



**Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 13, 2023**

Members Present: David Siegel, Sarah Bryarly, Larry Bogue, Greg Thornton, Julia Sands de Melendez, Abby Simpson, Dr. Daniel Bowan

Members Absent: Andrea Perry, Steve Harris

Alternates Present: Steve Lenzo

Staff Present: Britt Haley, Eric Becker, Kim King, Lonna Thelen, Erik Weitzel, Mark Snow, Connie Schmeisser, Caroline Miller, Stephanie Surch

Called to Order: Board Chair David Siegel brought the meeting to order at 7:34 a.m.

Citizen Discussion

Mireille Damicone, citizen, made a request for staff to replace the wood picnic tables and benches at Rudy Park, as they are very worn. Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, said he would work with his staff to complete this, and provided his contact information.

William Hotop, citizen, asked the Board and staff to consider adding a skate park to the Coleman Park master plan. Mr. Hotop has been working with the skateboarding community, and believes a skatepark at the park would be beneficial to the area. Mr. Hotop has started a petition for this, which has 400 signatures so far. Mr. Hotop read a few of the comments he had received in the petition.

Susan Davies, Executive Director for the Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC), had a few items for the Board. First, Ms. Davies stated that TOSC had been sharing articles about the unhoused population on trails. However, she said that citizens would like to understand all of the perspectives involved, so TOSC has been working with staff to get their input. Ms. Davies felt it was important for staff and advocates to communicate the importance of trail safety. While the new ranger team is a piece of the solution, everyone should advocate for safer trails. Next, Ms. Davies said she is looking forward to the dog park at Antlers Park to be completed. And finally, Ms. Davies informed the Board that the Starlight Spectacular will take place in Garden of the Gods on August 5, and TOSC is looking for more volunteers, and invited everyone to participate as well.

Before citizen comment ended, Britt Haley, Director, took a moment to introduce Lonna Thelen to the Board. Lonna is the new Design and Development Manager/TOPS Program Manager,

having recently moved to the Department after seventeen years working for the Planning Department in Development Review. Lonna brings a wealth of planning knowledge to this position.

Approval of Minutes – June 8, 2023 meeting minutes.

Motion – To approve the June 8, 2023 meeting minutes.

1st – Greg Thornton, 2nd – Abby Simpson, Approved, Unanimously.

Action Items

2024 Fees and Charges (Presented by Kim King, Assistant Director, Erik Weitzel, Senior Analyst for Finance, and Mark Snow, Community Recreation Manager)

Kim King, Assistant Director, Erik Weitzel, Senior Analyst for Finance, and Mark Snow, Community Recreation Manager, presented the Board with the 2024 Fees and Charges. This presentation included fees and charges matrix revisions; fees and charges – Special Events park rental fee reduction request; and finally, fees and charges – alternatives.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

There were no comments from the Board or citizens on this item.

Motion: Move to recommend approval of the proposed updates, clarifications and alternative fee structures associated with the 2024 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department fees and charges as shown on Exhibits A through H.

1st – Julia Sands de Melendez, 2nd – Sarah Bryarly, Approved, Unanimously.

Presentation Items

Villages at Waterview Master Plan (Presented by Connie Schmeisser, Landscape Architect II, and Caroline Miller, Program Administrator)

Connie Schmeisser, Landscape Architect II, and Caroline Miller, Program Administrator, presented the Board with the Villages at Waterview Master Plan. This presentation included a map of the area and project history; City limits and project context; zoning/land use context; the proposed concept plan; overall Parkland Dedication requirements; and finally, the conceptual neighborhood park.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

Staff Updates

Grants Update (Presented by Stephanie Surch, Analyst II – Grants)

Stephanie Surch, Analyst II – Grants, presented the Board with the Grants update. This presentation included the grants summary; top divisions working with grants; types and funders of grants; partnerships; and finally, future grants.

[Link to Agenda Packet Here](#)

Other Updates

Britt Haley, Director, provided the following updates:

- In front of each Board member is a stone token celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Pikes Peak Highway for members to take home.
- July is Park and Recreation month, which included City Council reading a resolution celebrating the month. Britt encouraged the Board to recognize PRCS staff if they see them out in the field or at events. In celebrating Parks and Recreation Month, Britt informed the Board of two upcoming events: a family fun walk in Memorial Park on July 15 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., and Music in the Park at Piñon Valley Park on July 28th from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- Finally, Britt informed the Board that Anna Cordova had accepted the position of Garden of the Gods Manager. Anna has been the interim Manager since January. Not only has Anna been a critical asset to the Department as the Park Archaeologist but has truly taken the time to develop partnerships and relationships that will contribute to her success as the new Manager.

Eric Becker, Park Maintenance and Operations Manager, provided the following updates:

- Eric introduced John Gebhart as the new Special Maintenance Improvement District (SIMD) Unit Administrator. John has an extensive background in water conservation and turf management. Most recently, John worked for Aurora Parks and Recreation, and the Department is thrilled to welcome John.
- Eric had Scott Abbott, Regional Parks, Trails and Open Space Manager, introduce Kyle Wilson, a new Senior Ranger. Kyle will be leading the new urban trail ranger team. Kyle most recently worked for the Colorado Springs Police Department, and his skills from working with Police will be extremely valuable in establishing this new team. Scott expects the other three Ranger I positions to be filled sometime in August, as the interview process is just now taking place.

Board Business

Recognition of Outgoing Board Members – David Siegel and Dr. Daniel Bowan

Britt Haley, Director, took a few minutes to recognize both Board Chair David Siegel and Board member Dr. Daniel Bowan. Both Mr. Siegel and Dr. Bowan have been on the Board since 2017, which is when Britt joined the Department as well. Britt recognized the difficulty of serving on

the Board and the personal sacrifices that come with serving on the Board, as it's more than meetings. Over the years, Britt has appreciated the voice that both gentlemen offered to keep multiple perspectives in mind. Britt noted how both of them bring such different backgrounds but equally mindful perspectives to the Board. In recognition of both Mr. Seigel and Dr. Bowan, Britt presented them with framed TOPS posters, with an inscription of their dedicated years of service on the Board.

Board Chair David Siegel took a moment to reflect on his time serving on the Board, and how it was an honor to be a part of so many achievements.

Board member Dr. Daniel Bowan echoed Mr. Siegel's sentiments, and thanked staff and other Board members for always being respectful of the different opinions throughout his time serving on the Board.

Election of Board Chair and Vice Chair

Per the Parks Advisory Board policies and procedures, the Chair and Vice Chair roles are selected every July.

Board member Abby Simpson nominated current Board Vice Chair Sarah Bryarly to serve as the Board Chair. Ms. Bryarly accepted this nomination. Board member Larry Bogue nominated Board member Greg Thornton to serve as the Board Chair. Mr. Thornton accepted this nomination. Both Ms. Bryarly and Mr. Thornton offered a few words about what serving as the Chair would mean to them. After a vote, Ms. Bryarly was voted to be the next Chair.

Board Chair Sarah Bryarly nominated Board member Abby Simpson to serve as the position of Vice Chair. Ms. Simpson accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations at this time. After a vote, Ms. Simpson was selected as the new Vice Chair.

Other Business

Greg Thornton – Mr. Thornton informed the Board that the Westside Community Center is very active as of late, having just celebrated on year of being operated by the Department. Many Senior Center activities have been moved to the Center. Additionally, Mr. Thornton said Memorial Park has been extremely active as well.

Dr. Daniel Bowan – Dr. Bowan had a few items. He mentioned that in November of 2020, PLDO was approved, and read the approved motion. The motion had passed on a 5 to 4 vote. Dr. Bowan said to better represent the Board's opinion on the ordinance, it would be best to read the motion as not supporting the change in acreage. Dr. Bowan thanked previous Board members Carol Beckman and Hank Scarangella for their leadership on PLDO. Dr. Bowan stated the new Mayor seems interested in community engagement and said he would like the Board

to be more culturally and community engaged and argued that the meeting time and date is not conducive to this. Dr. Bowan encouraged meetings be moved to another time, preferably in the evening, to accommodate more engagement. Additionally, Dr. Bowan said it would be helpful if meetings could be filmed, similar to City Council. Finally, Dr. Bowan asked for clarity on priorities from the new Mayor, specifically related to the Department, and how Board members can advocate on behalf of staff. Britt Haley responded that she will be meeting with the Mayor one-on-one in early August. Looking at Mayor Yemi's 100 Day Blueprint, the Department is involved, through the public safety piece. Additionally, on infrastructure and affordable housing, the Department is engaged. The First Lady is working on initiatives related to mental health, which parks are vital to. Britt sees many opportunities to elevate programming and sees Mayor Yemi's appreciation of the Department and its professionals. Ideally, Mayor Yemi would like to see funding returned to pre-recession funding through the General Fund. Britt said staff is ready with options to present.

Sarah Bryarly – Ms. Bryarly stated that there is a Greyhawk Park community meeting, to view the plan before it moves to the Planning Commission. The meeting will be on-site at the park, at 950 Spectrum Loop, and there is a project page available on the City website. Ms. Bryarly asked if, moving forward, development plans could come to the Board when possible before they have already move to the Planning Commission, that would be appreciated

Larry Bogue – Mr. Bogue informed the Board about the TOPS Working Committee meeting the day before, where the Department's naming policy was discussed. Mr. Bogue said this was robust and fruitful conversation between staff, the Committee and citizens. Mr. Bogue then asked who will be replacing Board Chair David Siegel and Board member Dr. Daniel Bowan. Board Chair David Siegel responded that interviews for new members will be taking place the following day, and there are many qualified applicants.

Julia Sands de Melendez – Ms. Sands de Melendez asked if there is an update on the partnership with the Golden Lotus Foundation. Britt Haley said she still needs to put an agreement into place, similar to that of the City Auditorium. At this point, staff is working on getting this agreement in place, though areas of clarity and goals need to be identified, as well as exit strategies if necessary.

David Siegel – Mr. Siegel stated that there is a LART meeting later in the afternoon. Final funding recommendations will be made in August. Mr. Siegel then asked about the status of the City Auditorium. Kim King, Assistant Director, said the business plan had been received. A consultant has been selected to review the business plan. Currently, two to three months are anticipated for a report to come out. The review of the business plan will provide an objective outlook on whether the plan is feasible with appropriate timelines, or if there are any gaps that

need to be addressed. Finally, Dr. Siegel asked for an update on the Pioneer’s Museum. Matt Mayberry, Cultural Services Manager, took a moment to formally introduce Anna Cordova, Garden of the Gods Manager. Then, Matt answered Mr. Siegel’s question, stating that the Museum will “close” beginning July 22 as the HVAC project begins. There will be a public exhibit space and operations at the annex, which is located in Plaza of the Rockies. Matt thanked Mr. Siegel for all of his collaboration and thanked him for helping in the transition to the annex.

Following Board business, Britt Haley reminded the Board that there will be a picnic at Monument Valley to celebrate outgoing members David Siegel and Dr. Daniel Bowan at 11:30 a.m. In the meantime, Britt invited the Department to head to Sondermann Park to view the vegetation management using goats.

Councilmember David Leinweber informed the Board and staff of a decision made by the Forest Service, that any work done on Forest Service land now has to be reviewed by the Forest Service’s new archaeologist. Councilmember Leinweber encouraged the Board to look into this, and push back if necessary to complete projects, as the impact of this decision will affect partner organizations.

Adjournment

Motion: Move to adjourn the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board meeting at 10:31 a.m.

1st – Julia Sands de Melendez, 2nd – Dr. Daniel Bowan, Approved, Unanimously.