

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes of November 1, 2023 Regular Meeting

OSAC MEMBERS PRESENT: Turk Montepare, Jeff Zimmerman, Paul Semmer, Dave Bittner, Arthur Hardin, John Taylor, Terry Craig, Bob Gregory, Meagan Graham, Peter Grosshuesch, Laura Rossetter,

OSAC MEMBERS ABSENT: John Uban

STAFF PRESENT: Katherine King, Jordan Mead, Jessica Forsyth

MEMBERS OF PUBLIC PRESENT: Cindy Ebbert – USFS, Kristi D’Agati – Town of Silverthorne, Alex Stach – Town of Breckenridge, Pete Swenson – Town of Frisco

Call to Order: Turk Montepare called the meeting of the Summit County Open Space Advisory Council to order at 5:31 p.m.

Approval of Agenda: Council members approved the agenda as submitted.

Approval of Minutes: The September 2023 OSAC minutes were passed unanimously.

Approval of Summary Report: Jordan Mead gave a recap of the Laurium Trailhead site visit with OSAC, BOSAC, and Breckenridge Town Council. The main concern from Town Council is encroachment into open space for parking lot expansion. Katherine added that staff plans to install a trailhead camera to track parking lot use. Paul Semmer added that the concern about encroachment should be more nuanced and evaluated as to how it impacts the historic resource behind the gate. Staff will continue to look at options over the winter.

Jordan Mead gave a recap of the parking improvements at Brown’s Gulch which are nearly finalized.

Council members approved the summary report as submitted.

Public Comments: Cindy Ebbert from the USFS provided OSAC with updates. The USFS is working on cleanup of the Burke-Martin mine and trash has been removed from the site. The Vail Pass Rest Stop parking lot has been completed, which will allow for winter parking there again this year. Summit County and USFS signed a lease for development of the Dillon Workforce Housing site. A new staff member has joined the Dillon Ranger District office, a posting for an interpretative ranger has been posted, a special projects coordinator has been hired, and the Deputy District Ranger position is still open.

REGULAR AGENDA:

Open Space Management:

Quandary Peak and McCullough Gulch Summer 2023 Recap

Katherine King gave an overview of the Quandary parking and summary report. Overall, staff has been pleased with the new contractor, SP Plus. This year parking prices increased by \$5, shuttle prices decreased, and locals could ride the shuttle for free. Free parking was available for shuttle riders at the south gondola lot. The overall contract cost was \$250,000, which was less than in previous years. This year the County took in \$173,000 in parking revenue and the Town of Breck offered a contribution as well. The total cost to the County for operating this program was \$27,500.

Utilization rate of the parking lot was approximately 90% and parking was more evenly distributed across more days of the week than in years past. There was a 150% increase in shuttle ridership, shuttle utilization rates increased from last year, and locals shuttle passes were up significantly. From survey feedback, parking lot users were less satisfied than shuttle users. 25% more people are hiking Quandary this year than last year.

OSAC was pleased with this overview and the reduction in overall cost to the County. OSAC asked about a "locals pass" at a reduced rate for the Quandary Parking Lot or reserving parking spaces for locals so they can go on a shorter hike from this trailhead. Katherine reminded OSAC that parking is free after 3pm. OSAC expressed concerns that the Lower McCullough Gulch Trailhead is starting to see more use. OSAC also discussed how to get ahead of other trailhead issues, such as the parking at Spruce Creek TH and along the road. OSAC asked about options for parking at McCullough Gulch Trailhead and staff responded that as of this point, the Sheriff has taken a hard line of no parking on County Roads. OSAC commented that the Quandary trailhead could be "cleaned up" meaning that survey boxes and kiosk could be consolidated in a more organized manner. OSAC was complimentary to staff's efforts managing the parking situation. OSAC did not have a concern with the cost of parking and stated people are starting to get used to the fact that parking at trailheads is now being managed and is not always free.

Executive Session to Discuss Acquisition of Real Property Interests: A motion was made by Dave Bitner and Art Hardin to enter into Executive Session. OSAC entered into Executive Session at 6:44 p.m.

John Taylor made a motion and Paul Semmer seconded to exit. OSAC left Executive Session at 7:01 p.m.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Paul Semmer referenced work being on plans for Royal Placer and Town of Blue River social trails that could complement the development of a management strategy.

Town of Dillon is having a trails open house tomorrow night (Nov. 2) at Town Hall. There was discussion of a meeting being needed between County, Town of Dillon, and the USFS.

A councilmember mentioned that Summit County may have originally contributed to funding for a plan for the area now discussed as the Frisco Backyard and that this past funding could be used as an opportunity for the County to be more involved in the planning process.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Forsyth

Jessica Forsyth, Open Space and Trails Senior Resource Specialist