

MINUTES OF MEETING

Parks, Open Space and Trails Advisory Board – July 28, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kari Kostka, Chris Miller, Hilarie Engle, Chuck Vertrees, Emily Reaves, Helen Carter

ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Scott Koberg, Mike Edwards, Candy Hahlbeck

OTHER: Brent Moore (Development Services)

INTRODUCTION:

K. Kostka called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. No conflicts of interest were declared by Advisory Board members. C. Vertrees moved to approve the April 28th minutes. H. Carter seconded. Motion passed.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

No reports.

C. Miller suggested that the Bike Park Subcommittee meet with M. Edwards to discuss next steps. M. Edwards is open to this.

MURGOITIO PARK:

Murgoitio Park-The Board received outreach from The Friends of Murgoitio Park asking the Board to consider engaging. K. Kostka inquired from B. Moore as to how the County has engaged. B. Moore went on to say that the plan was to put in a regional park in this location. The City of Boise was looking into doing a land swap with Harris Ranch in the Foothills that was dedicated to the city. Then they let the owners of Harris Ranch develop the majority of this park with housing. The neighbors didn't like this as they had seen the plans for the regional park. The city ended up dropping this deal because they found out the value of the land in Foothills wasn't equal to the land they were giving Harris Ranch. With the public opposition, the city council decided they wanted to drop it. K. Kostka added that this part of town isn't in city limits. They have tried to annex it a few times but there has been push back. B. Moore went on to say that the city has been collecting impact fees in the southwest area, but this money has been going to other parks in the incorporated part of the city. The city wants to put a hold on it for now. K. Kostka inquired if there is a role for the county in this? B. Moore responded that Boise owns this land that's in unincorporated Ada County. Do we work with the city to find a way to get park space here? C. Miller inquired if we should create a standard response if contacted again. He didn't feel qualified to respond. He would like to refrain from saying its not the County's responsibility. S. Koberg responded that comments should be directed to the County Commissioners.

OPEN SPACE & TRAILS:

M. Edwards updated the Board on his activities.

Oregon Trail-Install signage including kiosks and maps, address easement/trespass issues with BLM, City of Boise and Wagon View HOA and Work with BLM on EA for trail re-route and trail armoring.

Hubbard- Write Hubbard Reservoir Park Improvement Plan, work with Idaho Department of Lands on lease agreement and proposed improvements. Annual Maintenance includes fix drainage issues near parking lot culvert, remove debris and Russian Olive trees, annual grass trimming around parking lot and trails and if time allows use the Bobcat to re-establish narrow lumpy trails

Bike Park-Clean drains following rain events until ground freezes, Summer trail maintained on Flow, Storm'n Mormon, Shake'n Bake-rebuild berms and landings, fix cupping on Twisted Sister and Junk Yard, Rabbit Run and Treasure Valley Traverse and fix fencing-build and remove as needed.

Dry Creek Ranch- Continue working on trail easement and write RTP grant to pay for trail development.

Dry Creek has submitted another update plat for the south side of Dry Creek/Cartwright Rd. The updated version includes building only the portion of the regional trail that is part of the construction area. We still have not received an easement for the regional trail connection Dry Creek with Ada/Eagle Bike Park.

Echanove-Treat pathway with herbicide to kill grass, harden trail way near irrigation pond with gravel to prevent muddy trail conditions and build fence and gate on east end of trail.

E. Reaves inquired if all the work he has done this summer would be shared with the public. M. Edwards responded that he posts a lot of what he does on social media.

OTHER ITEMS:

Brandy Wilson will present at our August meeting to discuss Barber Pool. After that K. Kostka is hopeful we can do some outdoor tours. She went on to mention if H. Engle knew anyone that would be willing to talk to us that is with the WMA. H. Engle has someone in mind that can come to a meeting. H. Carter inquired what the WMA was. H. Engle responded that it is the Boise River Wildlife Management Area that starts at Harris Ranch and goes over to Highway 21 and beyond. K. Kostka went on to say that the Foothill are included that are managed by Fish and Game as a Wildlife Management Area. As well as a lot of trail systems that interconnect. H. Engle added that the first management goal is to be managed for wildlife. With all the people moving in, they don't understand that.

H. Carter added if there was someone that was going to come out from the Nature Conservancy. K. Kostka plans to speak with Dusty Perkins about coming out to a Parks Board meeting.

C. Miller inquired if someone from the DEQ that would make sense to learn from. He went on to say that when Eric Grace visited us, he talked about how the Land Trust was moving into looking at land for agriculture. The DEQ has a lot of programs associated with soil and land conservation. He wondered if there was a tie in as it applies to the Land Trust trying to acquire land in Ada County for that purpose. Could we be better informed to understand this process? K. Kostka responded that her and S. Koberg could give this some thought and maybe come up with someone that could come out to a meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

S. Koberg supplied an update.

Since our last meeting we have launched the annual Boise River Float Season and submitted our budget that was approved by the Board of Commissioners. The budget included areas 5 and 6 of the master site plan for Barber Park. This is also a candidate for ARPA funds, so we may have some budget savings using ARPA for that. We may potentially use ARPA funds for the Sunroc Greenbelt since we didn't take on that project this year.

In the budget request, S. Koberg request a Trail Crew Maintenance Foreman that was approved. We also asked for and were approved for an Education and Outreach Specialist. This person will pick up some of the social media and integrate some programming for schools at Barber Park.

Parking has been an issue at trailheads. There isn't enough parking for people who want to do these activities. This will be an ongoing discussion.

Seasonal staffing has also been an issue. According to the HR Director, there are people that aren't applying but there are also people who have removed themselves from the workforce. It has been stressful being shorthanded and the public visitors are not being as respectful as we are used to.

Last year in Barber Park we were at a 516 vehicle daily average with a weekend daily average of 766 vehicles. These numbers were up 28% from 2019. So far this year we are at 570 vehicles daily. Weekends are at 936 vehicles. In the past, we didn't start parking in the overflow parking field until 11:15AM. This year we have started parking in the field at 10AM on many days. We are also parking in the overflow field almost every day.

The plaza is working out well. We are seeing people spreading out and the pathways are great. E. Reaves commented about the air pumps on social media. She inquired if the Board could help with the message. S. Koberg responded that Commissioner Beck was here on a busy day to float with his family. He was renting and there was an hour and a half wait for rental equipment. He got a firsthand look at how the float season works at Barber Park. Commissioner Kenyon also visited the park two weekends ago to see how it was working due to some outreach from the public. Both have been supportive. We will be calling ACHD to the table in an after-action report along with other partners. C. Miller inquired if there are parking restrictions at Ann Morrison. S. Koberg responded that they do have adequate parking. They were able to implement a couple drop off areas near the shuttle. S. Koberg suggested that Boise City possibly run an internal shuttle to get people where they need to be. They haven't adopted this suggestion this season.

S. Koberg added that there are 3 applicants for the vacant Parks Board member position. They are looking to close the position this weekend. He urged if Board Members know anyone that is interested to please apply. It is unclear how interviews will be conducted by the Board of County Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT

K. Kostka adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m. S. Koberg and the Advisory Board toured the new Barber Park Plaza.