

Cottonwood Heights City
MINUTES OF THE PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
May 24, 2023
2277 E Bengal Blvd., Room 124, Cottonwood Heights, UT

Present: Michael Menssen; Paula McFarland; Melissa Fields; Erin Davis; Sarah Ricketts; Chris Owens; Ronna Cohen; Zachary Geiger; Chelsey Voss; Jennifer Shah; and Jennifer Cottam.

Management & Staff: Michael Johnson, Cottonwood Heights (CH) City Community & Economic Development Director; Ben Hill, CHPRSA Executive Director

Public: None

Summary and Key Actions

- U.S. Forest Service employees offered an update on the BST expansion
 - Councilmember Ellen Birrell shared resources for promoting Active Transportation
 - PTOS Committee funds were designated to servicing trees at Golden Hills Park
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Welcome

Before calling the meeting to order, Paula McFarland, Committee Chair, asked Jennifer Cottam, the newest member to the PTOS team, to introduce herself. Jennifer will serve as a welcome voice for the City's District 1.

Members of the U.S. Forest Service, Meghan Stan and Lindsay Anderson offered an update on the BST Trail progress through Cottonwood Heights. The update focused on the new section of trail between Ferguson Canyon, and the Dogwood Picnic Area in Big Cottonwood Canyon. One issue that still needs to be addressed is how to keep dog owners from bringing their pets from the Ferguson Canyon trailhead into the restricted BCC area. Several options, such as new signage, and "pet impediments" were discussed. Volunteers with the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation have also been active in helping to complete this section of the trail. The exact location of where the trail will enter Dogwood Picnic Area is still TBD. Discussions concerning the best methods for making the trail "mountain bike friendly" are continuing. Weed removal is also needed before the trail can be opened to the public, and the Forest Service is considering a "volunteer day" for addressing this need.

Cottonwood Heights Councilmember Ellen Birrell commended the PTOS Committee for creating an Active Transportation subcommittee, and addressed the group concerning an opportunity to utilize a new federal grant, the Safe System For All (SS4A) program to improve roadway safety. The Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC) applied for funding from this grant, and was rewarded enough money to create a Safety Action Plan which would be followed by several municipalities along the Wasatch Front. Once the Safety Action Plan template is completed (hopefully in 2023) the WFRC will then apply for a new grant the

following year. Ms. Birrell stated that success with a “demonstration project” that parallels the Safety Action Plan’s goals would give our grant application an advantage when reviewed.

City staff / CHPRSA Update / Council

Staff Update - Michael Johnson, CH City Community & Economic Development Director

Mike Johnson asked the PTOS Committee for their preferences with (3) projects that are currently being considered by the City Council. The proposed projects included... 1) The design of a shared-use path just West of Highland Drive, and south of the I-215 junction; 2) The expansion of the shared-use path on Ft. Union Blvd at approximately 1700 East; and 3) The installation of additional trail amenities along Big Cottonwood Trail. The Committee voted in favor of project #1.

Cottonwood Heights City Planners offered recommendations to The City on sustainability projects that they would like to see funded. The City Council entertained suggestions for (5) projects, and ultimately decided to fund (3) of them. Those projects are... 1) \$30K towards the completion of the Mountview Pollinator Garden; 2) The City will purchase bulk trees and host a “community tree planting/sale”. Those trees planted by The City will increase the overall number of trees in our area to be eligible for “Tree City USA” status. The remaining trees not used for the Tree City USA plantings will be sold to the general public at a subsidized rate; and 3) The addition of ordinance updates that require bicycle parking, and EV charging infrastructure in new commercial, and multi-family developments. Projects 1 & 2 were granted funding, and will move forward in July of this year.

Lastly, Mr. Johnson shared a mock-up of the tee shirts The City has purchased for participants with the Volunteers In Parks (VIP) program.

CHPRSA Update – Ben Hill, CHPRSA Executive Director

Mr. Hill stated that the work at McIntyre Park is nearly complete, and following such he will meet with the stakeholders to discuss how the park might be utilized in the future. During the renovation, the surrounding walking path was repaired, and overgrown trees were trimmed. The ultimate use of the newly resurfaced water tank “lid” is still TBD, and ideas from the PTOS Committee were welcomed.

The masterplan for renovations at Bywater Park will begin soon. An area near the front entrance to the park is being examined for a bike station/repair rack. Other areas within the park that are not currently covered in grass will be reviewed for other amenities or plantings.

Lighting poles have been installed at the CHRC pickleball courts. Power lines will be pulled to the poles in the next couple of weeks.

The Foundation Golf Tournament has been scheduled for August. Reservations for those wishing to play in the tournament are still being accepted.

Interviews were held for a new Program Coordinator, and an offer has been made to a potential candidate who has outdoor recreation experience.

Antczak Park’s tennis courts have been resurfaced, and will reopen on 5/25 after drying overnight. The website for Antczak Park’s donation program has been created, and will be activated once a few cosmetic changes are completed. QR codes and notices for the donation program will be launched soon. In addition to the painting of the park’s sport courts, the buildings and rails have received a fresh coat of paint. The new playground is scheduled to be installed on June 20th.

Committee Business

The draft minutes from the April 26, 2023 meeting were discussed. Committee Member Jennifer Shah moved to approve the amended minutes, which was seconded by Committee Chair Paula McFarland. The approval was unanimously carried by the committee.

The Committee discussed ways in which their \$3K annual budget could be utilized, with spraying of Golden Hills’ trees being the top choice. Pine beetles have badly damaged the park’s trees, and yearly spraying was encouraged by an arborist who was asked to examine the damage. Ben Hill offered that The City might be interested in expanding the work to include maintenance on all of the park’s trees, if the work could be combined with the spraying services already being funded by The PTOS Committee. Committee member Ronna Cohen moved that The Committee’s funds be dedicated to the spraying services, which was seconded by Sarah Ricketts.

Mike Johnson informed The Committee that additional “walking tour” brochures have been ordered, and that the brochures have become very popular. Funding for future walking tour brochures will need to be examined, as budgeted funds for the program are being exhausted.

An update on the Volunteers In Parks (VIP) program was offered by Ronna Cohen. Only two parks (Golden Hills and Butler Parks) are in need of “captains”. A VIP member recently reported that graffiti was seen in Butler Park, which was quickly removed. Ronna stated that the program is “operating nicely”.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Committee Member Jennifer Shah moved to adjourn, which was seconded by Committee Chair Paula McFarland, and unanimously carried by the committee. The meeting was adjourned.

Michael Johnson

Date

Paula McFarland

Date