



**TOPS Working Committee Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, December 1, 2021**

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

**Members Absent:** Nancy Hobbs

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

**Parks Board Liaisons Absent:** Abby Simpson

**Staff Present:** Anna White, Melody Horbach, Britt Haley, Gillian Rossi, David Deitemeyer, Karen Palus, Scott Abbott, Dan Allen, Kim King, Kelly Rajab, Kurt Schroeder, Matthew Sutton

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TOPS Working Committee Chair Bob Falcone brought the meeting to order at 7:35 A.M.

**Agenda Preview**

Committee Chair Bob Falcone announced the agenda for the meeting.

**Announcements**

Britt Haley, TOPS Program Manager, made the following announcements:

- The 2022 calendars were distributed to the Committee Members and Parks Board Liaisons.
- Karen Palus, Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Director, sent out the Revenue Report through October 2022 and Britt Haley wanted to highlight that this year we are 25% over compared to last year's revenue, showing that Colorado Springs has a strong economy.
- Phase 1 acquisition on Fisher's Canyon officially closed on November 24, 2021, and Phase 2 is now in process.
- TOPS Working Committee Members are invited to the Parks and Recreation Holiday Party where Parks Board Members will be joining as well on December 9<sup>th</sup> starting at 7:30 A.M. Go West Camps has been gracious enough to provide breakfast during the holiday party.
- The Venezia vandalizer has been caught due to video footage of the person in action. As soon as they were identified and arrested, the vandalism did stop.

Kim King, Recreation and Administration Manager, made the following announcement:

- Erik Weitzel has been hired as the new Senior Finance Analyst and will be a part of the administration team moving forward.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Due to a technical issue, the approval of the November 3, 2021 minutes will be deferred to the January 5, 2022 meeting.

### **Citizen Discussion**

Susan Davies, Executive Director of the Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC), announced they are working with Fountain Creek Watershed to put on a scenic film festival that is available in-person and virtually starting 12/2/2021. These short films portray the value of water, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Furthermore, the details on the event can be found on their official Facebook website. The admission is \$10 per ticket.

Furthermore, she stated the Advocacy Committee met on 11/30/21 and discussed the results of the November election. The Advocacy Committee asked communities around town that care about parks what could have been done better and plan to compile response to help to improve results next time. Tatiana Bailey was employed to do a study on the economic benefits of the Ring the Peak Trail including the Cripple Creek area and the region. The Trails and Open Space Coalition believe this information will be helpful going forward and encourage others to support TOSC.

Committee member Stephanie Surch inquired what the outcome of the discussion was regarding the November election. Susan Davies replied everybody agreed the ballot language could have been much better. There were further comments made that there was division within the open space advocates which was not helpful. In addition, they agreed there should be a simpler ballot measure and to not do everything at once.

### **Presentation Items**

**2022 Budget Update** (Presented by Britt Haley, TOPS Program Manager, and Kelly Rajab, Finance & Budget Analyst II)

Kelly Rajab, Finance & Budget Analyst II, presented the TOPS Working Committee with an update on the 2022 Budget. This presentation included: the website link on the official Colorado Springs website; all funds history for Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services; TOPS Capital Improvements Program; Significant Changes; Upcoming Important Dates; and finally, a slide for any questions related to the PowerPoint.

Link to PowerPoint

**TOPS 2021 Year In-Review** (Presented by Gillian Rossi, TOPS Park Ranger Supervisor, and Dan Allen, Trails Project Specialist)

Gillian Rossi, TOPS Park Ranger Supervisor, and Dan Allen, Trails Project Specialist presented the TOPS Working Committee with an update on the TOPS 2021 Year In-Review. This presentation included: Full Time staff; Full Time staff-current; Resource Technicians; Education Technician; Trail Technicians; Outreach Technician; Biological Technicians; Corral Bluffs Open Space (CBOS) On-Site Park Ranger; Free Incline Reservation System (FIRS); Incline Promo from Apolo Ohno; Interpretation & Education; Program Statistics; 2021 BioBlitzes; Law Enforcement; Volunteer Projects; Red Rock Canyon Open Space; Maintenance; Staff Trainings; Pikes Peak Outdoors Diversity, Inclusivity, and Equity Action Summit; Rocky Mountain Field Institute, Contractor Accomplishments; Wayfinding Update; Community Recognition; Leave No Trace Stewardship Initiative; Leave No Trace Hot Spot Week; and finally, a slide to thank everyone at the end of the presentation.

[Link to PowerPoint](#)

**Daniel's Pass Trail Follow-up Video** (Presented by David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect)

David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect, officially announced the opening of Daniel's Pass. The following video link has been sent out to the committee members due to technical difficulties.

[Link to Video](#)

### **Citizen Discussion**

Committee member Stephanie Surch commented that because she is very active in the non-profit community, she encourages people to donate to non-profit organizations as they are continuously doing a lot to improve the city as a whole. A lot of organizations are still recovering from COVID, so they are heavily reliant on community donations, so if one has the means, she encourages those who are willing to donate at this time of year.

### **Motion to adjourn**

1<sup>st</sup> –Blaze Panariso, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Ingrid Richter, Approved, unanimously at 9:57 A.M.