



**TOPS Working Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 7, 2015**

Members Present: Jason Alwine, Lee Milner, Cathy Grossman, Nancy Hobbs, Joe Lavorini, , Jeff Mohrmann, Sarah Musick

Members Absent: Becky Wegner

Alternates Present: Jim Klever

Alternates Absent: Sarah Blakeslee

Parks Board Liaisons Present: Jackie Hilaire, Scot Hume

Staff Present: Chris Lieber, Christi Mehew

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Jason Alwine brought the meeting to order at 7:30am.

Agenda Preview

South Slope season-end report will not be presented.

Announcements

Chris Lieber

- The Parks Advisory Board meeting on October 8, 2015 the agenda includes the Watkins Property Acquisition as an action item.
- An application for funding was received from Eric Eaton who is interested in preserving the property described as: beyond the end of Pikes Peak Avenue, north nearly to East Platte Avenue, east to Troy Hill Rd, and south nearly to Airport Road. The applicant will provide an overview of their application at the November TOPS Working Committee meeting.
- TOPS Working Committee members signed a photo/plaque for Leslie Thomas who recently resigned from the committee.

Approval of Minutes

Motion- to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2015 meeting:

- Nancy Hobbs-1st, Jeff Mohrmann-2nd, Approved - Unanimous

Citizen Discussion

Bill Koerner (Trails and Open Space Coalition)

- The State has created a \$100 million dollar initiative in which sixteen trail gaps will be under consideration to be closed. Trail gap closure suggestions can be

made by going to the Department of Natural Resources website. Please contact Bill Koerner by phone for the link information.

- Chris Lieber stated there are funds currently available that we should apply for whether it's through GOCO or State Trails. The Governor's initiative will have an emphasis on trails of statewide significance and the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services department will be recommending the following projects to be considered on the list of sixteen top trails in Colorado. The Front Range Trail (aka Pikes Peak Greenway through Colorado Springs), The American Discovery Trail (aka Rock Island Trail and Midland Trail through Colorado Springs), the Ring the Peak Trail, and a bridge/trail to connect the Olympic Museum to America the Beautiful Park and Pikes Peak Greenway trail.

Presentation Items (presented by Chris Lieber)

- **Colorado Natural Areas Designation- Corral Bluffs**
 - The City of Colorado Springs acquired the Corral Bluffs Open Space in 2008 with Trails, Open Space and Parks (TOPS) funds.
 - In accordance with the TOPS Ordinance, the Corral Bluffs Open Space was purchased with the purpose of protecting the property's extensive significant natural, cultural, archeological and paleontological resources.
 - The TOPS Program has been pursuing formal designation for the past 5 years, via the State's two step process.
 - In 2012 the first step was achieved as Corral Bluffs was registered as a Colorado Natural Area.
 - Staff will update on the second step in the process to formally designate Corral Bluffs as a Colorado Natural Area.
 - A Bio Blitz and Reptile/Amphibian testing may be conducted in the future.
 - Chris Lieber suggested TOPS Chair, Jason Alwine to send a letter of support advocating for the land to be designated as a Colorado Natural Area to the Colorado Natural Areas Program and El Paso County Commissioners.
- **Sand Creek Trail – Las Vegas Street to Hancock Boulevard**
Challenges:
 - The Sand Creek Trail is moving forward after many years of planning, land acquisition and collaborative funding.
 - The Las Vegas Bridge is not City property but is within El Paso County therefore requiring more coordination.
 - The trail needed to avoid crossing Las Vegas due to the high amount of traffic.
 - The south side of Sand Creek trail will go underneath the railroad which is owned by Santa Fe and Union Pacific Railroads.
 - The west side of the trail required acquiring nine easements from property owners.

- The railroad spur serves Fort Carson which is controlled by the Army Corporation of Engineers.
- The trail was designed for the north side but due to storm enterprise improvements on the south bank, renegotiations with the railroad were completed to move the trail to the south.

A transportation grant was received in 2009 and on Friday, October 2, 2015 the project went out to bid. January 2016 construction begins and May 2016 is the projected completion date. The celebration will be in June 2016.

Staff Reports

- **TOPS Policies and Procedures Review Process**
 - Chris Lieber stated the purpose of the review process of the manual is to have the policies and procedures reflect and support the ordinances, not to change the ordinances.
 - A subcommittee will be developed to review the manual and make change recommendations in January 2016 to the TOPS Working Committee. Lee Milner volunteered to be on the subcommittee.
 - February 2016 the recommendations will be an action item on the TOPS Working Committee agenda.
 - March/April 2016 the recommendations will be presented to the Parks Advisory Board.

- **Venezia Community Park – Construction Progress Report**
 - A concrete sidewalk is completed, a crane is on site along with a caisson drill which is creating bases for the light poles and foundations are being poured for seven buildings.
 - A private funder is interested in assisting with the tennis and pickle ball courts.

- **Rock Island Trail Corridor Acquisition Update**
 - Monday, October 12th Chris Lieber will be presenting the Rock Island Trail Corridor Acquisition to City Council during their work session and will be asking council to take action in two weeks on October 27, 2015.
 - TOPS Working Committee representation is encouraged at the City Council meeting on Tuesday, October 27, 2015.

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn - Cathy Grossman - 1st, Sarah Musick – 2nd, Approved - Unanimous

