



**CITY OF MANITOU SPRINGS
OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
Regular Meeting Minutes
Hybrid Meeting in Person and Remote
606 Manitou Avenue,
Manitou Springs, CO 80829
February 23, 2026

A. CALL TO ORDER & ANNOUNCEMENT OF MEMBER OPENINGS

Chair Conley called the Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

1. There is one opening for one alternate member. OSAC has sent its recommendation to City Council concerning applicant Anthony Lane.

Chair Conley took roll and confirmed that all members and alternates were present. Council Member Carey Storm was also in attendance.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT FOR ROLL CALL:

Chair David Conley
Vice Chair Paul Arlinghaus
Committee Member Judy Carnick
Committee Member Sheryl Cline
Committee Member Robin Kovats
Committee Member Anthony Maltese
Committee Member Andrea Sutela
Alternate Committee Member Cassandra Bresnahan
Alternate Committee Member Marion Ceruzzi

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

Vice Chair Arlinghaus moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Kovats. The motion was carried (7-0).

Public comment from Cory Sutela with Medicine Wheel Trail Advocates about trail work partnerships.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Draft minutes of OSAC October 27, 2025 meeting
2. Draft minutes of OSAC November 17, 2025 meeting
3. Draft minutes of OSAC January 29, 2026 meeting

Committee Member Kovats moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Carnick. The motion was carried (7-0).

Director Rossi and Chair Conley discussed the process of generating meeting minutes, which involves multiple steps and review by different individuals. For now, the Committee will continue with this process.

D. REPORTS

1. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PARAB) Update

No discussion.

2. Director's Comments

- a. Funding request to support 4/4 VOC Trail Workday at Black Canyon Open Space

Director Rossi discussed the VOC Trail Workday on April 4th and asked the committee to consider contributing \$2000 in funding to support VOC's project costs. The Committee requested a breakdown of what the funding would be used for; Rossi will bring the breakdown to the March OSAC Meeting. Committee Member Carnick suggested they could raise additional funds through community donations and local businesses.

Director Rossi gave an update on a recent hike with Paul Arlinghaus, Manuel Pulido, and Mike Maio to a sacred site in Black Canyon Open Space (BCOS) to assess damage from vandalism. Maio is the President of the Manitou Springs Heritage Museum. Pulido is a representative of the local indigenous community. Rossi said that during the hike, Maio and Pulido suggested that OSAC and City revise the Black Canyon Master Plan to relocate the trail well away from the site. Rossi mentioned that she plans to discuss the concerns with Anna Cordova, Garden of the Gods Park Manager and former City of Colorado Springs Archeologist, and the Palmer Land Conservancy, the conservation easement holders for that section of the open space property. OSAC discussed potential signage options to protect the site while maintaining access for spiritual users.

E. OLD BUSINESS

1. Bill Bauers Open Space: Survey results presentation and discussion

Director Rossi shared a brief summary of the Bill Bauers Open Space community survey results. The survey showed majority support for a natural trail through the open space. The Committee also discussed the community's priorities highlighted in the survey, which showed that respondents value maintaining existing trails and open spaces more than acquiring new ones. They reviewed plans for addressing a difficult trail pinch point, acknowledging it would be a long-term project. The City Council will receive and discuss the survey results at a work session on March 10. Final direction from City Council will be issued on March 17th at the regular meeting.

2. Governing Protocols

a. Election of Officers for 2026

On a motion by Carnick and a second from Cline, the Committee unanimously confirmed its current officers, with David Conley retaining his position as Chair and Paul Arlinghaus as Vice Chair. The Committee did not vote on a secretary and agreed to continue using an AI tool to generate meeting minutes.

b. Confirm regular meeting dates as fourth Monday of each month

The committee confirmed their regular meeting dates as the fourth Monday of each month.

c. Review and Approve Standard Operating Procedures

The draft SOP had been issued at a previous meeting. The Committee discussed the approval of the OSAC standard operating procedures (SOP). The group discussed two modifications suggested by Carnick, including changing the submission timeline for agenda items to 6 days before meetings and ensuring minutes are prepared and published at least 4 days in advance. They also discussed updating and distributing current open space and trail maps to all members annually. On a motion by Kovats, seconded by Arlinghaus, the Committee unanimously approved the draft SOP with the two changes. Alternate Member Ceruzzi and Chair Conley agreed to insert the changes and submit the final SOP to the City Clerk.

3. Fire Mitigation Plans: review Council discussion from Feb. 10 Work Session (Judy)

Committee Member Carnick explained the city's two chipping programs and the upcoming neighborhood chipping schedule, which will be distributed to residents. The group also touched on the city's efforts to address fire hazards on vacant properties,

noting that while City Council previously declined to involve citizens in mitigating these properties, there is now a renewed focus on fire safety measures.

Carnick also shared that the fire department presented their fire mitigation plans at a previous City Council Work Session, which focused on updating sirens and discussed the need for a risk assessment of open spaces, which currently lacks vegetation data. They also reviewed the Black Canyon project, which was reduced to 14 mitigable acres at an estimated cost of \$60,000, and identified Red Mountain as the next priority area for mitigation. Carnick noted that the OSAC list of open space parcels would be shared with the Fire Department and Council.

The group discussed progress on fire mitigation efforts, noting that the city has identified two consultants but is still seeking a third to obtain competitive bids. Carnick presented a map created by their GIS technician showing numerous small open space parcels that require fire mitigation, and the group discussed the potential for involving citizens in mitigating these smaller parcels. They agreed that a work session would be helpful to develop strategies for addressing fire hazards in specific zones, with suggestions including creating a system where fire department personnel could assist residents with mitigation efforts on designated days.

The group discussed addressing community concerns about wildfire mitigation and tree removal in Manitou. They agreed to propose an "Adopt an Open Space" program similar to their Adopt-A-Park initiative, which would include a 4-hour fire department training for volunteers to safely remove dead brush from local open space parcels. Carnick and Director Rossi plan to meet with Fire Lieutenant Mike Willie to discuss the program details, and they will provide an update to OSAC at the March meeting or send a memo beforehand.

F. NEW BUSINESS

1. Trail Maintenance

- a. Discuss potential for 2026 contract with RMFI for one. Two or three weeks.

On a motion by Kovats, seconded by Cline, the Committee unanimously approved a motion to engage RMFI for three weeks of trail work in the fall, with a budget of \$26,000.

- b. Discuss project options for Pikes Peak Trail CATS 2026 Volunteer Workdays.

Arlinghaus discussed plans for volunteer workdays with Pikes Peak Trail Cats and Medicine Wheel. The group also addressed trail maintenance needs, particularly at Black Canyon and Red Mountain, and agreed to schedule monthly volunteer workdays this summer.

G. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Chair Conley identified the following items for the March meeting:

- El Paso County Trail staff will visit.
- Update on Bill Bauer survey and Council response.
- Update on communication with Walton family on West End Parcel access.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Committee Member Kovats moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Cline. The motion was carried (7-0).
The meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

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