



**TOPS Working Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 8, 2020**

Members Present: Joe Lavorini, Blaze Panariso, Bob Falcone, Paula Krantz, Lily Weissgold, Nancy Hobbs, Lee Milner

Members Absent: Bob Shafer, Ingrid Richter

Alternates Absent: Scott Lewandowski

Parks Board Liaisons Present: Greg Thornton, Carol Beckman, Jason Rupinski

Staff Present: Britt Haley, Kurt Schroeder, Karen Palus, Anna White, David Deitemeyer

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TOPS Working Committee Chair Joe Lavorini brought the meeting to order at 7:33 a.m.

Agenda Preview Committee Chair Joe Lavorini announced the agenda for the meeting.

Announcements

Britt Haley, TOPS Program Manager, announced that there would not be a site tour in January, but one would be scheduled for February.

David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect informed the committee that the draft of the Austin Bluffs Open Space Master and Management Plan was on the City’s website at www.coloradosprings.gov/abosmasterplan for public review until January 27, 2020.

Scott Abbott, Regional Parks Supervisor, let the committee know that he would be giving an update in the February TOPS Working Committee Meeting about seasonals and how the winter season went for Regional Parks.

TOPS Working Committee member Bob Falcone told the Committee about his “Hiking Bob” Podcast episode featuring Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Director Karen Palus. The podcast was released on December 25, 2019 and can be found on his website.

Approval of Minutes – December 4, 2019

Motion: To approve the minutes of the December 4, 2019 TOPS Working Committee meeting.
1st – Bob Falcone, 2nd – Paula Krantz, Approved, Unanimous

Citizen Discussion

Don Watkins, citizen, addressed the committee with concerns about the Parks, Recreation, and

Cultural Services Department's acquisition of two additional properties in the Jimmy Camp Creek utilities property. He is the owner of a neighboring property and felt that one of the two additional properties the Department was planning to buy was appraised too high. His main concerns were the land use restrictions on the property and the structure on it. Don expressed overall support for the Department's desire to acquire the properties. Mr. Watkins stated he had not seen the appraisal he was questioning and did not know how the appraiser conducted value determination.

Action Items

Jimmy Camp Creek Utilities Property Additional Acquisitions (Presented by Britt Haley, TOPS Program Manager)

Britt Haley reviewed the properties that had been for sale through Utilities, which ones the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department did acquire, and then detailed the two we had not acquired and reasons why. Britt reminded the Committee of the City's real estate processes and gave some insight to the newer acquisitions. First, she discussed the Chira property which was purchased for \$172,000.00 after the property owners failed to send a contract. The owners of the second property, called the Hagen property, were offered \$25,000.00 to waive their right of first refusal of the property, and to clear any personal belongings off of the property. The cost of that property was \$216,300.00, and with the added \$25,000.00 came to a final cost of \$241,300.00. The personal belongings on the property include a barn. Britt said a supplemental appropriation request would be made to council for the purchase of these properties for a total of \$413,300.00.

[Link to PowerPoint Presentation](#)

Board member Nancy Hobbs asked what would happen if the property owners did not remove their personal belongings from the property, or remove them in time, after being offered the \$25,000.00 incentive. Britt Haley responded that the \$25,000.00 takes into consideration that they could do that, but everything they remove is less cost to the Department having to remove anything later. Nancy's next question was about potentially seeing what is in the barn on the property. Britt answered that the belongings are the owner's property, so we will not be able to view it.

Bill Koerner of the Corral Bluffs Alliance offered their Board's support for the acquisition, as it makes great sense to them.

Motion: To recommend acquisition of an additional 80 acres currently owned by Colorado Springs Utilities for a total cost of \$413,300 to help link the Corral Bluffs Open Space to the Jimmy Camp Creek Regional Park.

1st – Lee Milner, 2nd – Blaze Panariso, Approved, Unanimously

Presentations

Chamberlain Trail-Fishers Canyon Reach TOPS Application (Presented by David Deitemeyer, Senior Landscape Architect)

David Deitemeyer and Kevin Walker, Vice President of the Board of Directors for The Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC), informed the Committee that TOSC had submitted a TOPS application for two parcels, totaling 350 acres, of Fishers Canyon. These parcels would offer trail connections to the Chamberlain Trail. The presentation included pictures of the area; maps to show potential connectivity to Cheyenne Mountain State Park; trail concepts; timeline of acquisition; and an overall vision of the terrain, grade, and unique aspects of the area.

[Link to PowerPoint Presentation](#)

Citizen Discussion

There was no citizen discussion at this time.

Motion to adjourn

1st – Lily Weissgold, 2nd – Blaze Panariso, Approved, Unanimously

TOPS Working Committee Chair read the following:

In accord with the City Charter Art. III, §3-60(d) and the Colorado Open Meetings Act, C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(a) and (e), the TOPS Working Committee, in Open Session, is to determine whether it will hold a closed executive session. The issues to be discussed involve determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategy for negotiations and instructing negotiators regarding land acquisitions. The Chair shall poll the TOPS Working Committee members, and, upon consent of two-thirds of the members present, may hold a closed executive session. If consent to the closed executive session is not given, the item may be discussed in open session or withdrawn from consideration.

Motion to move into executive session

1st – Lily Weissgold, 2nd – Blaze Panariso, Approved, Unanimously

Motion to end executive session

1st – Nancy Hobbs, 2nd – Bob Falcone, Approved, Unanimously