**TOPS Working Committee Meeting**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, November 3, 2021**

**Members Present:** Blaze Panariso, Bob Falcone, Bob Shafer, Nancy Hobbs, Stephanie Surch, Paula Krantz, Wendy Thomas, Ingrid Richter, Hank Scarangella

**Members Absent:** Bob Falcone

**Parks Board Liaisons Present:** Carol Beckman, Greg Thorton, Abby Simpson

**Staff Present:** Melody Horbach, Britt Haley, Gillian Rossi, David Deitemeyer, Karen Palus, Hayley Noneman, Cody Bear-Sutton, Scott Abbott, Dan Allen, Kim King, Steve Bodette, Emily Duncan, Hanna Cook, Lisa O’Boyle, Kelly Rajab

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TOPS Working Committee Vice Chair Nancy Hobbs brought the meeting to order at 7:32 a.m.

**Agenda Preview**

Committee Vice Chair Nancy Hobbs announced the agenda for the meeting.

**Announcements**

Britt Haley, TOPS Program Manager, announced last night's election results were unsuccessful. The good news is that we spent a lot of time understanding TOPS and truly want to thank TOPS members for all of the work they did to promote it and move it forward. She also thanked Susan Davies for putting her heart and soul into promoting this. Every person Britt Haley has encountered regarding Fisher’s Canyon Open space has been very optimistic. Britt Haley was able to take Mayor Suthers up to the location and he was very excited. He wanted to focus on the fact that through the Broadmoor land exchange, we have the connection to the Chamberlain Trail. We also received supportive comments from newer members of the city council – Dave Donelson and Nancy Henjum. Britt repeated her thanks to everyone for all of the work they have done during the past few months.

**Citizen Discussion**

Susan Davies, Executive Director of Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC), stated she wants to echo Britt Haley’s comments on how hard everyone had been working on promoting 1A and 2C in hopes for it to be passed. She believes many people put in a great deal of effort, but other attributes could not be controlled. Because the voters were much lower than anticipated, she believes there is some disconnect as many people care about our parks and many people were in support of it in discussions. The good news is there are four more years to extend and hopefully increase the program. She stated she would appreciate it if people would ask their peers if they did not vote for it, to ask why so we can evaluate and reflect on it in order to develop a plan for the next campaign.

Committee member Stephanie Surch wanted to thank the staff for all of their hard work. She also inquired about what we can do to proceed forward regarding the outcome of the election.

Britt Haley, TOPS Program Manager, believes that the results don’t have anything to do with our city and have to do with national politics that filtered down to our election. She thinks it doesn’t have to do with how supportive people are with the program, but rather a reaction to national and state politics and reiterated it’s just her opinion at this time as the results have not been analyzed. Also, Britt Haley mentioned next Monday at Patty Jewett, we will be having our calendar reveal and we are blessed with the best photographers here in Colorado, along with the beautiful resources to photograph. She is excited for all of us to see the beautiful calendar and its outstanding quality.

Committee member Ingrid Richter agreed with Britt Haley's comments and reiterated she also thinks the results of the election reflect our state on national and political issues. She believes this reflects how angry people have been regarding all of the changes due to a combination of Covid, government mandates, the economy, and unemployment. She believes the voting results had nothing to do with this specific measure, but more so an emotional reaction directed to the government.

Committee member Stephanie Surch mentioned that she found herself explaining a lot of what the TOPS Program was. She was surprised by this and wants to share this with the committee moving forward.

Karen Palus, Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Director, agreed with Stephanie Surch’s comments and mentioned she believes there will be continuous education to the public regarding the TOPS Program. She is very appreciative of the efforts that have been implemented and thanked Stephanie Surch for making that comment.

TOPS Working Committee Vice-Chair Nancy Hobbs agreed that getting out more in the community to educate others will help with the program. Furthermore, she inquired if the iNaturalist links can be added. <https://www.inaturalist.org/>

**Presentation Items**

**Bio Blitz Update** (Presented by Hayley Noneman, Park Ranger, and Cody Bear-Sutton, Natural Resource Specialist)

Hayley Noneman and Cody Bear-Sutton presented the TOPS Working Committee with an update on Bio Blitz. This presentation included an explanation of the BioBlitz events; history; 2021 BioBlitzes; Corral Bluffs BioBlitz; Stratton Open Space BioBlitz; BioBlitz Promotion; Stratton BioBlitz Partners; Moving Forward; and finally, a slide to thank the TOPS Working Committee.

Link to PowerPoint

**Hot Spot Week Update** (Presented by Gillian Rossi, TOPS Park Ranger Supervisor)

Gillian Rossi, TOPS Parks Ranger Supervisor, presented the TOPS Working Committee with an update on Hot Spot Week. This presentation included what is a Hot Spot; Goal (the “Why”); coordination; partners and stakeholders; media outreach; the Leave No Trace flyer; site tours; outreach and programs; a review; what’s next; in the meantime; and finally, a slide to thank the TOPS Working Committee.

Link to PowerPoint

**Daniel’s Pass Trail System Update** (Presented by David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect)

David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect, presented the TOPS Working Committee with an update on the Daniel’s Pass Trail System. This presentation included the Daniel’s Pass Trail System scope of work; trailhead parking; trail bridges; Daniel’s Pass Trail; scenic vistas on Daniel’s Pass Trail; Sweetwater Canyon Trail; Scenic Vistas on Sweetwater Canyon Trail; Bruin Trail; Scenic Vistas; FlowRide Concepts; Old Trail Decommission; Daniel’s Pass Trail System Wayfinding; and finally, a slide to thank the TOPS Working Committee.

Link to PowerPoint

**Citizen Discussion**

Cory Sutela, Executive Director of Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates, wanted to let the staff and board know they will be having their fifth annual membership party this weekend at Trails End Taproom. There will be a community gear swap, and everyone is welcome to join. Furthermore, he mentioned that they will be having a holiday sweater party in December that will incorporate Leave No Trace in the theme and there will be additional prizes for those who participate. The sweater party will be at OCC Brewing, next to Front Range Barbecue on Colorado Avenue.

Committee member Paula Krantz mentioned that Bike Colorado Springs will be partnering with Medicine Wheel this weekend as they have an event on the same day as Medicine Wheel. She mentioned everyone is welcome to join and it will be a fun time.

**Motion to adjourn**

1st –Paula Krantz , 2nd  – Bob Schafer, Approved, Unanimously at 8:53 A.M.