishers Canyon Acquisition**](https://coloradosprings.gov/sites/default/files/6_new.pkbd_fisherscanyonacquisition.final_.pdf)(Presented by Britt Haley, Design and Development Manager/TOPS Program Manager, and David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect)

Britt Haley, Design and Development Manager/TOPS Program Manager, and David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect, presented the Board with the Fishers Canyon Acquisition. This presentation included 2014 Park System Master Plan guidance; information about the acquisition; a map of the property; the Chamberlain Trail Master Plan; various pictures of the Chamberlain Trail; trail and connection opportunities; pictures of the property from various locations and vantage points; the transaction overview; the acquisition phasing map; funding available; the tentative timeline; and finally, the staff recommendation and proposed motion.

Link to PowerPoint Presentation Here

Board member Steve Harris thanked David and staff for their work on this acquisition.

Board member Larry Bogue asked what type of maintenance is required for the debris basins and what access is needed to complete that maintenance. David Deitemeyer responded that there is currently an access point as a legal easement at the end of Wellfleet Street, which is on the eastern portion of the property. At this point, the debris basins are owned and maintained by the Spires HOA, and current maintenance is maintaining the drainage feature and making sure the sediment is removed. This is an annual maintenance. Larry asked if future access will be primarily by foot and bike via the Chamberlain trail, or if there will be new access. David said this will be determined through a master planning process, and the current access is just through the Wellfleet access point. There is another legal easement on the North side through the Broadmoor Hotel.

Board member Sarah Bryarly asked if David anticipated a lot more public access through a master plan. David responded that it’s a little premature to say for sure, and the Department would like to see what the community would want. Sarah said this was a very exciting acquisition.

Board Vice Chair Carol Beckman asked if this acquisition would provide legal access to Cheyenne Mountain State Park. David responded that the current master plan alignment for the Chamberlain Trail guides in that direction, but there isn’t legal access yet. One hurdle is that one easement is being held by a developer, and the other hurdle would be crossing Norad Road. However, this is something that will be discussed further. Carol thought crossing Norad Road would be just a road to cross. David said there is no pedestrian access, so this would have to be agreed on at another time. Carol’s next question asked if the Broadmoor currently used the McNeill Trail. David said they are utilizing it for guided hikes. Through our due diligence, we found that the McNeill Trail is on this property. Carol asked for a breakdown of the Phase I and Phase II fees, which David provided. The cost breakdown is as follows: $10,000 for the appraisal; $32,933.09 for the survey; $6,315 for the legal costs; $2,600 for the environmental assessment; $2,500 for the closing cost; and $200,000 for the holding fees. This is a total of $54,410 for Phase I and the $200,000 holding fee for Phase II. The Phase I cost is the $1,475,000. The land is $1,421,000, with the other costs factoring into the final amount. Britt Haley did not anticipate significantly higher closing costs and encouraged the Board to focus on the Phase I acquisition, rather than getting too into the details with Phase II. Her next question was in the difference of cost per acreage for Phase I and Phase II per the appraisal. Based on land value and acres for each phase, the cost per acre appears to be about $5,500 for Phase I and $30,473 for Phase II. Britt responded that when an appraisal is done, the philosophy is to look at the parcel’s entire usage. While it has two separate parcels with different uses, the portion we are looking at now is for recreational use. The other 84 acres were appraised with comparable sales for development. Then the appraiser took the two parcels and made a combined appraisal. Britt said she could get these breakdowns for Carol offline. An article in The Independent had mentioned a fee of $54,000 for real estate. David responded that is a fee we typically budget for acquisition fees. $75,000 is put into a fund each year for us to do our due diligence on acquisitions. Carol’s final request was to make public access in another area, like a trailhead and parking, rather than through the current very limited trail connections.

Board member Andrea Perry asked if the property will be multi-use for hiking and biking. David responded yes, as well as equestrian use.

Board member Greg Thornton asked if it will be too difficult to build a trail due south in this area. David answered that he has been a part of many discussions with State Parks, and they are working on a management plan. There is a possibility but that will be discussed in the master planning process. However, State Parks staff does hope for these connections.

Cory Sutela, Executive Director for Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, said the Board is very excited, and that this acquisition was a great example of continuation of the 2014 Parks System Master Plan.

Susan Davies, Executive Director for TOSC, said her organization was thrilled to help with this acquisition. She hoped that Board members appreciated and understood how vital their recommendation of this acquisition would be for generations to come. Finally, Susan added that City Council had been very supportive of this acquisition.

**Motion:** **To recommend the acquisition of up to 343 acres of property known as the Fishers Canyon property in two phases from The Conservation Fund and specifically to approve the Phase I acquisition of 258 acres at a cost of $1,475,000 which includes the cost of the appraisal, land survey, phase I environmental report, real estate transaction costs and professional services fee with revenues from the TOPS Open Space Category.**1st – Steve Harris, 2nd – Greg Thornton, Approved, Unanimous

**Presentations**

[**Victory Ridge Site Plan**](https://coloradosprings.gov/sites/default/files/8_victory_ridge_park-_draft_presentation_reduced.pdf)(Presented by Connie Schmeisser, Landscape Architect II, and Tim Nelson, Consultant with Galloway and Company Architecture)

Connie Schmeisser, Landscape Architect II, and Tim Nelson, Consultant with Galloway and Company Architecture, presented the Board with the Victory Ridge Site Plan. This presentation included the context of the site; the design process, including concept 1 and concept 2; the Master Plan; furnishings and lighting; a zoom-in of the playground; and finally, one last overview of the Master Plan.

**Ceremonial Items
Check Presentation from Pikes Peak Pickleball**

Peggine Tellez, Regional Director of the Great Plains Region of USA Pickleball, gave an overview of the 2021 Great Plains Regional Pickleball tournament. After detailing both successes and some hardships of this year’s event, she presented the Department with a $1,500 check for continued maintenance of the pickleball courts.

**Staff Updates**

**Budget 2022 City Council Dates** (Presented by Kelly Rajab, Analyst II, Finance)

Kelly Rajab, Finance Analyst II, presented the Board with the Budget 2022 City Council process dates.

Board Vice Chair Carol Beckman asked what happens with the budget if the election goes in favor of 2C. Kelly said we have been preparing internally to amend the budget, if necessary, which would happen before the final decision on the budget by City Council.

**Other Updates**

Karen Palus, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director, mentioned that the Leave No Trace Hot Spot week is in full swing. We will have a briefing on this initiative at the next meeting.

Kim King, Recreation and Administration Manager, updated the Board on the Westside Community Center. The first Request for Proposal (RFP) process had been closed unsuccessfully. An operator is still needed. A new RFP will go live on the 15th. There was a public meeting on Tuesday evening, where goals, the timeline, and evaluation of the RFP were shared. Citizens were able to attend and voice any concerns. In a perfect world, Kim would like to announce an award at the beginning of the year. However, Kim is anticipating requests for extension. The Center for Strategic Ministry is willing to extend their operation to make sure the community center operates as is.

Kim King also updated the Board on the status of the City Auditorium. The previous night, the first of three initial public meetings was held at the City Auditorium by the Colorado Springs Community Cultural Collective. The Collective is going through their due diligence process to validate the viability of their proposal. There will be meetings in November and December, and more information can be found on both our City website and the Collective’s. Board Vice Chair Carol Beckman voiced a concern that the RFP’s for both the City Auditorium and Westside Community Center is very confidential and asked if there is a way to be a little more transparent and have more public input rather than just at the beginning. Kim explained the procurement process, and the selection of the evaluation committee to review the RFP’s. Kim said they look for broad and representative views. Carol’s next question was of the Board’s role in the City Auditorium process, and if they will be able to have an opportunity for input. Karen Palus responded that the Board will have the opportunity for input on conditions of the transfer, as the transfer of the ownership of the City Auditorium to the Collective will come to the Board before moving to City Council. If the Collective does not meet the goals they have outlined within six months, an opportunity for extension would have to be reviewed by the Mayor. However, the reason why the goals were not met would need to be discussed. Board member Greg Thornton had heard that in 2019, the Auditorium hosted about 350 events. Kim responded that sounds correct considering all rentals, and this ended due to restrictions with COVID-19. Greg asked if the Auditorium would remain empty during the due diligence period, or if rentals would resume. Kim responded that clean-up following the Auditorium’s use as COVID-19 isolation shelter had just been completed, and the Collective has two days a week reserved where they can do additional analysis. While there is a staff vacancy at the auditorium, interim staff are able to facilitate on these days. Greg asked if we knew where regular bookings have moved. Karen said some people have been informed of other venues, however many organizations are choosing not to move forward with events. Greg then asked if staff knew the pricing of the Collective versus the pricing of the City. Karen said at this time we don’t know, but the Collective has a complex market. Board alternate member Chris Aaby commented that there is a tiered model for costs to support local artists. The goal is for pricing to be as accessible as possible. Board Chair David Siegel asked that the Board be kept in the loop as much as possible, to which Kim responded that the Collective is supposed to report to the Department every two months, and we will share the information. Carol asked if the pricing models were part of the business plan. Kim said yes, and the feasibility will be reviewed by the City’s Economic Development division. Staff said they would try to get the presentation from the previous evening to share with the Board. Greg Thornton said he had concerns that the Collective would price out some of the smaller user groups, but Kim assured him that was not the mission of the Collective’s new approach, instead they want to “lift all ships” and be very supportive to the community. Board member Dr. Daniel Bowan said that he felt some frustration that the Board was not serving in an advisory position, but rather for approval. He felt that the Board should have had a chance for more input before the Memorandum of Understanding for the City Auditorium went through. Board Chair David Siegel responded there was a Board representative on the RFP process. Board members may reach out to City Council on their own time as a citizen. Daniel responded that maybe there should have an executive session to share opinions with the representative. Karen responded that she understood what he was saying, though this process began over two years ago and outlined the steps that had led to the decisions made. If the Collective doesn’t follow through with the goals of their due diligence, there is a reverter clause. Karen said the Board will have an opportunity to make suggestions on operations.

Anna White, Staff Assistant, reminded the Board that the November meeting has been rescheduled to November 18th, as the City will be closed in observance of Veterans Day on the regularly scheduled date.

**Board Business**

Steve Harris – Steve asked about the status of the sport courts at Boulder Park. Karen Palus responded that a vendor had been selected. Anna White, Staff Assistant, said she would forward the press release to Steve via email.

Sarah Bryarly – Sarah asked if there was any news on the vandalism at Venezia Park. Kurt Schroeder, Park Operations and Maintenance Manager, responded that the police had ticketed one individual. One citizen had put up a $2,000 reward for information that would lead towards the arrest of the other individuals responsible. Next Sarah asked Kurt Schroeder if he could follow up on the wrappings for the signs at Venezia, as well as if the benches and trash cans needed to be resealed. Kurt said he would check on this.

Carol Beckman – Carol mentioned that at the TOPS Working Committee meeting, they had voted on their Chair and Vice Chair, and re-elected Bob Falcone and Nancy Hobbs respectively. The 30th Street Construction project begins on October 18. They will begin with the drainage structure. Anna White mentioned that a project update was originally scheduled for this Board meeting but had been rescheduled to next month.

Dr. Daniel Bowan **–** Daniel had asked staff to put together a slide containing information of the City’s total General Fund dollars, with parks allocations as a dollar figure and a percentage from 2000 on. He mentioned that while the General Fund has increased quite a bit, support for Parks has not. Daniel said he would reach out to City Council as a citizen to advocate for the Parks receiving more support. Staff gave their input on why Parks had seen a decrease in overall support.

**Adjournment**

**Motion: Move to adjourn the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board meeting at 11:34 a.m.**

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