

MINUTES
OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS BOARD
REGULAR SESSION
October 7, 2021
Zoom Video Conference

OSTB Present:

Graeme Means Dist. 1	Howie Mallory Dist. 2 <i>Not Present</i>	Amy Barrow Dist. 3	Michael Kinsley Dist. 4, Chair	Wayne Ives Dist. 5
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Staff Present: Gary Tennenbaum, Jessie Young, Liza Mitchell, Paul Holsinger, Carly Klein, Kim Arensdorf, Ted O'Brien, Dale Will, Richard Neiley, Connie Baker

BOCC Present: Greg Poschman

Others Present: Tim McFlynn, Chris Peterson, Mike Maple, Mike Pritchard

Michael Kinsley called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike Maple commented on having issues with accessing the Open Space and Trails Board Meeting Agendas online. Gary Tennenbaum stated that the County is working on improving that on the website.

Maple remarked that the ebikes, specifically Class II ebikes, are becoming a huge issue on trails. He observed that ebike use is degrading the biking experience and safety issues. There should be more attempts from the County to regulate ebikes and at speed control, Maple said.

Maple commented on the Sky Mountain Park Management Plan, recommending that OST look into adding a single track trail along Brush Creek that would connect Ditchline Trail to Cozyline Trail, on existing public lands. It would be a great addition to Sky Mountain Park and create a loop trail option, Maple said. He encouraged a more proactive wildlife review and action plan to create this trail. Tennenbaum recommended that Maple make an official comment to the Sky Mountain Park Management Plan update, which is still open for public comment. Tennenbaum noted that it is not just wildlife that needs to be looked at, there is also private land in that area that would need to be taken into consideration as well.

Mike Pritchard provided Roaring Fork Mountain Bike Association support for the Sky Mountain Park Management Plan's recreation action item to "monitor the potential to provide a single track connection from Ditchline Trail to Cozyline Trail".

Tim McFlynn commented on the Emma Townsite future building use. After speaking with Harper Kauffman, owner of Two Roots Farm and Emma Open Space agriculture leasee, he recommended utilizing the buildings for agriculture cold and dry storage. McFlynn stated that it would be a great resource for all agriculture producers in the valley. Tennenbaum explained that currently there is an incoming proposal from non-profit/food bank groups to utilize the Emma

Townsite buildings to grow the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program and a distribution hub. He stated that this will be discussed with the Emma Townsite Steering Committee, the Emma Caucus, the Board and public in the future.

Tim McFlynn & Mike Maple left at 9:30 a.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Amy Barrow moved for the OSTB to approve the 09/07/2021 OSTB & BOCC Joint Meeting for Regular & Executive Session Minutes. Wayne Ives seconded. Motion passed (4-0).

Open Space and Trails 2022 Budget

Tennenbaum explained that the main part of the OST budget is comprised from the work plan and acquisitions. He noted that in the past couple years OST has adopted a lot of Management Plans with extensive action items, with those projects staff capacity needs to be considered. There are three potential positions for 2022 that will help the program. With the significant increase in recreation, OST will be focused on defining its role in recreation management, which will be discussed in the OSTB retreat, Tennenbaum said.

Tennenbaum provided the OST fund balance projections, which depicts the tax revenue allocations within the Administration, Acquisitions and Improvements, Trails Acquisitions and Construction, and Maintenance funds within the OST program. Michael Kinsley asked about the potential implications of the upcoming City of Aspen ballot question. Connie Baker explained that the state passed a measure to reduce the residential assessment rate, which has slightly reduced property tax. The question on the ballot for November could further reduce the residential assessment rate, she said.

Tennenbaum reviewed the five year plan and 2022 budget summary. Graeme Means asked about contingencies with regards to trail and maintenance construction costs. Tennenbaum explained that OST does include contingency costs with major projects. Specifically with the Aspen Village Bridge Connection project, the contract will have 15-20% contingency. He noted that there has been issues with finding contractors with the increase in demand. Staff will come back to the Board for approval if the costs end up being a lot higher than planned, Tennenbaum said.

Tennenbaum provided the 2022 budget change requests:

- **Agriculture Specialist** – Tennenbaum explained that currently Paul Holsinger's position is split between Agriculture and Conservation Easements. There is potential to partner with Colorado State University (CSU) as an extension agent. Holsinger stated that the Agriculture program has grown and adapted, therefore there is an increasing need for a specialist in agriculture management to expand food production. Amy Barrow asked what additional costs would be if this position is not split with CSU. Holsinger stated that regardless of whether we have funding from CSU, this position will be needed for the educational piece for the greater public.
- **Diversity Coordinator** – Tennenbaum explained that this position will be shared with Aspen Valley Land Trust (AVLT). The position will provide public outreach to extend out to the vast

public, he said. Barrow noted that this position would be a great way to branch out with other organizations and include diversity.

- Additional Forest Protection Officer (FPO) – Tennenbaum explained that current FPO position has only been able to provide limited coverage at Wildwood, due to enforcement needs in other locations. This new position will help with additional coverage, he said. Means asked what properties would be covered by this position. Tennenbaum stated that coverage would include Wildwood, Smuggler & Hunter Creek, and up Independence Pass. Wayne Ives asked if housing issues are being considered. Tennenbaum stated that the Forest Services has some housing opportunities and partner with Aspen Center for Environmental Studies (ACES).

Kinsley commented that these positions respond to major changes and growth in the County.

Jessie Young provided details on three areas of the work plan, which include planning, implementation and outreach. The Management Plans that are to be updated in 2022 include Smuggler (in partnership with City of Aspen), and the Forest Management Plan, which will provide OST inventory and health assessments. She noted that the Deer Creek Management Plan is in its beginning phases and the remaining budget for 2021 will be carried forward to next year.

Young provided additional 2022 implementation planning items for the budget:

- Frying Pan Stagecoach Trail
- Emma Townsite
- Brush Creek Park and Ride to Aspen Airport Business Center (AABC) Trail feasibility
- Rio Grande Trail Interpretation Plan, design for the interpretive panels
- Node Plan – Interpretive Nodes (under Resource Management budget)
- Aspen Village Bridge connection
- Redstone Park Construction, this will be brought back to the Board for approval
- Hunter Creek Prescribed Burn
- Deer Creek Management Plan actions

Means asked about the justification for Redstone Park improvements. Tennenbaum noted that OST will request to utilize the County's park dedication fees. Additionally, Redstone Park was adopted by OST from the General Fund, he said.

Liza Mitchell provided details on the Natural Resource management and project planning:

- Administration - ecological consultant services and data management
- Thompson Creek Open Space riparian habitat enhancements
- Glassier habitat improvements
- Sky Mountain Park Plan implementation
- Filoha riparian restoration
- North Star ecological enhancements
- Annual stewardship and monitoring
- Wildlife monitoring at Filoha
- Aspen Global Change Institute soil monitoring

Young explained that the continued and rise of new recreationalist on OST properties has increased the need for outreach and education. She provided the following 2022 projects and partnerships:

- Ebike outreach
- Signage
- North Star user outreach
- Pitkin Outside Website revamp and app transition to address issues and make the interface more user friendly
- ACES & RFC partnership for educational tours
- Education campaign in partnership with CPW

Ted O'Brien provided the Resource and Trails Management projects and annual maintenance:

- Wingo Roaring Fork River Bridge pier repairs (costs will be split 50/50 with RFTA)
- Rio Grande Trail capitol improvement project to rebuild the trail platform
- Stein Bridge Repair and Maintenance
- Sky Mountain Park Airline/Take-off Trail to assist with directional use. This will need board approval of the Sky Mountain Park Management Plan at the November meeting.
- Thompson Creek Open Space Crystal River embankment maintenance project. This project will add reinforcement before erosion becomes an issue.
- Rio Grande Trail Node Plan to complete all the interpretive nodes
- Redstone Park update construction project
- Crack sealing of paved trails and soft surface maintenance
- Noxious weed control

Means expressed the need to look at improving or adding hiking trails and connections at Sky Mountain Park. Staff should also look into partner funding for the Airline/Take-off Trail, he said.

Holsinger explained that the biggest 2022 project for Agriculture and Conservation Easements is the Glassier irrigation improvements. The improvements will expand the productive area by approximately 30 acres. He noted that Home Supply feeds into the system. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Basin Roundtable will assist with project funding, Holsinger said.

Means asked if the irrigation system will affect the water rights. Holsinger said it would not affect the water rights as staff will work with OST's ecological consultants to create a system to maintain the flood irrigation.

Tennenbaum provided the Nordic ski operation budget forecast which runs through the City of Aspen. He noted that the Down-valley cat is 20 years old and needs replacement. The old cat is recommended to be donated to the Mount Sopris Nordic Council, he said.

Kinsley asked why the old cat cannot be continued to be used if it's available to donate. Chris Petersen, City of Aspen, stated that the old cat cost \$8-\$10k in repairs plus employee hours each

year to maintain. The trade in value is only \$15k, therefore it would be a better benefit to Mount Sopris Nordic Council, Petersen said.

Kinsley asked if the new cat helps to reduce the carbon footprint. Petersen stated that unfortunately the current technology with electric cats hasn't been developed enough, however the new cats do operate as efficiently as possible. Tennenbaum noted that staff could come up with a policy for climate change reductions and measure successes similar to OST's biodiversity policy.

Barrow noted her appreciation for the donation to Mount Sopris Nordic Council.

Board action below.

BOARD AND STAFF COMMENTS

Kinsley asked for clarification on current ebike issues. Tennenbaum stated that staff will be reviewing the ebike policy with the City of Aspen and determine next steps.

BOARD ACTION

Open Space and Trails 2022 Budget

Graeme Means motioned to approve the Open Space and Trails 2022 budget. Wayne Ives seconded. Motion passed (4-0).

Pride of Aspen Mining Claim Conservation Easement

Amy Barrow motioned for the Open Space and Trails Board to support the City of Aspen Ballot question authorizing the conveyance of 4,000 sq. ft. for the City of Aspen and Pitkin County acquisition of a 19 acre conservation easement which includes public access on Shadow Mountain. Wayne Ives seconded. Motion passed (4-0).

ADJOURN

The OSTB meeting of October, 2021 adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Approved:

Attest:

Michael Kinsley

Michael Kinsley, Chair
Pitkin County Open Space & Trails Board

Kim Arensdorf

Kimberly Arensdorf
Pitkin County Open Space & Trails
Administrative Specialist

Signature: *Michael Kinsley*

Email: michaeljkinsley@gmail.com

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2021.10.07 OSTB Regular Minutes_Aproved

Final Audit Report

2021-11-04

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