

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

**Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, December 9, 2021**

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

**Alternates Present:** Julia Sands de Melendez, Steve Lenzo

**Staff Present**: Karen Palus, Kurt Schroeder, Kim King, Britt Haley, Anna White, Melody Horbach, Connie Schmeisser, Carly Kobasiar

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**Called to Order**: Board Chair David Siegel brought the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m., following the annual Parks Advisory Board/TOPS Working Committee Holiday breakfast.

**Citizen Discussion**

Lee Milner, citizen, asked the Board and staff to support the idea of opening Jimmy Camp Creek Park. He stated that if a planning effort began in 2022, it would bring recreation to the east side of Colorado Springs, where many voters voted “no” on Ballot Issue 2C to increase the TOPS (trails, open space, and parks) tax. He said the plan to open should include guided hikes by Parks Rangers, not just a free for all.

Linda Hodges, citizen, agreed with Lee Milner’s statements encouraging staff to begin a process to open Jimmy Camp Creek Park. While she acknowledged that there are archaeological elements, she suggested beginning to survey the area. She asked Britt Haley, Design and Development Manager, if the area is leased to anyone, as cattle roams freely. Britt responded that the archaeological survey is being updated, as there are around 4,500 sites on the property, and this is happening now. Secondly, the property is not fenced and the neighboring property is owned or leased by someone who has cattle. Britt stated Colorado is “a fence-out state,” which is why this exists. Board member Dr. Daniel Bowan asked for clarification on what a fence-out status meant. Britt answered that you must put a fence on your property, to keep cattle off your property, not the owner of the cattle.

Susan Davies, Executive Director for the Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC), said she had met with the Ballot Issue 2C advocacy committee, where they had a thoughtful discussion about why 2C didn’t pass. There were many exterior factors, and Susan pointed out that demographics showed that the Powers corridor area voted against more than anywhere else in the City.

LeAnne Baca Bartlett, citizen, expressed concerns about off-leash dogs in Mountain Shadows Park and Chipeta Elementary School. She said on repeated visits, she is seeing an increase of off-leash dogs and has noticed that there are significantly less children. She said she feels like she can’t enjoy the park and take her dog to the park due to the issue. She hoped that more could be done for enforcement and public education around the issue.

Brandon Laney, citizen, spoke briefly about a cooperative arrangement between members of the Uintah Bluffs neighborhood and Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates to improve Mesa Open Space. The Open Space is currently maintained through an executive agreement between the Department and Colorado Springs Utilities. He said he will continue to pursue the agreement moving forward and looks forward to more Board meetings.

Cory Sutela, Executive Director for Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, followed-up Brandon’s comments about working with the Uintah Bluffs HOA on the Mesa Open Space proposal. He also stated his support of opening Jimmy Camp Creek with a master planning process. Next, Cory said his organization had received shipment of their cardboard pump track, and are looking forward to finding an area to put these in. Cory said the fundraising for the Cresta Open Space has gone well. Finally, the Goose Gossage biking area has fundraised money which will be used to provide water for the bike facility.

**Approval of Minutes** – **November 18, 2021, meeting minutes with proposed changes.**

**Motion – To approve the November 18, 2021 minutes with proposed changes.**

1st – Carol Beckman, 2nd – Abby Simpson, Approved, Unanimously, with Board Chair David Siegel abstaining.

**Action Items**

**Percheron Master Plan Major Amendment (Formerly Banning Lewis Ranch North)** (Presented by Connie Schmeisser, Landscape Architect II, and Andrea Barlow, Principal at NES Landscape Architects)

Connie Schmeisser, Landscape Architect II, and Andrea Barlow, Principal at NES Landscape Architects, presented the Board with the Percheron Master Plan Major Amendment (Formerly Banning Lewis Ranch North). This presentation included the project request; the site location; the previously approved master plan; approved master planned public parks; the proposed Percheron Master Plan; proposed Percheron Master Plan public parks; Park Land Dedication (PLDO) information; the catchment area of neighborhood parks; and finally, the parks and trails and phases of completion.

Link to PowerPoint Presentation Here

Board Chair David Siegel asked for clarification on a line on the site plan connecting the regional trail and the sports complex. Andrea responded that the line is just a phase line marking the different parts being completed in different phases of the project, not intended to show an underpass. Pedestrians moving North to South will be directed to the regional trail, and there will be signalized intersections.

Board Vice Chair Carol Beckman asked, as mentioned at the last meeting, if having the metro district take two larger parks, currently listed as dedicated to the City, is still a poissiblity. Andrea said this is still possible, but those conversations have not taken place yet. Carol asked if the parks went to the District instead of the City, would there be any issues. Andrea said the parks qualify for either the District or the City; there won’t be any issues either way as the parks end up being dedicated concerning size or requirements.

Board member Dr. Daniel Bowan asked Andrea to point out on the site plan where pedestrians will cross. Andrea pointed out the regional trail, as well as the proposed signalized crossings. There are multiple crossings on different roads. The nature of the sports complex is going to be primarily attracting vehicle traffic, but anyone who wants to use the community park aspects could easily walk there. There will also be additional sidewalks. Daniel commented that there is a trail north of the sports complex from an open space area, that looks like it will be redirected over the road. Andrea reiterated that those are just phase lines, then pointed out the trail connection from the neighborhood to the regional trail and the open space area. Daniel’s other question was whether the intent was to approve just the PLDO portion of the master plan, just the master plan, or both. Connie responded that the recommendation was to City Council if the total land obligation was acceptable and met the ordinance. He said the wording of the staff memo was a little confusing, as it seemed like the Board was commenting on the master plan. Connie responded that staff can be more specific in the future. To follow-up, Daniel asked if any of the future parks would come back before the Board. Connie responded that is the case, regardless of who designs the park.

Board member Andrea Perry asked how it is decided who develops a park. Connie answered that developers are obligated to give park land to the City. But when there is a district, the developer builds the park, but the District owns and maintains the park. Any PK zoned land has to come before the Board, though.

**Motion: To approve the 31.5 acre parkland obligation as set forth in the Percheron Master Plan.**  
1st – Sarah Bryarly, 2nd – Carol Beckman, Approved, Unanimously.

Board Vice Chair Carol Beckman shared her appreciation for this project and the additional donations of land that will benefit the parks and trail system.

**Coleman Park Encroachment Project** (Presented by Britt Haley, Design and Development Manager)

Britt Haley, Design and Development Manager, presented the Board with the Coleman Park Encroachment Project. This presentation included an overview of the project; an aerial image detailing the encroachment; and finally, the project elements.

Link to PowerPoint Presentation Here

Board member Dr. Daniel Bowan asked for some clarification of where the future park site will be. Britt pointed out on the map where the Coleman Community Park will be, which is currently undeveloped. However, money was designated for a planning process, which is in progress currently. Britt pointed out the portions of the current encroachment. When the Sky Sox organization expanded their stadium facility, they accidentally built on City property, which will be corrected with this exchange. The Sky Sox need access to their property.. Daniel then asked what the current status of the Switchbacks stadium at this location is. Britt responded that they still have an agreement to use the field, but they can terminate if they want. They have not made any notice of termination. The current agreement goes until 2023, and in discussions, there isn’t much intention to renew on either from either party.

Board Vice Chair Carol Beckman asked what the trapezoid shaped area is, and where the Sky Sox current access is. Britt pointed it out on the map, and said the agreement with the Sky Sox says that any improvements, not baseball related, need to not rely on our property. Kurt Schroeder, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, said that it was unusual that their infrastructure is physically separated from their parking lot by a strip of parkland. Even if they had not built on our property, we would still want to correct the issue. Carol then asked if they can access Tutt with their frontage there, and Britt responded yes, and Traffic Engineering doesn’t want any new roads built on Tutt in this area. Future discussions with Traffic Engineering could identify other options. There are two transaction costs: one is a survey for the area which will be shifted, which was $8,500 and has been split with Sky Sox; the other cost is Real Estate Transaction costs, and a preliminary calculation is $3,600. Total cost for each party is $6,050.

Board Chair David Siegel thanked Britt for all of her work.

**Motion: To recommend the proposal to correct the stadium encroachments at Coleman Community Park by completing a like for like exchange with the Sky Sox baseball organization.**1st – Carol Beckman, 2nd – Andrea Perry, Approved, Unanimously

**Presentations**

There were no presentations on this agenda.

**Staff Updates**

**Special Events Update** (Presented by Carly Kobasiar, Special Events Supervisor)

Carly Kobasiar, Special Events Supervisor, presented the Board with the Special Events Update. This presentation included information about the Special Event staff; functions of the Special Events division; 2021 highlights; the effect of COVID-19 on events; the COS150 Downtown Celebration; what’s new for 2022; and finally, an overview of the social media outreach.

Link to PowerPoint Presentation Here

**Weidner Field Renaming** (Presented by Kurt Schroeder, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager)

Kurt Schroeder, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, verbally informed the Board about a request to rename the Switchbacks’ field at Norman “Bulldog” Coleman Community Park to Ed Raigan Field, in honor of Ed Raigan. The Raigans, who financially backed the improvements at the stadium, went above and beyond the investment they had agreed to make. Their improvements have made the stadium a high-end recreational venue.

**Board Business**

Steve Harris – Steve wanted to circle back on the Jimmy Camp Creek issue. He asked if there are impacts from the cattle on the property, and if there is a way to fence the property to keep cattle off. He also shared his support of the idea of guided hikes and limited openings. Britt responded that Jimmy Camp Creek has been incorporated to the guided hikes that are done through the Corral Bluffs Alliance (CoBA). Britt said she would love for the Board to join staff for a hike with CoBA members. Britt reminded Board members of the unique shape of Jimmy Camp Creek. While she has thought about fencing it, or at least the areas where cattle congregate, but the space is too big to do it effectively, temporarily or permanently. The other challenge is the funding sources. Britt’s first approach was to get as much study done ahead of a master plan process, so we can adequately steward the property. While some of this work is done already, more work will be done in 2022. To fence and staff it without a funding source, will be a challenge. Britt has another concern about the hydrology of the area, which also contributes to the caution moving forward. Steve thanked Britt for her explanation and for staying on top of the issue.

Larry Bogue – Larry said he had more questions about Jimmy Camp Creek, and if in the future, the Board can get updates on what surveys are done, the price, and some estimates moving forward.

Carol Beckman – Carol briefly covered what had been discussed at the TOPS Working Committee meeting. There was a budget update, with the only change being an increase in salaries. Carol then thanked Kim King for the City Auditorium updates as they progressed, and informed the Board that David Weesner, a citizen who had been very involved with the City Auditorium, had recently passed away. She wanted to acknowledge all of the time and effort David had given to the Auditorium.

Dr. Daniel Bowan **–** Daniel wanted to express his agreement in the movement towards opening Jimmy Camp Creek, and asked if we could theoretically use the Parks category of TOPS to work towards a master plan. While the 2022 budget for TOPS is approved, he said he would like to see funding in 2023 go towards more surveying and movement for this effort. Next, Daniel asked about the concerns from City Council on the Historic Stratton Park acquisition, which was approved by City Council on a 7 to 2 vote. Britt said the main concern was being constrained on use of the property as an Asian Heritage Facility. There will be a second vote on the supplemental appropriation next Tuesday. Karen Palus added that she will be briefing Council Members on how some of our partnerships work so the understanding of this property is more thorough. Finally, Daniel mentioned that the Incline shuttle is now mostly full of Cog Railway users. He mentioned that the Incline attendants have been a little strict on people walking through the parking lot. He said there is no safe way to cross into this area, and would like to see safer access. Kurt responded that this would likely be a function of the City of Manitou, and they can discuss this at the next meeting to discuss Incline operations with Manitou.

Greg Thornton – Greg also touched on the TOPS Working Committee meeting, and how tax revenue remains very high. Next Greg mentioned that Kurt Schroeder had stated that Prospect Lake is getting an aeration system. Greg asked when this will be happening. Kurt responded that the Request for Proposal is in process, and the funding source is the American Rescue Plan Act. This will also have an injection system to help when we need to mitigate algae and treat the water.

**Adjournment**

**Motion: Move to adjourn the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board meeting at 11:24 a.m.**

1st – Greg Thornton, 2nd – Abby Simpson, Approved, Unanimously.