

**STEAMBOAT SPRINGS PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
PUBLIC WORK SESSION MINUTES**

August 23, 2017

The regularly scheduled public work session of the Steamboat Springs Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at approximately 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 23, 2017, in the Citizens' Meeting Room, Centennial Hall, 124 10th Street, Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Steward Handloff, Steamboat Symphony Orchestra Director/Picnic Theater Festival Artistic Director:

It's come to my attention that you folks are considering some artistic performance locations in West Lincoln Park – either an amphitheater or some kind of stage space there. I just wanted to let you know I can't think of a more inappropriate location for a performing arts space than West Lincoln Park. Between the noise from the river at high water, the trains, and of course the highway, which is almost in your back pocket, it is not appropriate for any sort of performance space that I work with – either the orchestra or theater. I think I can speak for most of the performing arts organizations in town that they would support that statement as well.

If you would like to get some locations for performing arts, it would be nice I think to get all the performing arts groups together and spend some time doing some consultation, which was not done before that West Lincoln Park site was selected by someone. So we haven't been involved; we'd love to get involved; we encourage you to support the performing arts any way you can, but please don't waste any money on West Lincoln.

Koermer encouraged Handloff to provide some ideas that may be more suitable through the upcoming public master plan process.

Overstreet said the department is still talking to the Arts Council regarding a vision for the park. They will also be looking at what type of playground will fit in the park for 2018.

Chair and Vice Chair Nominations

Commissioner Watson nominated Alan Koermer to serve as chair and Doug Tumminello to serve as vice chair.

Frank Alfone seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

Koermer said he has a lot of things going on and he may need to ask others to step in on occasion.

Commissioners were willing to do that.

Howelsen Hill Public Engagement Process Update

Kyrill Kretzschmar, Recreation and Enterprise Manager:

We've been working on this initial document which we started on two weeks ago. We've met twice since then; we're meeting every week on Thursday. We actually have a working plan.

We defined our answers to the toolkit questions just a little bit further.

"This document provides initial analysis toward developing a well-informed and thoughtful public engagement strategy as requested by City Council."

Purpose:

The purpose of this project is to design and implement a public engagement strategy in support of creating a vision plan which ascertains the community's vision for facilities and all-season usage at Howelsen Hill Ski Area, including associated costs and desired funding mechanisms of determined alternatives.

Assumptions to Verify with Council:

Looking at the ski hill only.

All-season use.

Focusing on what the community wants.

Gathering input on specific topics.

This vision plan will lead to a public approval of some or all elements of this vision plan.

Results:

A community vision for Howelsen Hill Ski Area outlining up to three alternatives.

Kretzschmar: The reason we did this is that the community may come up with more than one vision. We may see an alternative that is totally doable, and then there's more that the community would like to see in the future.

Purpose of Public Engagement:

Broadly engage the public to ensure the city is moving forward with a plan that has community-wide support.

Who Will We Engage?

Numerous constituents of Howelsen Hill Ski Area including user groups inside and outside the city limits; non-traditional stakeholders.

When Will This Process Be Successful?

When the public has the opportunity to provide input on the alternatives developed.

The group answered several yes-or-no questions in the toolkit procured from Boulder.

What's Next?

Kretzschmar: In our last meeting, we outlined issues that affect stakeholders. We spent an hour thinking of the main issues that need discussion. We came up with:

Fiscal sustainability, maintenance on existing facilities, ongoing operating costs, deferred maintenance, capital improvements, public access, vitality/vibrancy of Howelsen Hill, summer usage, winter usage.

Who are the stakeholders affected by those issues?

We want your input on this; it may even be a homework item.

This will be the discussion with the design team tomorrow.

Then we have two weeks to finalize the document with who we want to engage in the community.

We're also going to use the stakeholder analysis John did in March.

On September 7, I'm going to start working with a peer advisor from Boulder to come up with an engagement strategy, tactics, look at what our capacity is (financial, staff, time,) and what kind of strategies we want to use within the timeframe that we have.

Once we have this plan finalized, we can go back to Council and present.

Alfone asked about the deadline to get this document to Council;

Kretzschmar said he did not know.

Overstreet: I think I talked about September 1, but this project planner from Boulder says to make it an effective process is to take as much time as you can in the beginning to plan it properly.

Weik wanted to present the Council with the scope and key assumptions of the proposed plan as quickly as possible.

Overstreet: The Parks and Rec report will be in the packet for the August 29 meeting. I could include Kyrill's information here.

Weik: I think this is one of those areas where we as a commission need to be dialoguing with Council. I think one of us should be there.

Overstreet will let Gary know to contact Walter and let him know that a commissioner will be there to discuss this during the Parks and Rec Commission reporting time at the August 29 meeting.

Overstreet: I believe the agenda is pretty packed that night, so it would be later at night.

Commissioner Koermer will attend; Commissioner Weik will be his backup.

2018 CIP Update

Overstreet: This has not been finalized; it is still going through scoring. I have provided to you the items our department has submitted to be considered in the capital program. It will be presented to City Council on September 12.

Craig Robinson, Parks, Open Space and Trails Manager:
Howelsen Hill Lift Improvements:

In 2017, City Council approved a new drive system for our Pauma lift. We had a lift assessment done a few years ago; they said we can get many more years out of it if we replace some critical components. We are working on design with an engineer right now; it's not quite as easy as we had hoped. The engineering will be complete this year. We're expecting to do the work next year unless otherwise directed.

In 2018, we had put in \$28,000 to replace the top Pauma bull wheel bearings, (?), which needs to be done as well.

Then we put in \$280,000 of engineering/design for the lift replacement. This was all done as the chair was moving; we didn't really know what was happening and where we are today. I expect this one is going to provide some lively discussion with Council.

The replacement would happen in 2019. Since that time, we've been directed by Council to start researching more and try to find a used lift. Industry experts have said a used lift may not be our best answer and that a new lift may be where we should be going for cost efficiencies and bang for your buck. We'll present all those options to Council to see what they want to do.

If we buy a new lift, \$3.5 million would be a ballpark estimate.

We've been tasked with moving the alignment over toward where the Pauma line is. Squeezing a lift into that area is going to be challenging. We're trying to bring in some experts to get input as to what this might look like and get estimates.

The same study assessed our chairlift. It's in good shape; it doesn't have a ton of hours on it; we use it more in the summer than we do in the winter. If it were in a stable location and we didn't have landslide issues, we could update the drive terminal and the main motor and everything else like we're doing with Pauma for about \$750,000 and improve it to a more modern standard and have it last 15-20 years. But because of its location, where tower 6 is and the landslide activities that we're having, the recommendation from the consultants was to move the lift. We're also limited in uphill capacity with a double chairlift; we could add capacity by putting in a slow-speed quad if that's the decision.

Robinson said it would cost probably 1.5-\$2 million to move the lift and replace it with a used lift.

Tumminello: So the alternatives are: move the current lift, replace it with a used lift or purchase a new lift.

Ball Field Improvements:

With our current contract with Triple Crown Sports, we receive \$75,000 annually from the city for ball field improvements and Triple Crown Sports donates \$15,000 for a total of \$90,000 a year. We had a study done under the previous contract about improvements that would be beneficial for fields that Triple Crown uses. There" certain ways this funding needs to be utilized to benefit the fields they use. We are still working off of that 2004 plan.

2017 was planning to install a new main line from the pump house to the Klumker and Vanatta fields and then connecting that irrigation to a non-potable water system. We have a very old irrigation system that was installed in the 80's at the main line; the other system is probably 80's or early 90's, which has outlived its useful life. So the plan was to repair that this year. We are behind schedule; that is likely not going to happen; we're still working on design; we would put that out to bid this winter for a spring project likely next year.

In 2018, we had planned to renovate Klumker Field; regrade to fix drainage problems and install a new irrigation system there. Hopefully we're back on target with that.

2019: Install a new batting cage by Adams field.

2020: New irrigation on Ski Town field.

Alfone asked where the additional revenue comes from beyond the \$90,000; Robinson said there is none; they save money over multiple years to meet larger expenses.

Alfone: 183,000 is the running balance.

Watson: That seems awfully low. Is there room to renegotiate that contract?

Robinson: It expires in 2020.

Spring Creek Dam Restoration:

The upper dam there is now in a state where if we don't take action, the state is going to likely implement an order to require us to drain it or breach it.

This year we're finalizing design, and we'll have a bid-ready project for next year to lower the height of the dam to make it a non-jurisdictional dam for the state. It will be a real small pond like the lower pond is today.

It will be less impactful than if we tried to breach it. From the upper pond to the lower pond will be pretty heavily riprap, but the rest of the area up top will still be a small pond.

So we believe we're on target with a \$225,000 project next year that will go out to bid in winter or spring.

Yampa River Core Trail Bridge Decking:

This year we've done the 9th Street bridge. We're also going to be doing the stone Lane bridge in September.

Next year we have the Fish Creek bridge; Soda Creek Bridge in 2019; both Snake Island bridges in 2020.

While we doing this, we paint the bridge because of efficiencies.

Weik said she would want to see the detour plan before these other bridges are under construction.

Tennis Center Court Resurfacing:

This year we have a project to update the three remaining clay courts.

We're well passed the recommended life expectancy of a clay court.

They're replacing the water components and the clay itself and repairing some of the fencing at the same time.

[?] Water irrigation System for Parks:

We worked with the city's water resources engineer on utilizing city water rights so we don't lose those. Last year we finished West Lincoln Park; we fired that up this year for the first time.

In 2018 we're talking about developing a plan for Little Toots Park and the lawn at the Bud Werner Memorial Library. The initial part of that is the feasibility study. Is it even possible?

If so, we'd conduct the design; in 2019 we'd do the construction.

2020: Feasibility and design for Staley Park; 2021 Staley Park construction.

2022 we have Bear River Park even though it's a parked project.

Howelsen Hill Magic Carpet:

Replace our baby magic carpet – not the boardwalk which is the larger of the two. It's out there for 2019. The older lift that we have is still going, but parts are kind of hard to find. It's not ideal.

Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update:

It's a 2017 project. \$75,000 in 2017 matched by \$75,000 from GOCO.

Overstreet: We plan on interviewing consultants the week of September 4. I wanted to see if a member of the commission would like to be on the panel. It would be during the day. I think we've narrowed it down to four consulting groups. I would like to do a half day. I was targeting September 6.

Floyd said she could do it if it was outside of 1-2:30.
Overstreet will email the group with the time.

Rodeo Grounds Infrastructure/Howelsen Parking Improvements

Robinson: This is a multi-year project. The city has a CMAC grant, which is for air quality and is matched with city dollars to work on the Rodeo Master Plan to pave the ice arena side of the facility and to reconfigure the entrance. This is planned to tie into the Ice Arena Master Plan. Already that facility overflows into the rodeo grounds in the wintertime. So it's going to provide some seamless connectivity for parking year-round with pedestrian connections.

The design is going to be challenging; we have a timeframe with CDOT that we have to try to stay on; I think they need final design by February. Whether or not this gets approved to be constructed in 2018 is yet to be seen, but that's the request. I don't think there have been any grants awarded at this point in time. I think the design with the CMAC CDOT process has to be completed first, and then they might fund the construction of it upon successful design.

Tumminello confirmed that the parking improvements alone are \$800,000. It's going to be a large parking lot for downtown overflow, Howelsen Park and the rodeo.

Alfone wondered why a traffic study was required; Robinson wasn't sure and will double check.

Howelsen Tennis and Volleyball Lighting Improvement:

We had this in our 2017 budget, but we had a lot of projects on our list and needed to balance our workload, so this was pushed to 2018. The Howelsen volleyball courts use has exploded at night, and the tennis courts receive use as well. The lighting down there is old and degraded. All the other lighting at the facility has been improved; this is the only area that has not been.

There's a request to replace the lights with LEDs so maintenance will be less and efficiencies will go up.

Yampa River Restoration:

These projects were all identified in our Yampa River Structural Master Plan. We've been challenged to accomplish these projects with everything else that's going on. We have a grant for 2017 working on the Stockbridge site adjacent to the Core Trail, which is eroding and becoming a safety hazard on the side of the Core Trail. We have a GOCO grant that's going to help us accomplish that project. We're hoping to have that done by end of November at the latest.

2018: Depot Kayak Roll (D Hole): We've got some hazards that are emerging. This structure was approved to have a recreational in-channel diversion waterway (the C and D holes combined.) We're obligated to

maintain those structures as they were constructed, and we have the safety concerns.

2019: Iron Horse Improvements: We have some money from the developers that was supposed to go toward some improvements at the Iron Horse.

Emerald Park, Botanic Park, Model T Hole

Park Playground Equipment and Park Shelters:

2017: We had money for a picnic shelter at West Lincoln Park and to replace the playground there. Our plan was to have a public meeting, which we did, to talk about this concept, what the community would like to see there, and what to do with the Yampa River Queen. We have met with several people about this project, including the developer of the Yampa River Queen. The public meeting was essentially a bust; we had two people show up from the public. We are working with those two people, though. They've got a vision for West Lincoln Park; several other people have talked about that as well; so we're working with them for a conceptual design.

We have basic criteria that we're trying to meet: budget, community needs, replace the playground, better utilize the park.

We see a need for picnic shelters. We just installed a new one at Howelsen Park this year by the beach. It's already got people calling to reserve it. That's what we would like to do.

I think we're going to see a different vision that incorporates a shelter perhaps with a stage for more community events. We're a little concerned about the durability of a structure. We don't have a lot of maintenance dollars, so we want an indestructible facility that requires low maintenance and easy to repaint.

Whenever it moves through the process we're going to bring it back to you to endorse.

2018: Little Toots Park Playground and Improvements to Sidewalk Access within The Park.

2019: Brooklyn Park Playground

2020: Emerald Park

Our playgrounds are not all that ADA compliant, so we're going to be upgrading them so they are ADA compliant. A lot of them have sand bases; we'll be moving them to the Fibar [ph] mulch – the wood mulch that's out there. It's more of an industry standard. We probably will not be doing the rubber matting because we're buried under snow for almost half the year.

We also did an exercise with the Recreation department about what type of playground structures kids like. We showed them several pictures and different styles of play structures with options for each. It was ages 2-12 plus parents and instructors. We got some good information out of that process; I think it will be helpful for us for GOCO applications.

Koermer confirmed that the sidewalks in Little Toots Park are ADA sidewalks and a connection to the gazebo so that becomes ADA accessible as well.

Blackmere Trailhead Improvements:

This is to get the community discussion moving forward. It's a 2023 plan to design a new parking lot.

It's just so the community is aware that there's challenges up there and safety concerns about cars parking on both sides of the street, speeds, etc.

Watson confirmed that the city owns all that land.

Howelsen Hill Snowmaking:

We applied for this about five years ago as a CIP; it's been parked ever since. We've tried to recirculate it in the list, and it gets back on the park list. So I pulled it off the park list again. We've got Swiss cheese that we're repairing annually. We band-aided a repair already this summer that's under the parking lot, and we have to go back this fall and try to do a better job to fix it. We know we have other leaks out there. When a leak becomes too much of a problem, it bubbles up to the surface and causes major issues. If it does continue on this route and we do not fix it, we will not be making snow at Howelsen. If it happens in the middle of winter, we will have a muddy mess and we won't be making snow. So if it happens when prime-time snowmaking temperatures are in effect -- when you have those windows you take advantage of them. If this happens during that time, we will not be making snow. This is the main line that is the main distributor of water.

Alfone confirmed that three of the four ball field irrigation systems draw water out of the Yampa. It's the same pump house and the same water right with different pumps that distribute to different system main lines. The feeder out of the Yampa is the same.

Alfone: If you're losing so much water, are you reporting that?

Robinson: We're reporting the gallons used.

Alfone: Which is what's coming out of the Yampa, right?

Robinson: Yes. Once it goes through the pump that's the gallons used.

Alfone: So you don't know what you're losing.

Floyd: With the uncertainty of Howelsen Hill and what it's going to look like based on the conversations that are going on, if that was repaired, do you foresee that any of the proposed plans for Howelsen Hill wouldn't need that repair? Is that broken pipe going to be needed regardless of if the chair moves/doesn't move, jumps open. Is that needed to be repaired regardless of what happens as long as there's going to be a ski area?

Robinson: If it's going to continue to be a ski area and we want to make snow there, it needs to be replaced. This CIP needs to happen. If you were not going to make snow there anymore yet you were going to – we're obligated by GOCO to have a jumping facility on two plastic jumps for summer jumping – you would need to repair a water line from the pump system to those jumps so you could use them in the summertime.

Robinson said if you wanted a smaller operation, you wouldn't have to make snow but the season would probably go from Christmas through February 15 or so.

Winter Sports Club competition makes snow and takes advantage of the longer season.

Robinson: The manmade snow allows you to more easily move the snow around; if you're relying on natural snow you're going to be hitting dirt a lot quicker. You wouldn't be training on it because racers around gates would then go straight to the ground.

Highway 40 Medians:

Robinson: From Old Town Hot Springs to MacDonald's, you've noticed they have sod in them. We have large cutouts where sprinkler heads need to be to water that sod. The mounding that happens every year with the dead grass and the scoria has grown in height.

Our recommendation is to begin the discussion of 2022 planning and maybe 2023 construction to eliminate all the grass out there today. It's going to save money on maintenance and be much safer for the contractors who do the maintenance. Rebuild them similar to what's by the Tennis Center. A lot of it would be that concrete that may not be quite as nice but is more practical for a department that struggles to maintain things.

Floyd confirmed that it would be an estimated \$25,000 savings.

Floyd: I think that's a significant visual downgrade. I think that's unfortunate. When the trees got put in and all it was to make that corridor more pleasing to guests who came into town. It seems unfortunate for \$25,000 to diminish that experience for people.

Robinson: Our budget to maintain all medians in town, which is HWY 40 and Mount Werner Road is \$75,000. That's all out of our parks budget because it's green and growing. If the community desire is to keep grass out there, we would recommend redoing it and making it more efficient where you kind of build it up a little bit so you're not getting all that material in there. I did notice in Summit County that their sod is that thick, too. It is going to be a maintenance item; if that is a priority for the community, then it will come out through this process.

Ski Town Park Irrigation:

This system was installed in 1992. We've got breaks occurring out there. Depending how the next couple years go we might push that up a year. We wanted to make sure it was out there because it wasn't on the CIP anywhere. So we have \$150,000 out there. It would result in a more efficient system, which is great because those are our most heavily-used fields.

What we hear from the community is they would like to see more AstroTurf. That's an option at Ski Town; it's about a \$2 million project. We have two fields out there that are used by Triple Crown. The fields are used for soccer, lacrosse, rugby, football, volleyball, etc.

Dr. Rich Weiss Park Improvements:

We have an old deck there that we couldn't verify when it was constructed; it's deteriorating; we've talked about replacing the deck and the bathroom at that park. That's one of our oldest bathrooms. We'd make it more accessible and allow it to be open year-round for trail users. We would move it closer towards the Core Trail; connect it with sidewalks and have snow removal and maintenance take care of that. That's 2019 and 2020.

Howelsen Hill Stables:

The stables were constructed in 1943, and they probably haven't been maintained that well since then. They're dilapidated; the concrete foundation on one of the buildings was caved in years ago with the snow load falling off the roof.

It's comparable to rehab the buildings for the price we're talking about here. We've talked about tearing down the existing building. There's an old bathroom in there that's in pretty rough shape. It would be terminating those services. The water lines that provide water for the animals are breaking and corroding underground. It would be replacing and upgrading the water for the stables use and replacing that one building with two Tuff sheds. One Tuff shed would be a winter office, and the rest would be storage.

If there's a desire to rehab the entire facility, it could be done at a much higher cost. Knowing that we're constrained by budget these days, this is what we believe to be a workable solution. If the stables ever go away based on either user conflicts or the concessionaire that's there right now – who has been the sole bidder on this service for many, many years – decides to go away on their own, or if the city decides not to renew and continue with this option, what would that space be? Rebuilding the stables would limit us; by putting Tuff sheds down there we can move those for some very valuable real estate.

Watson: How much do they pay the city?

Robinson: I think we budget around \$12,000 per year for revenue projections, so it depends on their summer. That's based on a certain percentage of rides that occur.

Floyd asked about the trends in their business; Robinson did not know.

Koermer: Had that been opened up for bid recently at all?

Robinson: About five years ago. For the past ten years we haven't had anybody but them bid on it. We are actually just now renewing a least with them for two years with an option for three more years of additional service. Both parties can pull out at any time during that. There were discussions about partnerships; they were open to the concept, yet it has not moved passed that point.

Koermer: Any discussion as to routine maintenance being funded by the concessionaire?

Robinson: That's not in the existing contract. As far as implementing this plan, there were some discussions about whether they would want to participate in some of that cost. Again, they were open to the concept, and it's kind of stalled. They also operate in Rocky Mountain National Park in the Grand Lake area where they've moved to the outskirts of town. They have a ranch in Craig and in Dinosaur.

Watson thought that was a lot of money to subsidize a business.

Tumminello thought the place was dilapidated.

Koermer: The location is key and yet the upkeep is dismal. How do we motivate a concessionaire or the city to prioritize something that we're now trying to really strongly make a focal point of our community and do these improvements with the Howelsen Master Plan? This goes back to the engagement process; I don't think it's just the hill. This is opening our eyes to what we have the funding for, what we need to prioritize, where's the sense of urgency. It is embarrassing to have a dilapidated structure where our tourists are going to enjoy themselves. I respect the longevity of the relationship.

Weik: I think the only reason people are going to insist on keeping it is a sense of western heritage.

Tumminello: I don't think the concessionaire has done anything wrong; I think the upkeep falls squarely on the city.

Watson: It becomes a business analysis as to whether it makes sense to keep it going as compared to what else could be there instead.

Kretzschmar:

Placeholder item for the ice arena. Skid replacement is the compressor in the back that actually cools the ice sheet. That piece of equipment is now

20 years old. Next year we have a test planned – a very expensive test at \$30,000 – to determine the remaining life of this piece of equipment. Once we do that, we'll know when the replacement will have to take place. Right now I placed it in 2019.

Ice Arena Expansion:

Last year it was placed on the CIP; it did not get funded. This year I placed it on the CIP sheet for two reasons: The group that's working on this project wanted to get it to a point where it's actually fully planned and shovel-ready. Currently, it is in the city planning review process; we're expecting comments back in September. It just recently made the top three finalists for the accommodations tax reserve fund. I'm working with the group to answer those questions. The funding is divided 50-50 city and private.

Tumminello requested a recap of 2017 CIP project status at the end of the year; Overstreet will facilitate that.

Koermer suggested a spreadsheet with when/if they were completed and budget versus actual cost.

Overstreet explained how many Parks and Rec projects don't make the CIP cut because they don't tend to be mandated by contract.

There will be an all-day budget meeting on October 3, followed by a first reading before the election and a second reading after the election with adoption at the end of November.

Overstreet will then report on what's been approved or delayed or parked.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Eric Meyer, 2775 Riverside Drive:

I guess my biggest question would be how much has been spent on Howelsen in the last couple years, and how much of this CIP is based on Howelsen right when this big discussion is happening. There's a lot of planned money there at the same time as this discussion about what we're going to do at Howelsen. From the ice rink to the BMX track and the ski hill to Yampa is where a lot of the money is going. How does that play into the CIP planning when you're talking about the master plan?

Floyd: I think there's been quite a bit of investment in Howelsen Park; I wouldn't say the same for the ski area; so I think it's worth not lumping the ski area in with those improvements.

Overstreet will distribute that information.

Tumminello: That does highlight the need for clarification from City Council on the scope of the project – Howelsen Hill or the entire park?

Next Meeting: September 13

Agenda:

Discuss and make a recommendation on the Spring Creek Alternate Trail and a multi-use continuation of the NPR trail.
Review meetings through the remainder of the year.

Possible field trip September 27.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.