



**CITY OF MANITOU SPRINGS
OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
Regular Meeting Minutes
Remote Meeting via Zoom
March 24, 2025

A. CALL TO ORDER & ANNOUNCEMENT OF MEMBER OPENINGS

Chair Beeson called the Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) meeting to order at 6:23 PM.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT FOR ROLL CALL:

Chair Tim Beeson
Committee Member Judy Carnick
Committee Member Sheryl Cline
Committee Member Robin Kovats
Committee Member Andrea Sutela
Alternate Committee Member Paul Arlinghaus
Alternate Committee Member Nancy Wilson

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT FOR ROLL CALL:

Vice Chair David Conley
Committee Member Anthony Maltese

1. One opening for alternate

Chair Beeson noted that there is one alternate position on the board that is vacant.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Draft minutes of December 9, 2024 OSAC Meeting (5 minutes)

Committee Member Carnick moved to approve the December 9, 2024 OSAC Minutes. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Sutela. The motion carried (6-0) with Committee Member Wilson abstaining.

2. Draft minutes of January 27, 2025 OSAC meeting (5 minutes)

Committee Member Wilson moved to approve the minutes with a correction to Committee Member Carnick's name on page 9. The motion carried (6-0) with Committee Member Cline abstaining.

3. Draft minutes of February 24, 2025 OSAC meeting (5 minutes)

Chair Beeson suggested edits to correct clerical errors in the minutes, including changing the word spend to send on page 12, the word assent to approved on page 13,

and wildcats to trail cats under item 3A. He added that the motion count on page 13 was incorrect and should state five to zero, as there were only five members present.

Committee Member Kovats moved to approve the minutes as amended to include changes suggested by Chair Beeson. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Sutela. The motion was carried (5-0) with Committee Members Cline and Wilson abstaining.

C. AGENDA REVIEW AND PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There was no public comment.

D. REPORTS

1. PARAB (Parks and Recreation Advisory Board)
 - a. Approved Minutes for PARAB October 28, 2024 meeting
 - b. Approved Minutes for PARAB November 11, 2024 Meeting
 - c. Approved Minutes for PARAB December 02, 2024 Meeting
 - d. Approved Minutes for PARAB January 13, 2025 Meeting

Chair Beeson commented on the minutes and noted there appears to be a park area near the trail at Overlook Park. He added that he plans to visit the site as well as Higginbotham Flats, where he observed good progress on current projects.

E. OLD BUSINESS

1. Black Canyon Open Space (David)
 - a. Next Steps (David, 5–10 minutes)

Chair Beeson noted that Vice Chair Conley had some updates on the Black Canyon Open Space, but was unable to attend the meeting.

2. Bill Bauer Trail Development (Andrea, Robin)
 - a. Casandra Hessel's email on survey next steps (Tim, 5 – 15 minutes) (This will require one or more votes.)

Chair Beeson explained that the committee had previously discussed conducting site visits to the properties and that a related question was sent to the Public Information Officer (PIO), Cassandra Hessel, regarding survey distribution options.

Committee Member Kovats suggested that the option to run an ad in the Pikes Peak Bulletin (PPB) might be a good idea.

Chair Beeson noted that the PIO requested information on when to start running the survey and for how long as well. Based on PIO Hessel's recommendation to run the survey for at least two weeks, he suggested three weeks. He stated that they could start the survey as early as the next day.

Committee Member Carnick questioned if there was any reason to rush the survey.

Committee Member Wilson expressed support for the survey, but suggested that more research may be needed before circulating, including the cost of running an add in PPB.

Chair Beeson reminded the committee that the survey questions had already been reviewed and voted on, and that OSAC needs to determine how to distribute the survey. Chair Beeson reported that he spoke again with Larry Rose, who remains committed to completing the project. If subdivision of his property is not possible, Mr. Rose may propose establishing a trail easement instead. Chair Beeson noted that an easement will likely take several more months and indicated there is no urgency to continue discussion at this time.

Committee Member Kovats asked about the typical response rate to surveys posted on the city website and emphasized the importance of ensuring nearby residents are notified and encouraged to respond.

Chair Beeson commented that one opinion may be that while nearby residents' opinions are important, the property belongs to the City, not just those living along the canyon.

Committee Member Kovats noted that if nearby residents oppose the trail while the broader community support it, the committee could face conflicting opinions.

Committee Member Cline cautioned that soliciting input without considering it could be problematic.

Committee Member Carnick observed that responses may be limited mainly to nearby residents, as those not directly affected often choose not to engage.

Chair Beeson explained that the survey will be distributed citywide but can also target individuals with a significant interest in the property. He emphasized the importance of notifying nearby residents, particularly those along the canyon and the three community members who had previously expressed interest. He suggested that direct outreach, such as delivering flyers to the approximately 36 neighboring households, would be manageable and appropriate.

The consensus was that the committee would discuss the survey at the April meeting.

3. Existing Trails Development (Andrea, David)

- a. Washout section at switchback above Wildcat Gulch (Andrea, 5 minutes)

Committee Member Sutela shared that Director Rossi and Vice Chair Conley are working on the Wildcat Gulch project. She added that she will be meeting with them in the next week to talk about maintenance projects for the upcoming season.

- b. Signage on Creek Walk and Old Intemann Trail (Billy Richard in lieu of Gillian) (5 minutes)

Senior Parks Maintenance Worker and Horticulturalist, Billy Richard shared that the project is temporally delayed due to staffing issues. He added that an order has been placed with Rock Art Industries for carsonite posts and decals for the Intemann Trail, Iron Mountain Trail and Red Mountain Trail. Prior to ordering, staff did produce eight signs that are planned for installation in April.

4. Planning Department

- a. New Open Space Properties and Interactive Map (Tim, 5 minutes)

Chair Beeson noted that 38 parcels were proposed to be zoned open space. He commented that while inspecting the sites, particularly for fire prevention issues, is worthwhile, OSAC alone lacks the expertise to address fire concerns, which should fall under the Manitou Springs Fire Department. He encouraged OSAC members to review and walk some of the parcels to become more familiar with their condition and needs. Chair Beeson suggested that one of the members could get in contact with the Fire Department.

Committee Member Arlinghaus suggested the committee consider a program to allow people to adopt open space parcels to help with invasive control or fire mitigation, noting a small parcel behind his home.

Committee Member Sutela noted that there is a current program to adopt a trail or open space. She added that she is not sure what the program entails.

Committee Member Kovats stated that she believes the program focuses on trash cleanup and weeding in parks and along trails. She added that including open space and potentially fire mitigation would be new and expressed support for the idea.

Committee Member Arlinghaus shared that he had adopted the Iron Mountain Trail and offered to research what would go into the process of potentially adopting open space.

Committee Member Wilson also expressed support for an adopt open space program.

Chair Beeson shared concerns regarding the potential sale of a small piece of city-owned property behind a private residence. He noted that such a sale could create

political challenges and affect previous donors who contributed land to the city. He expressed support for an adopt open space program, noting it would be a more manageable approach.

Committee Member Carnick shared that she had recently spoken with Fire Lieutenant Mike Willie about the department's limited capacity to take on additional mitigation projects due to existing workload and large ongoing efforts. She suggested that, rather than having individuals request site visits, the Fire Department could develop a public guide or pamphlet on fire mitigation practices. She noted that such a resource could help reduce demand on the Fire Department while still providing residents with helpful information.

Chair Beeson commented that developing a public pamphlet may not be appropriate, as decisions about vegetation removal and mitigation require professional assessment and oversight.

Committee Member Carnick acknowledged that the Fire Department may not have time to assess small properties and confirmed that they will assess Black Canyon.

Committee Member Wilson stated that she believes similar materials already exist, such as brochures on protecting homes from fire, which could also apply to open space areas. She suggested checking with the Fire Department to see if existing resources could be used or adapted for Manitou Springs. She noted that residents living next to open space areas have a shared responsibility to help with mitigation.

Committee Member Carnick volunteered to reach out to Lieutenant Willie and suggested that the open space program could be called "Adopt a Plot".

Council Liaison Judith Chandler expressed support for the proposed project, noting that the Fire Department has already mapped fire risk levels for properties in Manitou Springs. She suggested starting with open space parcels near the highest-risk areas and expanding from there. She stated that the City would likely support the effort and encouraged collaboration with groups such as Pikes Peak Permaculture and the Manitou Springs Garden Club to help recruit volunteers. She also reminded the committee that all open space parcels are City-owned and that any mitigation work would need City and Fire Department review and approval. She added that tracking and documenting completed mitigation efforts could further strengthen the program.

There was further discussion about the interactive parcel map, during which Committee Member Arlinghaus commented that he would have liked to see a map showing all open space parcels, not only those proposed for zoning changes.

5. Directors Comments (Billy Richard in lieu of Gillian) (5-15 minutes)

Senior Parks Staff Richard reported on the following:

- Lieutenant Willie confirmed that fire mitigation in the Black Canyon Open Space does not need to precede trail construction.
- There are new staff members in the Parks and Recreation Department, including Senior Parks Staff Richard, another Parks Maintenance Worker, and a Cemetery Caretaker. The department is in the process of hiring two seasonal parks technicians and the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Technician has accepted a new position elsewhere.
- The first reading for rezoning City parcels is on April 1, 2025.

F. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There was no discussion about future agenda items.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Committee Member Cline moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Wilson. The motion was carried (7-0).

The meeting adjourned at 7:12 PM.

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