

MINUTES OF MEETING

**Parks, Open Space and Trails Advisory Board – November 15, 2017
Ada County Parks and Waterways Administration building**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Cook, Kari Kostka (via phone), Jim Keller, Mark Suderman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Marc Grubert, Julia Kertz-Grant, David McKinnon,

STAFF PRESENT: Scott Koberg, Candy Hahlbeck,

OTHER: Larry Maneely, (Commissioner’s Office), Jason Boal (Development Services), Sara Arkle (City of Boise)

INTRODUCTION:

C. Cook called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m. No conflicts of interest were declared by Advisory Board members.

Motion: C. Cook moved to approve the minutes. M. Suderman seconded. Motion passed

OLD BUSINESS

PENITENTIARY CANAL GREENBELT:

Scott provided an updated on the Penitentiary Canal Greenbelt. J. Keller asked for a reminder when this project will be completed. S. Koberg responded that the end date is scheduled in the contract as June 22, 2018. We have an agreement with Boise Project Board of Control and Bureau of Reclamation to deliver water to the installed pipe or whatever phase of completion the project is in, by March 15, 2018. L. Maneely inquired if Granite Construction would have anything to post related to this project on the 3rd floor of the courthouse. S. Koberg responded that he didn’t think the contractor did, but that we could collaborate with Kate to come up with something.

NEW BUSINESS

BOISE CITY PARKS E-BIKES UPDATE:

S. Arkle from City of Boise provided a presentation and report on the City’s current policy and proposed ordinance change regarding E-Bikes. Throughout the course of the past year, the City has been trying to determine the best path forward. The draft ordinance for E-Bikes has been through work sessions but it will need to go through 3 readings before it is placed into ordinance. This process will begin in early December. The second reading will be when public testimony will be given. The City’s draft ordinance is separate from the existing Other Power Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMD) policy currently in place. The City is trying to be as consistent as possible with the way other municipalities are addressing E-Bikes. C. Cook inquired about the last sentence of the E-Bikes definition that talks about disengaging or ceasing to function when the vehicles brakes are applied- most bikes don’t have any connection between the brakes and the motor. S. Arkle responded that the retailers didn’t have a problem with this definition. The ordinance is attempting to classify E-Bikes as a type of bicycle but also further define where they can appropriately be used.

In the draft ordinance, E-Bikes would be allowed on all multi-use Greenbelt Pathway under the City’s jurisdiction. The draft ordinance has language that would allow an officer to enforce unsafe E-Bike riding like they can enforce unsafe bicycle riding. The City may get to a point where they consider posting speed limits because some areas of the Greenbelt are not appropriate given the existing conditions. S. Arkle explained that no new speed limit signs would be posted this time.

E-Bikes are not currently allowed on Ridge to Rivers trails in the Boise Foothills unless pre-authorized by the Boise City Parks Director. Only certain trails owned solely by Boise City and approved by Boise City Parks staff are authorized for E-Bike usage once authorized. The City took a look at the trails that are on City property to determine trails that could be appropriately authorized for E-Bike usage. The Ridge to Rivers page now has a list of trails on Boise City property in the foothills that are authorized for E-Bike use.

The City's Communication Team has put together a pamphlet that can be provided to retailers to distribute to anyone purchasing an E-Bike. This pamphlet explains where E-Bikes are approved for use and how to get pre-authorized for a mobility disability authorization. S. Arkle explained that any additional questions can be brought up in public testimony at the meeting on December 12th --- the date of the second reading.

The first reading will happen December 5th, the second December 12th, and the third on December 19th. Scott noted that December 12th is the night before our next meeting and that it would be a good opportunity to go to the public hearing and update the Advisory Board at the December 13th meeting.

OPDMD Policy

The City of Boise had an OPDMD policy in place for trails and pathways within the city that needed to be revised because it wasn't jurisdictionally appropriate. S. Arkle highlighted the revised Assessment Factors portion of the OPDMD. When looking at accommodations, you aren't looking at who is using the device but what the device is designed to be used for. This is where E-Bikes are different than other power driven mobility devices such as an electric wheelchair where one has to use this particular device because one's mobility disability requires it.

The City then went on to find that there were approximately 30 trails that are City property. They went through the assessment and determined which trails will and won't provide an accommodation. Of those 30, 6 are pedestrian only trails. Those people that need to use a mobility device indoors and therefore are required to use a mobility device that is only designed for people with disabilities, is a separate category.

This policy has been approved by the City Park Commission. It doesn't need to go to council for approval. It is a supportive policy to the ordinance. It is also currently in effect. C. Cook inquired about Pole Cat trail. S. Arkle replied that when the next revision is done, this trail will be removed. C. Cook also inquired about the authorization process. S. Arkle replied that the next step is that they are going through the process of creating a form that conforms to the ADA guidance that allows the City to have an understanding of how many people are asking for this accommodation, who they are and what kind of bike they have. From there the user will receive a sticker. The sticker is now in production and they hope to have them ready by the first of the year. C. Cook inquired as to the expiration of the sticker. S. Arkle responded that there is no expiration date. S. Koberg asked, for clarification, that the people that are receiving this sticker, are they are still limited to where they can ride? S. Arkle responded that that was correct and that it only applied to trails on City property. L. Maneely inquired if the trails are open year round or if there will be a seasonal restriction? S. Arkle responded that they are open year round. S. Koberg inquired if Rep. King's draft legislation, he assumes that she plans to move forward with the classification of bikes. If the City moves forward with the classification they are going to define this in a new ordinance and it passes, the City is insulated from that potential state legislation. In its current iteration, there wouldn't be any other action that the City would have to do to respond to state legislation. Is this correct? S. Arkle responded that that is a realistic assessment of what they are trying to do, but more specifically because it was needed. C. Cook inquired when the City plans to implement signage on trails that there is no e-bike usage. S. Arkle responded that because e-bikes are not allowed on the Foothills, she doesn't anticipate that there will be any changes to current signs in the next year.

ADA COUNTY E-BIKES RECOMMENDATION:

The Board of County Commissioners has asked for a recommendation from the Advisory Board, in conjunction with Scott's input that was already provided, to support any decisions moving forward on policy for E-Bike usage on Ada County property. There are 2 components to this letter --- recommendations for how we interpret E-Bike usage on the Greenbelt and how we interpret E-Bike

usage on County owned Ridge to Rivers trails. It could be as simple as stating that the Advisory Board supports the direction the City is going. The purpose is to get collaborative input from the Advisory Board. J. Keller stated that this issue is more straight-forward than the County trails in the foothills because it is critical to be more consistent in regulations with other Greenbelt partners. He leans towards adopting the same policy as the City. He went on to say that a trail by trail review may be needed to make sure we are taking the right steps and considering the right thing for each trail in the foothills under Ada County jurisdiction. S. Koberg responded that what we would really be looking at is 2 different locations initially --- Seamans Gulch which is an isolated patch of Ada County owned Ridge to Rivers trails, and also the Ada/Eagle Bike Park in which we would collaborate with Eagle and get on the same page with them. M. Suderman inquired about the Bike Park and the trails on the back side that are Ridge to Rivers trails. S. Koberg responded that it's a BLM 40 at the Big Springs trailhead. If you stop at the saddle, that is technically the boundary of the Bike Park. We don't want to send people from that area up and over to a non-motorized, non E-Bike area which is that BLM 40 in addition to the Idaho State Veterans Cemetery property. M. Suderman agreed and said that it's reasonable and consistent with following suit with Boise City on the Greenbelt. He went on to say that it's reasonable to say no E-Bikes at the Bike Park. C. Cook added that it would be important to talk with the City of Eagle to see where they are headed. If they are headed towards allowing E-Bikes in their portion of the Bike Park, this is something that would need to be revisited. C. Cook suggested a motion to follow Boise City's lead on the Greenbelt and remaining Ridge to Rivers trails. This would be the recommendation of the Advisory Board, to follow the recommendation and to put it into County code. M. Suderman would like to add to follow suit with the Ridge to Rivers part and to not authorize E-Bikes in the Bike Park until further discussion with all parties involved and everyone is on the same page. Scott added that revising County code is a lengthy process so it's good to keep the momentum going on this issue. C. Cook inquired if we should reach out to Eagle City on this issue. Scott said that he could but that it wouldn't be until the first or second week in December as Boise City continues to move forward on their draft, just before the next Parks Board meeting.

RED HAWK TRAIL DEVELOPMENT:

Scott provided an update on Red Hawk. Scott walked the site and identified the potential trail alignments with David and Sam from Ridge to Rivers last Tuesday. This site visit included an evaluation of a proposed loop alignment off the existing Red Tail Trail provided by the Land Trust and Hidden Springs. It's not the best connection but it is feasible. There is also a potential alternate alignment currently being looked at between the upper and lower that is a more interesting connection from a geologic standpoint. It goes right through the slide area. The concern there is that we don't really know the wildlife displacement and what might occur there. We would like to get some additional input from Idaho Fish & Game to determine if this would be a good site for a trail. Scott is meeting with Hidden Springs, Land Trust and David on November 27th to summarize the site visit and determine if all parties remain on the same page. The proposed launch part of the loop that would head across the draw and north to connect with the Avimor trails was also evaluated during the site visit with David and Sam. A buildable alignment was identified but Scott isn't exactly sure where the alignment is situated compared to the existing corridor conservation easement on that portion of County property. There is also a trail easement in place, but it's not in the best location on site. There are a lot of deer that use this draw and it remains complicated but if, after consultation with IDFG, this alignment seems appropriate the intent is to get the loop flagged this fall and possibly build in the spring.

To make an 80 acre BLM parcel potentially available as a connection near this location, we have coordinated with David and he is currently working with BLM to include this as part of a wider NEPA process for other parcels in the Foothills.

M. Suderman requested that Scott bring up this property on Google Earth for the next meeting.

C. Cook inquired if placing a bridge in the narrow section with the gully would be beneficial. S.

Koberg responded that it hasn't been considered as an alternative. Scott thinks it's doable to get down and across. The key factor now is the conservation easement and the wildlife in the area to get around the property.

MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL SPEEDS:

C. Cook has concerns about the blind corners on some of the Ridge to Rivers trails. He mentioned that in the past they have added rocks to Peggy's Trail to slow riders down, but it's just not enough to physically slow people down. He foresees more conflict in the future if we don't take a more proactive approach. Recently, with Dry Creek, Ridge to Rivers put in bridges and fixed the erosion on the trail. By fixing the erosion, that has increased the speeds on the trail in blind corners. M. Suderman inquired if C. Cook has had many close calls on the trail. C. Cook responded that Peggy's is the one he rides the most, and he is always paranoid about those corners and he doesn't see people slowing down for them. J. Keller added that the rocks that were placed would not slow down a decent rider. He has the same feeling about these blind corners as Chris. M. Suderman commented that he has heard from people he rides with that other riders go out and move the rocks so they can go faster. Scott suggested that the Advisory Board consolidate their comments and email them to him. He will then forward them on to David and request feedback. C. Cook said he would get some photos from Peggy's before the next meeting.

OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS COORDINATOR POSITION:

Phone interviews were done and 3 candidates were selected for in person interviews. One was conducted via Skype because of the location of the candidate. From the 3, the position was offered to Mike Edwards who is the former President of SWIMBA. His start date will be December 12th. He will be at the next Parks Board meeting on December 13th. He will be caught up to speed on several objectives as soon as he starts and will be deployed on specific, high priority items that are offsite. He comes to us from DEQ. His leadership in trail building and trail maintenance in SWIMBA were key factors in his hiring.

ADJOURNMENT

C. Cook adjourned the meeting at 1:34 p.m.