



**Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, September 14, 2023**

**Members Present:** Sarah Bryarly, Larry Bogue, Greg Thornton, Abby Simpson, Andrea Perry, Steve Harris, Steve Lenzo, Amandla Atilano-Roque

**Members Absent:** Julia Sands de Melendez

**Alternates Present:** Debbie Swanson, Kimberley Sherwood

**Alternates Absent:** Mike Sullivan

**Staff Present:** Britt Haley, Eric Becker, Kim King, Lonna Thelen, Anna White, Mark Snow

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**Called to Order:** Board Chair Sarah Bryarly brought the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

**New Board Member Introductions**

Britt Haley, Director, invited both Board members Steve Lenzo and Amandla Atilano-Roque to introduce themselves. Both Steve and Amandla introduced themselves and provided some information on their background, and why they are looking forward to serving on the Board.

**Citizen Discussion**

Jeff Jensen, President of the Pikes Peak Pickleball Association (PPPA), presented the Board with an overview of their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Colorado Pickleball Open – Pikes Peak or Bust. This presentation included sponsors and organizer information; PPPA’s partnership with United States Senior Pickleball (USSP); tournament demographics and format; the new wheelchair athlete competition; mixed doubles; men’s doubles and singles; women’s doubles and singles; Mayor Yemi and Director Britt Haley helping to kick off the tournament; a thank you to staff; and finally, next steps ahead of next year’s tournament.

[Link to PowerPoint Presentation Here](#)

Jesse and Elli Collette, citizens, approached the Board to discuss the potential implementation of their art installation, PlanetWalk, along the Greenway Trail near America the Beautiful Park. Mr. and Mrs. Collette would like to give a formal presentation to the Board about PlanetWalk in the coming months. Mr. and Mrs. Collette represented that they felt they had received conditional approval in 2016 from staff and the Board on moving forward. They have raised around \$25,000, which is close to what they would need for Phase I of installation. Mr. and Mrs. Collette are also looking for a formal statement of approval, as well as a Board liaison on the

project. Britt Haley, Director, thanked Mr. and Mrs. Collette for the update on their project, and provided a brief overview of where the COS Creek Plan stands as of now, which will impact America the Beautiful Park and the area that the Collette's are interested in using for the installation. Britt said she would get Lonna Thelen's, Design and Development Manager, contact information to the Collettes for information moving forward.

[Link to Information about PlanetWalk](#)

Hannah Mooney, Watershed Outreach Coordinator for the Fountain Creek Watershed, informed the Board about all the activities taking place during Creek Week, which will take place from September 30 to October 8, 2023. Ms. Mooney stated that this is one of the biggest clean-ups in Colorado, with 6.8 tons of trash removed so far.

Susan Davies, Executive Director for the Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC), stated that her organization had decided to take a formal position regarding e-bikes. This position is to support Class 1 e-bikes on trails. After lengthy research, studies have shown that Class 1 e-bikes do not impact trails any more than a regular analog bike. TOSC's Advocacy Committee and Board of Directors are committed to helping move forward these efforts of support, and hopefully a change in the TOPS ordinance language to allow for e-bikes. Ms. Davies said she feels the time is now to really move on this support. Britt Haley, Director, responded that a change in the TOPS ordinance would need to go to a vote of the citizens, which would require moving through another ballot initiative. Additionally, there are other conservation easements within the system that will need the approval of other organizations, such as the Palmer Land Conservancy, for the use of e-bikes. Ms. Davies thanked Britt for the update, and offered support from her organization as the process continues.

Cory Sutela, Executive Director for Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, thanked staff for their help moving material to different project locations, including the bike skills park in Red Rock Canyon Open Space and the Chutes Trail. There is a workday on the Cresta Bike Park coming up. Finally, Cory echoed Ms. Davies comments about e-bikes, and is also happy to support in any way he can.

Matthew Hadley, citizen, informed the Board about the parkour community, and how he is looking forward to working with staff on potential parkour elements being implemented in the design of future parks.

Keith Thompson, Executive Director for the Colorado Springs Mountain Bike Association, echoed the support to e-bikes on trails moving forward. Not only are they good for the economy, but the conversation surrounding e-bikes is becoming increasingly more positive.

**Approval of Minutes – July 13, 2023 meeting minutes and August 10, 2023 meeting minutes.**

**Motion: To approve July 12, 2023 meeting minutes.**

1st – Greg Thornton, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Larry Bogue, Approved, Unanimously, with Board member Andrea Perry abstaining.

**Motion: To approve August 10, 2023 meeting minutes.**

1<sup>st</sup> – Greg Thornton, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Andrea Perry, Approved, Unanimously.

**Action Items**

There were no action items on this agenda.

**Presentation Items**

There were no presentation items on this agenda.

**Staff Updates**

**2024 Budget Update** (Presented by Britt Haley, Director, and Kim King, Assistant Director)

Britt Haley, Director, and Kim King, Assistant Director, provided a brief verbal update about the 2024 budget. Sales tax has not been coming in as strong as it did in previous years, which has led to each department needing to cut their budget back by 3.4%. Both Britt and Kim listed the various ways this can be done, including phasing the construction of Greyhawk Park. While it is tough to make cuts, it provides an opportunity for leadership to prioritize in creative ways. City Leadership is hoping that 2025 will be a recovery year. The Budget will be presented at the City Council Budget Work Session on October 16<sup>th</sup>.

Councilmember Michelle Talarico took a moment to comment on the positive outlook from staff on ways to save and prioritize, as budget season can be very stressful when facing cuts.

**City Auditorium Update** (Presented by Kim King, Assistant Director)

Kim King, Assistant Director, provided a brief verbal update about the City Auditorium. Kim informed the Board that the Colorado Springs Community Cultural Collective (CSCCC) has terminated the agreement with the City regarding its use and plans for the City Auditorium. The City and the CSCCC had executed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2021 to allow time for the CSCCC to raise funds for the proposed renovation of the site. During this time period, the CSCCC was also operating programs and events out of the Auditorium to raise awareness of and funds for the project. However, the CSCCC was unable to reach fundraising goals, and thus terminated the agreement. The last day of occupancy for the CSCCC will be on November 1, 2023. Staff is working diligently to come up with next steps for the City Auditorium and will keep the Board updated as information becomes available.

**Urban Ranger Team Update** (Presented by Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager)

Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, provided a brief verbal update about the Urban Ranger team. Working with Kyle Wilson, Senior Park Ranger, two of the three new urban rangers have been hired and should be starting in the coming weeks. Eric and Kyle are working to define roles and responsibilities of these new rangers. Eric will update the Board as the new rangers are implemented and patrolling.

**Cottonwood Creek Restroom Update** (Presented by Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager)

Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, provided a brief update about the Cottonwood Creek restrooms. The Stormwater Enterprise has been making improvements to Cottonwood Creek and some drainage areas near the park. While working with Stormwater, Eric realized this would be a good time to address the restrooms at Cottonwood Creek near the soccer fields. This restroom was old and did not have capacity to support the sports activities in the area. The cost to replace the restroom was near \$300,000. With the lack of funding and Stormwater work inhibiting use of the restroom anyways, staff decided to demolish the current restrooms and pour a new concrete pad and create a portable restroom enclosure with four portable restrooms. There will be an additional pad poured closer to the east side of the fields which will house more restrooms. This project should be finished in the next few weeks.

**Other Updates**

Kim King, Assistant Director, announced that the survey for recreation needs is available online until October 6<sup>th</sup>.

Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, stated that due to the heavy rainfall at the beginning of the summer, the Department is seeing around \$1,600,000 in water savings.

**Board Business**

**Westside Community Center Working Committee Appointments** (Presented by Mark Snow, Community Recreation Manager)

Mark Snow, Community Recreation Manager, informed the Board that there were multiple vacancies for various reasons on the Westside Community Center Working Committee. After advertising the available positions, Mark, staff at the Westside Community Center, and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Westside Community Center Working Committee conducted

interviews. Three regular member positions were offered and accepted, as well as an alternate position.

**Motion: To recommend approval of the slate of appointments to the Westside Community Center Working Committee as presented in Exhibit A.**

1<sup>st</sup> – Greg Thornton, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Abby Simpson, Approved, Unanimously.

**TOPS Working Committee Appointment** (Presented by Lonna Thelen, Design and Development Manager/TOPS Program Manager)

Lonna Thelen, Design and Development Manager/TOPS Program Manager, informed the Board that there is a vacancy on the TOPS Working Committee due to Vice Chair Wendy Thomas resigning. Alternate member Chelsea Gondeck was offered a position as a regular member on the Committee and accepted the offer.

**Motion: To recommend approval of the appointment of TOPS Alternate Chelsea Gondeck to the TOPS Working Committee as presented.**

1<sup>st</sup> – Steve Harris, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Andrea Perry, Approved, Unanimously.

### **Other Business**

Larry Bogue – Mr. Bogue informed the Board about the items discussed at the TOPS Working Committee meeting, which included a Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) grant opportunity for Wild Horse Ranch, and an update on projects in Red Rock Canyon Open Space. Additionally, Mr. Bogue informed the Board that TOPS Working Committee Chair Bob Falcone had recorded a podcast interview with Mayor Yemi and encouraged everyone to check that out.

Sarah Bryarly – Ms. Bryarly stated there is an Incline Friends Meeting on Monday. She asked Eric Becker if he could call in a service to the portable restroom at the base, as it had not been serviced in quite some time. Ms. Bryarly said issues such as the portable restroom needing service reignited the conversation around permanent restrooms at the base.

Greg Thornton – Mr. Thornton stated that there will be an open house event at the Westside Community Center (WestFest) from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and invited everyone to join.

Abby Simpson – Ms. Simpson stated that she and Chair Sarah Bryarly had asked staff to compile a list of upcoming events to make sure there is adequate Board representation at events. Additionally, staff was asked to compile a list of which Board member is a liaison to which projects. Anna White, Staff Assistant, said she would work on having these documents available for the next meeting.

**Adjournment**

**Motion: Move to adjourn the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board meeting at 9:12 a.m.**

1<sup>st</sup> – Andrea Perry, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Abby Simpson, Approved, Unanimously.