



**TOPS Working Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 1, 2023**

Members Present: Bob Falcone, Wendy Thomas, Blaze Panariso, Hank Scarangella, Paula Krantz, Ingrid Richter, Wendy Howe, Jeff Davis

Members Absent: Bob Shafer

Alternates Present: Chelsea Gondeck

Alternates Absent: Ellen Senf

Parks Board Liaisons Present: Larry Bogue, Greg Thornton

Parks Board Liaisons Absent: Abby Simpson

Staff Present: Britt Haley, Kim King, Eric Becker, Anna White, David Deitemeyer

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TOPS Working Committee Chair Bob Falcone brought the meeting to order at 7:31 A.M.

Agenda Preview

Committee Chair Bob Falcone announced the agenda for the meeting.

Announcements

Britt Haley, Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Director, announced the following to the TOPS Working Committee:

- The final Coleman Park public meeting went well and will likely be a TOPS project in the future. Core sampling is being done on the property currently but grading in the future could be difficult. Funding for this project will be a big lift.
- The Garden of the Gods Manager position received significant interest and Britt will be reviewing applications shortly.

Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, informed the Committee about the status of the Urban Trail Ranger positions. The positions will be more patrol oriented, and the ideal candidates would have some enforcement background. The positions should hopefully be posted in the next few weeks.

Kim King, Recreation and Administration Manager, introduced April Allen, the new Analyst II for Volunteer Coordination and Community Engagement.

Committee Chair Bob Falcone asked Britt Haley the status of the TOPS Program Manager/Design and Development Manager. Britt responded that with new conversions of previously part-time employees into full-time employees, we have about sixty vacant positions. With that being said, Britt has prioritized hiring for the community centers, due to their robust programming needs, and the Urban Trail Rangers first.

Lastly, Anna White, Staff Assistant, stated that a TOPS Working Committee member or members would need to be chosen to represent the Committee during the Blodgett master planning process. Committee members Hank Scarangella and Wendy Howe volunteered to be the representatives.

Approval of Minutes – January 4, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes of the January 4, 2023 TOPS Working Committee meeting.

1st – Blaze Panariso, 2nd – Ingrid Richter, Approved, Unanimously.

Citizen Discussion

Cory Sutela, Executive Director for Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, stated that his organization is looking forward the Blodgett master planning process, and has already been engaging with users to get feedback and opinions. Medicine Wheel will be hosting another event to get feedback at Goat Patch Brewery on February 21st. Lastly, Mr. Sutela said he had been in contact with a hang-gliding association who has interest in the master planning as well.

Susan Davies, Executive Director for the Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC), said she had attended the one-day seminar, SmartCOS, and enjoyed the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services presentation. Ms. Davies was also delighted to see water consumption being discussed, as well as the TOPS ballot measure, which had a great response from present City Council members. Finally, Ms. Davies said her organization was waiting on messaging they could put out in support of the TOPS ballot measure. Ms. Davies encouraged Committee members to write letters to the editor of the Gazette in support of the TOPS extension.

Warren Dean, citizen, thanked staff and the TOPS Working Committee and staff for all of their work. Mr. Dean expressed concerns about the plans to expand mining operations on the property adjacent to the Pikeview Quarry, and he wanted to know why the Department was allowing that to happen. He stated that the open space is already very nice and questioned why we would want to tear it up. Britt Haley responded that the 9.3 acre parcel is currently being reclaimed, and no further mining operation is happening on the property. Britt also added that staff is anticipating a reclamation timeline for 2023, and inspections have been taking place monthly. David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect, provided additional background information, including that the operation of reclamation began in March 2022 and the earthwork should be completed by the summer. This fall into next spring, we will work to revegetate the area, with a full growing season anticipated in 2024. Jerry Shnabel, Castle Aggregate President, informed Mr. Dean and the Committee that the company doing the reclamation has been in compliance with all agreements. Lastly, Britt Haley said there could be an opportunity to visit the property on an upcoming scheduled site tour.

Action Items

Wild Horse Ranch Acquisition (Presented by Britt Haley, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director)

Britt Haley, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director, presented the Committee with the Wild Horse Ranch acquisition. This presentation included the candidate open space map; the overview map; transaction information; photos of the property; and finally, the proposed motion.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

Committee member Jeff Davis asked Britt Haley to describe the purchase impact. Britt responded that this would nearly double the area of Corral Bluffs. Next, Mr. Davis asked if this new parcel would connect to what is currently owned by the Department. Britt answered that while there is no connectivity, it is directly across Highway 94 from what is currently owned.

Committee member Ingrid Richter asked if the water rights would be an issue. Britt replied no, but the pond on the property could be adjudicated.

Committee Chair Bob Falcone asked what would need to be done to revegetate the property. Britt answered that the area should revegetate once the cattle are off of it.

Bill Koerner, citizen, is a member of the Corral Bluffs Alliance (CoBA) and was very supportive of this acquisition. Mr. Koerner also stated he believes the area will revegetate without much issue.

Cory Sutela, Executive Director for Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, said his organization supports this acquisition, but did encourage staff to work towards public access. Britt Haley responded that, upon approval, this area would be added to the overall Corral Bluffs plan. From there, it can be opened for public access within that plan or separately. Britt added that she hopes access will be a priority for the next mayor, as it was for Mayor Suthers.

Susan Davies, Executive Director for TOSC, echoed the comments about the property and the need for public access.

Motion: A motion to recommend the acquisition of approximately 1,021 acres of property identified by tax schedule numbers 4400 000 457 and 5400 000 022 and a supplemental appropriation of \$7,655,000 to include the purchase price and associated real estate transaction costs from TOPS Open Space category fund balance.

1st – Blaze Panariso, 2nd – Paula Krantz, Approved, Unanimously.

Presentations

Red Rock Canyon Project Update (Presented by David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect)

David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect, presented the Committee with the 2023 Projects and Improvements in Red Rock Canyon Open Space. This presentation included a map of the project areas; project goals of the trail system; examples of road to singletrack trail; the trail system project schedule; photos of various trails that will see improvements; a diagram of proposed improvements; the Palmer Trail area; the scope of work for the trail system; the Round Up Pond trail reclamation; and finally, an update on the Palmer Trail closure by the United States Forest Service.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

David added that there is an active project website online, and he will continue to provide updates on these projects as they continue. City Communications will keep the project page updated.

2023 TOPS Capital Projects (Presented by Britt Haley, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services)

Britt Haley, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, presented the Committee with a presentation to remind them of 2023 TOPS Capital Projects. This presentation included the TOPS approved 2023 CIP budget; the TOPS Trails category; the Chamberlain Trail; the Bridge at Greenways at Sand Creek Park; the Legacy Loop-South Railroad Bridge Connection; the TOPS Parks Category; Boulder Park landscaping; the Grey Hawk Park master plan; the Memorial Park Irrigation in West Prospect Lake; the Oak Meadows Park playground replacement; the TOPS Open Space category; the Black Canyon Open Space Master and Management Plan implementation; and finally, the Corral Bluffs cultural study.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

Citizen Discussion

Bill Koener, citizen, reiterated that he is a member of the Corral Bluffs Alliance (CoBA), and gave some background information on the previous need for preservation in Corral Bluffs and Jimmy Camp Creek Regional Park. Mr. Koerner encouraged staff and the Committee to continue pursuing opportunities that could connect Jimmy Camp Creek to Corral Bluffs, or to augment Corral Bluffs. Mr. Koerner added that it would be helpful for Committee members to familiarize themselves with the TOPS applications for Corral Bluffs and Jimmy Camp Creek to understand why it is such a vital need to preserve the area.

Susan Davies, Executive Director for TOSC, reflected on the Red Rock Canyon presentation as a great example of what TOPS invests in. She said the project website could be a great tool in the movement to extend TOPS in April.

Carl Woody, Program Director for the Rocky Mountain Field Institute (RMFI), announced that RMFI had selected a new director. Jolie NeSmith has been selected and will begin in her new role on March 13th.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion to adjourn the TOPS Working Committee meeting at 9:14 a.m.

1st – Blaze Panariso, 2nd – Wendy Thomas, Approved, Unanimously.