



parks · recreation · cultural services

**Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes – FINAL  
December 13, 2018**

**Members Present:** Jason Rupinski, Carol Beckman, David Siegel, Ron Ilgen, Hank Scarangella, Mina Liebert, Gary Feffer, Daniel Bowan, Michael Phan

**Members Absent:**

**Alternates Present:** Sarah Bryarly, Abby Simpson, Gregory Thornton

**Alternates Absent:** Lisa Wieland, Brooks Williams

**Staff Present:** Karen Palus, Britt Haley, Kurt Schroeder, Kim King, Anna White, Christi Mehew, Tilah Larson

---

**Called to Order:** Board Chair Mina Liebert brought the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Citizen Discussion**

Susan Davies, Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC) Executive Director

Susan gave a positive review of the "Full Moon Hike" that the Garden of the Gods Foundation and Friends of Garden of the Gods hosted on Black Friday in partnership with REI Opt Outside. She mentioned that over half of the 3,000 participants were not Colorado Springs locals, but that many people felt an "appetite" for similar experiences. She said most of the participants stated that they enjoyed being in the park at night and encouraged the Board to continue to connect more people with the resources surrounding them. She also invited the Board to attend a public meeting on January 16 at the West Side Community Center to discuss the Waldo Canyon Planning Process for trail connections.

**Approval of Minutes** – November 8, 2018

Motion – To approve the November 8, 2018 minutes with proposed changes by Parks Board members Carol Beckman and Hank Scarangella.

1st – Hank Scarangella, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Carol Beckman, Approved, 8-0 with Michael Phan abstaining

**Ceremonial Items**

**Timberline Thank You Calendar Support** (Presented by Tilah Larson, Senior Grant Administrator)

Tilah Larson thanked Timberline Landscaping for their continued support in the 6th year of the annual Discover Colorado Springs Calendar. She presented a gift to Stephanie Early in appreciation.

**Garden of the Gods 10 Mile/10K Runs – Garden of the Gods Foundation and Rockledge Ranch**  
(Presented by Ron Ilgen, President of Pikes Peak Marathon)

Ron Ilgen and Tim Bergsten gave an overview of the five races hosted by the Pikes Peak Marathon, including the Garden of the Gods 10 Mile Race and the Summer Roundup 12k Trail Run. They presented both the Garden of the Gods Foundation and Rockledge Ranch with donation checks to thank them for their support of the races.

**Pikes Peak Ascent & Marathon – Pikes Peak - America's Mountain** (Presented by Ron Ilgen, President of Pikes Peak Marathon)

Ron Ilgen reviewed both of these races for the Board and reiterated Pikes Peak Marathon's appreciation for support from Pikes Peak - Americas Mountain.

**Action Items**

**Rampart Range Road Property Acquisitions** (Presented by Britt Haley, Design and Development Manager)

Board Comments:

Board Member Carol Beckman asked if the reservoirs that were displayed on the maps still existed. Park Operations Manager Kurt Schroeder responded that they existed in name only. He stated the larger reservoir will still hold water at times after heavy rainfall, but they have been abandoned otherwise. Carol's next question was whether the dams to those reservoirs had been bridged. Kurt responded that they had not, but the State Dam Inspector keeps a close eye on them, and we maintain them with minimal maintenance. Carol asked if this purchase amount had to be approved by City Council to which Britt replied that any purchase under \$20,000 can be completed by the Real Estate Services Manager as long as the Parks Board approves the purchase. Carol mentioned a suggestion that had been brought up at the TOPS Working Committee meeting the week before about potentially sending letters to the surrounding neighbors to declare our and to interest encourage them to donate or sell their properties to the Parks Department as well. Parks Director Karen Palus replied that we had done this in the past. Britt commented that there was interest in looking into this, but we would have to consult with the City Attorneys first. Carol's next question was if there would be continue to be a cut through from the new Gateway to the original trail. Jake Butterfield responded that the original trail had been rehabbed since maintenance could not be sustained on that trail. There are discussions to build this new trail, but it is not built yet. He stated that the Rocky Mountain Field Institute was potentially looking at this as a project, but that he would refer back to appropriate staff on the final word if this trail would be built.

Board Member Hank Scarangella asked if using TOPS funding to purchase this property, as it is part of the existing Garden of the Gods, would turn Garden of the Gods into a TOPS property. Britt responded no, that just the parcel itself would become a TOPS property. He asked if this was the only land in the Garden of the Gods that was acquired with TOPS money. Britt replied

that the outparcels in this area were TOPS property. Karen Palus gave an example of the North Cheyenne Canon, being both a regional park and partially a TOPS Property.

Board Member Ron Ilgen asked what incentive the property owners would have to donate their property versus selling it. Britt responded that a value is identified by the City for the property and then used for an IRS write-off.

Board Member Jason Rupinski asked what the total acreage would be after purchasing the parcels. Britt replied that this new parcel paired with the donation adds about 6 acres. She didn't know the total acreage for the Garden of the Gods.

Board member Michael Phan asked why we would pursue the land and keep our money if the land owners are "stuck with the land." Britt responded that the landowners could invest the money, but no utilities run over there. From a land management standpoint, Britt said it would be better for us to be in control of the land to maintain the natural backdrop.

Motion: Move to approve of an acquisition of approximately 3.34 acres of property identified by tax schedule number 7333-300-003 and approval to expend \$14,550.00 plus the associated transaction costs from TOPS Open Space Category revenues.

1st – Carol Beckman, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Michael Phan, Approved, Unanimous

**Velodrome Improvements and Dome Permanency** (Presented by Aron McGuire, Director of the Colorado Springs Olympic Training Center)

[Link to PowerPoint presentation](#)

Board Member Jason Rupinski asked what the life expectancy of the dome was. Aron responded that the dome should last another 15 to 18 years, as its lifespan has been shortened by taking it down and putting it back up. Jason then asked what the survivability of a dome like this is, considering the weather in Colorado Springs and if the United States Olympic Committee [USOC] would be liable if something happened to it. Aron responded that the dome was rated to withstand wind up to 103 miles per hour. He said with recent winds, the only damage was to lighting inside, and that the dome had held up though hailstorms we had seen this summer. The dome is manufactured in Canada, which also sees sever weather.

Board Member Ron Ilgen mentioned that the positive comments Kurt Schroeder had reviewed earlier from a public meeting held concerning the dome were mostly from users. He asked if there were any other comments. Kurt responded that there were three other citizens that had contacted him after the meeting with their comments. He said one was positive, one was negative in regards to the dome being "unsightly" and the third comment was a citizen wishing the dome was a different color. Aron replied that "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" and the citizens and athletes who use the dome enjoy it.

Board member Hank Scarangella asked what the process would be if the USOC decided to decorate the outside of the dome to aesthetically change it. Karen Palus responded that the process would come back to the Parks Advisory Board, then move on to Council. Typically this would not go to Council, but language in the original agreement sends it to Council.

Board member Gary Feffer wanted to confirm that all of the costs would go to the USOC, and asked if there were any repercussions to the Parks Department from an operation standpoint. Kurt Schroeder responded that there is no impact on us except for putting another appropriate use in the park. Gary then mentioned that it was interesting that neighboring property owners and businesses did not give much push back to the permanency of the dome.

Board member Daniel Bowen asked for a little more information on the relationship between the City and the USOC. Aron responded that the fees charged to riders go to the operations of the velodrome so that it is self-sustaining. There are hard costs and maintenance, but the goal is not necessarily to profit. Daniel said he would have liked to hear some of the statistics of community involvement. Karen stated that this is our parks property, but the USOC's facility. He also asked if the replacement of the dome, when necessary, would be a cost to the USOC, which Aron confirmed.

Board member David Siegel wanted to clarify the liability falling on the USOC for things like accidents in the facility or if something happened to the dome. Aron confirmed this. David then asked how the cost to participate in cycling at this velodrome compared to the other two covered velodromes in the world that Aron had mentioned in his presentation. Chris Schmidt, who is the Operations Manager at the velodrome, replied that the velodrome in Colorado Springs was the cheapest of the three. David's next question was about guaranteeing continuing community access to the velodrome. Aron said he couldn't put the community usage into a number of hours but wanted to continue to keep the velodrome open to community riders. He detailed how this helps their riders, as you may have community rides and Olympians riding side by side. David's final question was if there was ever going to be a possibility of adding the Olympic Rings or the Team USA logo. Aron said this would be discussed down the road.

Board member Michael Phan asked if the track had been used in the past for any city events or camps. Aron responded that the dome is used by the Rocky Mountain State Games for events, but part of the partnership with Parks and Recreation lets the USOC run those events and camps as they are more knowledgeable in what is required. He said the USOC is always open to partnering with City entities, such as Kids on Bikes. Michael asked if there was a written percentage of usable time for the community. Aron did not have a formalized number. Kim King mentioned this could be a conduit through our community centers who partner with Kids on Bikes.

Board member Carol Beckman asked if there were fees for community events. Chris Schmidt responded there are no fees and the USOC supports these events. Carol asked how many community events they had a year. Chris replied that there are usually 3 to 5 community events per year. Carol's next question was about the durability of the dome in consideration to UV

rays. Aron responded that the dome is created to withstand the rays, and that the heat does not affect the inside of the dome for riders.

After this question, there was some confusion about the results of the survey people had taken. Kurt clarified that one column had accidentally been printed twice.

Board member Michael Phan asked if it would be possible to track the community usage down the road and revisit feedback down the road. Aron said it would be possible to track this. Kim King replied that we could consolidate the events and add that. Aron mentioned a webpage with all public events and an online calendar. This website is [teamusa.org/velo](http://teamusa.org/velo).

Board member Carol Beckman asked if there were any other counter arguments in the survey to the dome. Karen Palus mentioned these comments are mostly in regard to the aesthetics of the dome.

Citizen comments:

Susan Davies, Trails and Open Space Coalition, commented that there is a disconnect in our community in regards to the bike lane and trail system. She explained that people want to be able to ride their own bikes to the velodrome, while many people disagree with the way to do this (on street bike lanes). She encouraged the Parks Board to be involved in the conversation concerning bike lanes.

Justin Whithelm, a Paralympic cyclist, spoke out in support of the permanent dome. He stated the cover helps to control outside factors that can affect the riders (noise, weather) which is helpful to riders with PTSD, such as himself, in their rehabilitation.

Motion: Move to approve the request by the United States Olympic Committee to allow the Velodrome bubble to become a permanent fixture to the facility.

1st – Carol Beckman, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Ron Ilgen, Approved, Unanimous

### **Board Business**

Karen Palus, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director

- Karen reminded the Board to take home their holiday gifts and wished the Board a happy holiday.
- She reminded and invited the Board to the Strategic Plan meeting at Hillside Community Center on December 17 at 8:30 a.m. She quickly walked through the Strategic Plan packet and encouraged the Board to be involved in the conversation with staff at the meeting so as to get their feedback and recommendations.
- Karen invited the Board to the ribbon cutting ceremony of the El Pomar Youth Bike Park at Fountain Park on December 19 at 3 p.m.
- Karen announced there would be a ribbon cutting for both the Foothills Trail as well as the Gateway Trail in January, date TBD.

- Karen announced that the Urban Canopy Analysis would take place in January, date TBD.
- Karen announced that there would be an "All Things Garden" Project Update at the January Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting. Daniel Bowan asked that there be an update about the commercial uses in the Garden of the Gods included. Karen said she would talk to the Visitor and Nature Center about an update for this. Carol Beckman asked for an update about the shuttle and parking as well.
- Mina Liebert asked briefly about the status of a group called "Protect Our Parks Initiative." Karen gave a quick background about this initiative, which was created by an organization called Save Cheyenne, who are potentially interested in bringing an amendment to change the City Charter, which would require that any exchange of park property would require a vote of the citizenry. Karen and Britt had been in conversation with the leaders of this group. Karen said there has not been any final language yet for the initiative. There are stipulations to the properties that would be subject to a vote. There are three properties that have been exchanged in the past that this initiative would apply to: the original Garden of the Gods transaction with the Visitor and Nature Center, North Cheyenne Canon and Seven Falls, and the Strawberry Hill section of North Cheyenne Canon. There needs to be language changed around encroachments, parkland dedication and conservation easements as to what would be subject to this ordinance. Karen detailed the next steps for the initiative in the future through the Council process as well as other options for them. Ron Ilgen commented he disliked the name "Protect Our Parks," as he stated it makes him think more of protecting parks from vandalism. Daniel Bowan asked if this was a practice in other places. Karen responded that most of the other cities with similar language are landlocked or diminished in the properties available to them. Karen said the group was advised to look at bigger cities for a better comparison. David Siegel asked if it was appropriate for the Department to take a stand on this ordinance, and if it would be appropriate for the Board to make an opinion as well. Karen responded that this would be more dependent on the process, and to give feedback if this were to move forward to Council. Karen said as a citizen they could have an opinion, but not as a collective Board. David said he would advocate the Board to take formal action while they could, depending on the timeline. Mina Liebert responded that the Board has proceeded similarly in the past.

#### Jason Rupinski

- Jason referenced the TOPS meeting from the previous meeting and said he enjoyed seeing what the members were looking forward to in 2019.

#### Hank Scarangella

- Hank asked for a brief update about Larry Ochs. Britt responded that the department was trying to get Otis Moore from Westside LLC., the other group in the exchange, to provide his comments on transactions. She gave a bit of background on their other obstacles, but said it was difficult to get a response as Otis Moore is very busy and does not live in the state. Gary Feffer asked if there was any red flags with this delay, or if

there were any second thoughts with the other party. Britt responded there was no indication that there were issues besides just Otis Moore being busy.

- Hank asked for an update on PLDO. Karen Palus responded that there had been several conversations with Council Members. The department was taking their suggestions to the legal team and was working to draft an ordinance for review. Karen said there would be appointments from the Board in January to assist in the review of the proposed ordinance. She also stated the department was working with the data from 2017, and using formulas to show the data under the new ordinance as well as the current. She said Council's comments were consistent with what she expected, which were supportive.

#### Gary Feffer

- Gary mentioned the RFP submittals on the City Auditorium. He said the plan moving forward was to proceed to have further discussion, including interviews with the prospective bidders.

#### Mina Liebert

- Mina gave an update on the Hillside neighborhood project and some of the discussions about the Leon Young Pavilion. She stated there was going to be a meeting with key members of the neighborhood the next morning, and another neighborhood meeting would be occurring with a date to be determined.
- Mina also gave the update that the LART approval moved forward.

#### David Siegel

- David asked what Karen's expectations of the Strategic Plan meeting were. Karen reiterated that she wanted the Board to be involved in the planning process, as it will be brought to the Board for approval. She wanted the Board to feel a part of the planning process. Gary commented that the thought was to involve the Board as the meeting was already scheduled.

#### Daniel Bowan

- Daniel asked about the archeological dig at Garden of the Gods. Cultural Services Manager Matt Mayberry stated the excavation was complete and all of the 135 test units excavated produced 70,000 artifacts. All of these have been taken back to Alpine Archaeology in Montrose, who have a year to complete their full report. Matt detailed some of the items found. At the end of the process, some of the material will be curated for exhibits at the Pioneers Museum, and everything else will be put back on the site. Matt said a lot of earth has to be moved to create the detention pond and the details that go with that construction. There is also a conversation with FEMA about archaeological monitoring, and how much is needed.
- Daniel made one comment in concern to a video of the construction on Pikes Peak – America's Mountain and some of the explosions featured in the video, and felt it may not be appropriate to celebrate them in regards to how we celebrate conservation.
- Daniel made a request to see Corral Bluffs listed as an Open Space on the website as he could not see it before. Britt and Karen double checked the website and could see the

issue Daniel had brought to attention, and explained that Corral Bluffs was listed on a different part of the website, but they would look into putting information about it on the original page he was viewing. Daniel wanted to see more information open to the public about some of these projects.

- Daniel asked for a quick comment on the properties in Jimmy Camp Creek that Colorado Springs Utilities is selling. Britt gave a quick update about these properties and what it would entail to purchase them, as some of them have a Right of First Refusal. She said these would require appraisals, as do the purchases of any TOPS properties. Gary asked if there was a way to avoid the exercising of first refusal in a City exchange of property, which Britt did not know. Britt said she felt urgency in regards to the project.

#### Carol Beckman

- Carol asked if it was possible for the Department to create a revolving page on the website about upcoming projects, their status and the status of current projects. She referenced a few specific projects, but wondered if it was possible to offer more information about all projects. Karen responded that as much as she would like to do this, that with our amount of projects and staff time, it's not feasible due to the amount of information required for each project. Instead, we try to provide all of the information we can about our bigger projects.
- Carol also mentioned an update about some information provided in the previous TOPS meeting about the South Shooks Run trail, in regards to the railroad. Carol detailed the jack and bore process and some of the options available that had been presented. Britt gave more information about why the railroad would not allow for an underpass, citing their safety and structural concerns.

#### Michael Phan

- Michael stated he appreciated being involved in the Strategic Plan to help make sure we are making progress and meeting the milestones.

#### **Adjournment**

Motion: Move to adjourn at 11:33 a.m.

1<sup>st</sup> – Carol Beckman, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Hank Scarangella, Approved, Unanimous