

MEETING MINUTES

Parks, Open Space and Trails Advisory Board – December 14, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Miller, Kari Kostka, Hilarie Engle, Eric Plotkin, Chuck Vertrees

ABSENT: Helen Carter, Emily Reaves

STAFF PRESENT: Scott Koberg, Candy Hahlbeck, Brent Moore, Davey Brown, Commissioner Ryan Davidson

OTHERS: David Gordon (Boise City Parks)

INTRODUCTION:

K. Kostka called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

No conflicts of interest were declared by Advisory Board members. C. Vertrees moved to approve the November 16th minutes. H. Engle seconded. Motion passed.

RIDGE TO RIVERS TRAIL PROGRAM UPDATE:

David Gordon showed the group the Ridge to Rivers interactive map. A QR code will be added to signs. This will take users to the interactive map. Currently, the Ridge to Rivers map averages 200 views a day. After the press release it shot up to 1000 views per day. It is now back to 350-400 views per day. S. Koberg commented that Park & Waterways contributes financially to Ridge to Rivers each year and are looking to contribute more next fiscal year. S. Koberg added that we are looking for ways Davey can collaborate with David's crew to assist with Seaman Gulch Trailhead maintenance, and we brought Ada County IT to the partnership to create and administer the interactive map. We are trying to do everything we can to make things better and easier for David and the Ridge to Rivers partnership where we can. Two new trails that opened this summer are Hawkins Loop and Harrow Trail. The Hawkins Loop is 5.7 miles. The Harrow Trail is half a mile. Both are directional trails. These trails are closed seasonally for wintering wildlife until May 1st. K. Kostka inquired how trail condition information is gathered. D. Gordon responded that his crew goes out and checks trails. Photos and information are required by whoever goes out to look at trail conditions. E. Plotkin inquired if there are any filter options for the map. D. Gordon responded that there are and showed how to access this. E. Plotkin inquired if there was an opportunity to use the trail counter data to let users know how busy the area is. D. Gordon thinks this would be easy to put out a general statement based on this data. The group then looked at the NICA practice schedule that is on the website. E. Plotkin inquired if there was an opportunity for crowd sourcing. D. Gordon responded that years ago the original idea was to get people to give them information. The opportunity is there via Facebook, but it's never caught on. They probably won't take it any further than that. K. Kostka commented that the County has been better at posting conditions at the Bike Park. She wondered if there was any shared or linking to Ridge to Rivers. S. Koberg responded not really conditions wise. D. Gordon added that there are only 4 people on their team so they can't really cover out there.

Next year planning includes making the Grove Trail into a small loop that will be handicapped accessible. They also plan to cut 250-300 yards of trail and tie into Redwing Blackbird.

Larger projects that have been on the book are still on the books. This is because they are on BLM land and they are tied up in the NEPA process. K. Kostka inquired what area this was in. D. Gordon responded that one of the trails was going to be called the Curlew Connection. This would connect Watchman Trail over to Trail 6 and Fat Tire. The other trail that was tied in would be the Eighth Street Extension Trail. E. Plotkin inquired how the direction rules were working. D. Gordon responded that he has far less complaints than in the past because this is providing a downhill bike experience.

K. Kostka asked D. Gordon to speak to E-Bikes on the Ridge to Rivers Trail System. D. Gordon responded that Boise City has done what they can to provide E-Bike opportunities. If you have an accessibility need you can get a sticker. There is a list of trails you can ride on with that sticker. These

trails had to be on City property. Ada County provides E-Bike opportunities at the Bike Park. The rest of the trails would either be partially on City or partially on County and largely on BLM, Forest Service, or private land. All private easements say non motorized. E-Bikes are still considered a motorized vehicle by both federal agencies. C. Miller inquired about erosion on trails. D. Gordon responded that the erosion you would see is related to bikes due to heavy braking. Heavier bikes combined with lack of experience going downhill create erosion.

SUBCOMITTEE REPORTS:

C. Miller supplied an update. At the last meeting, it was mentioned that an Eagle High Bike Team member was killed in an accident. The Team is trying to get trail connectivity from Avimor to Hidden Springs and Hidden Springs to Bike Park. S. Koberg and C. Miller met with the team last week. This was an information gathering meeting. They talked about efforts that existed in the past and roadblocks. The biggest roadblock currently is Boise Hunter Homes. The Eagle Bike Team is starting to develop a strategy for how they would like to approach Boise Hunter Homes to start the process. He anticipates, at some point, trying and put pressure on Boise Hunter Homes from a larger public standpoint. S. Koberg added that a trail connection between Avimor and the Bike Park is something that has been contemplated for years but really decades in the larger picture. Dry Creek Ranch is the missing puzzle piece. Development Services has a lot of involvement in this. The question remains, how do we pull the right lever during the community phasing and development to prioritize the trail connection external to Dry Creek Ranch that is as important to building homes and schools. The Eagle Bike Team was seeking a meeting with Boise Hunter Homes. R. Davidson added that the Commissioners can always bring concerns from the Advisory Board to the developers because of the working relationship they have. R. Davidson went on to ask if it would be appropriate to name a trail after the young man who passed. S. Koberg responded that this has been passed on to the City of Eagle as there has been a request for a USGS marker with his name at the top of the hill. Memorials tend to become an issue over time but there is a maintained area at the Bike Park that may be more appropriate for that. As for the trail name, we have steered clear of that because of the number of requests we get. However, this is not a Ridge to Rivers trail connection. This may be a potential down the line. C. Miller inquired if there was any kind of motivation to finish this road since the settling ponds were put in. He wondered if the easy first step would be to have them deed or get an easement for just this section of the road. S. Koberg responded that the tricky thing is that this is in a preliminary plat for homes. This road will be an ACHD road at some point. Some form of a legal agreement that allows this road to be used would be in order. K. Kostka added that if it would be helpful for this Board to help influence or advocate for some of these things to happen, its something they could do. C. Vertrees inquired if there was an easement from Dry Creek to the Bike Park from the Developer. S. Koberg responded that there isn't a signed easement. He intends to talk to them about getting a second opinion about an existing proposed trail alignment between the Bike Park and Dry Creek Ranch. He thinks we would benefit from a second option. B. Moore went on to speak on this as well saying that they have had a lot of meetings with Boise Hunter Homes trying to get other trails punched through. They have learned that the next time they do a major development like this to get trail connection more solidified and get the language tighter. He went on to say it's been frustrating, but a lesson learned.

GREENBELT SAFETY: H. Engle reported that her and E. Reaves are working on Greenbelt/E-Bike safety. They think it would help to have a visual to put on Next Door and Facebook and to send out to the neighborhood association. Possibly even something on social media. She went on to say we would like to create a social media campaign about do's and dont's on the Greenbelt. Perhaps a campaign like Ridge to Rivers Happy Trails. Also, perhaps working with the Boise City in slow zones on a weekend with volunteers. K. Kostka likes these ideas and perhaps they could be packaged into something that could be provided to the Commissioners and Boise for a broader conversation around Greenbelt usage and safety. The parties went on to discuss this.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

S. Koberg reported on the Master Plan. He provided everyone with the Master Plan update document. There are 7 different phases and 13 different deliverables. The Board will be involved and engaged with this process. He expects to have a signed contract for the OBM on December 20th. This will start in January and conclude in March 2024.

PROGRAM & EDUCATION SPECIALIST REPORT:

No Report.

OTHER ITEMS:

D. Brown has been focusing on dialing things in and figuring things out at the Bike Park. He's done some improvements in Columbia Village where the entrance to the Oregon Trail is. He is still waiting to finish the BLM loop. The reject sand that is being used there is working great. C. Miller inquired about the trail mix that is being used on a new vertical trail built by Ridge to Rivers. He asked if this is just a trial run or if they are using a different product. S. Koberg responded saying that was the reason behind the site visit that was scheduled with David Gordon. We use a particular mix, but he wants to get everyone on a demo to discuss what everyone uses for their all-weather trails and to try and get everyone on the type of mix. S. Koberg invited Board members to be involved. C. Vertrees talked about the all-weather trail they just did this past spring. He said he would be interested in being involved in the discussion about trail mix that others have used.

E. Plotkin inquired about the dirt road at Pikes Peak, Colorado. The erosion of the gravel they put down ended up clogging up streams and destroying habitat. We are dealing with a similar situation, but is there any concern that it could clog up waterways? S. Koberg responded that the Ridge to Rivers program was created with this multi-jurisdiction partnership because of the interest in protecting the natural resources in the Foothills in light of trail design and the interest in the public for the public to recreate. There is always that natural resource component or conservation ethic in the background.

ADJOURNMENT

K. Kostka adjourned the meeting at 1:33 p.m.