



**TOPS Working Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 6, 2019**

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

Alternate Absent: Scott Lewandowski

Parks Board Liaisons Present: Greg Thornton, Carol Beckman

Parks Board Liaisons Absent: Jason Rupinski

Youth Ambassadors Present: William White, Jack Keenan, Emma Hybl

Staff Present: Britt Haley, Karen Palus, Kurt Schroeder, Christi Mehew, Kelly Rajab

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TOPS Working Committee Chair Joe Lavorini brought the meeting to order at 7:34 a.m.

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

Announcements

Britt Haley, TOPS Program Manager

- There will not be a site tour in November or December.
- The January 2020- TOPS meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 8th due to the New Year's Day holiday.
- We received a new TOPS application from Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC). The application involves the Chamberlain Trail and staff will review the proposal.
- We have closed on the property located at 1325 Rock Creek Canyon Road.
- A public meeting on Austin Bluffs Open Space will be held tomorrow night at Grant Elementary School from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- A public meeting on the designs from the TOPS Wayfinding Project will be held on Tuesday, November 12th at Westside Community Center from 5:00 p.m to 7:00 p.m.

Karen Palus, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director

- Announced the approval of Ballot Issues 2B and 2C from yesterday's election. Under 2B park projects will receive \$7,000,000 in TABOR retention funds for identified park projects. She thanked Susan Davies, TOSC Executive Director for her help on this initiative.

Approval of Minutes – October 2, 2019

Motion: To approve the minutes of the October 2, 2019 TOPS Working Committee meeting.

Per correction from Bob Falcone to change Fish and Wildlife to US Fish and Wildlife.

1st – Bob Falcone, 2nd – Blaze Panariso, Approved, Unanimous

Citizen Discussion

Susan Davies, Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC) Executive Director, said we did very well on the 2B initiative. Many people supported it with less than \$5,000 to run the campaign. People have so much passion for Parks and she thanked the park staff for their great work.

Bob Falcone – Thanked staff and all who helped make this measure successful.

Presentation

Budget 2020 Update (Presented by Kelly Rajab, Parks Financial Analyst)

[Link to PowerPoint presentation](#)

Can find the budget at www.ColoradoSprings.gov/budget/page/city-budget

Susan Davies, TOSC Executive Director asked about the water budget. Kelly Rajab said we have a \$1.45 million increase for water in the 2020 budget. Kurt Schroeder, Parks Maintenance and Operations Manager, stated the water cost rate has gone down; however, the daily access fee has gone up. Utilities works with us and will shut off our systems at times to save us from paying the daily access fee. Non-potable rates have gone up 12%.

November 26th is 2nd reading of 2020 budget.

TOPS Working Committee member Bob Falcone asked how will the TABOR retention money be added to the budget. Kelly Rajab responded that the Budget Department will add it to the Parks budget before it goes to City Council approval.

A question was asked about when do staff start planning for the 2021 budget and will Jimmy Camp Creek and Corral Bluffs be in this budget? Kelly Rajab said that begins in April 2020. Staff responded that early work in the area of Jimmy Camp Creek and Corral Bluffs will start with an inventory of resources that can then be used for the master planning process. The 2021 budget process is 4 months out so this hasn't received much attention yet.

TOPS Working Committee Chair Joe Lavorini confirmed that we have received a \$4,000,000 increase in the budget from 2019 to 2020. Kelly Rajab said yes and it is dispersed throughout several funds.

Susan Davies, TOSC Executive Director asked if the General Fund support to the Parks Department is still below where we were at in 2007. Karen Palus replied yes.

Citizen Discussion

No citizens spoke at this time.

Britt Haley stated the Denver Museum of Nature and Science (DMNS) has an exhibit of the

fossils discovered at Corral Bluffs Open Space. They are currently showing a NOVA film in their IMAX theater. The NOVA film is streaming on PBS now. Matt Mayberry is trying to schedule the two scientists Ian Miller and Tyler Lyson to present the NOVA film to us in Colorado Springs.

Karen Palus stated this discovery has generated a lot of conversation on protecting this area. They have called this the epicenter of paleontology.

Britt Haley recommended going to the Corral Bluffs Alliance (COBA) website to find all the information on this discovery.

TOPS Working Committee member Lee Milner requested that staff send the COBA link to TOPS Working Committee members.

TOPS Working Committee Chair Joe Lavorini asked how does this affect managing the property? Britt Haley responded more security measures have been needed to protect the property because there are so many resources that could be lost forever. We have lots of support and we are planning on how to additionally protect the property. Staff is talking with other land management agencies that have models at this time.

Karen Palus said we have been talking to the DNMS and seeking their insight. Their position is that this is really a matter for the land managers to address.

TOPS Working Committee member Bob Falcone asked if the DMNS will help with security measures on the property. Britt Haley said no and they are the science team and they are relying on us for the protection of the property. She stated we did everything we could with the anticipation of the media announcement and now we are in the protection and management process.

TOPS Working Committee member Lee Milner asked about money to protect the area. Britt Haley stated the ranger team has been helping and we have approved security money in the budget from the past that we are using.

TOPS Working Committee member Bob Falcone asked will we accelerate our plans to manage the property will this accelerate plans to manage it. Britt Haley stated she was hoping people would realize the importance of this property and see the true nature of this site. Work on the resource inventory will also help.

Mike Scott, asked what are some of the models. Britt Haley said the National Park System, a State Park in Washington and Matt Mayberry and his team know of others.

Motion to adjourn

1st – Bob Falcone, 2nd – Bob Shafer, Approved Unanimous

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 go into a closed executive session.

1st – Lee Milner, 2nd – Ingrid Richter, Approved, Unanimous

Motion: to close the executive session

1st - Blaze Panariso , 2nd – Lily Weissgold , Approved Unanimous