

City of Aurora  
**OPEN SPACE ADVISORY BOARD**  
Webex Meeting  
January 26, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Victoria Samuel, Vice Chair Suzy Cress, Brad Stratton, Bob Hunchberger, Steve Kennedy, Wayne Gallagher, Mark Christopher, Tom Isaacson, Lee Lindholm.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Pat Schuler, Manager of Open Space and Natural Resources (OSNR); Kristin Memmott, Naturalist; and Lauren Morales, Administrative Support.

VISITORS PRESENT: None.

CALLED TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Victoria Samuel at 5:35 P.M.

- I. WELCOME: Victoria Samuel welcomed everyone to the January meeting. Pat Schuler introduced Kristin Memmott, a Naturalist with the City of Aurora.
  - GUEST SPEAKERS:
    - a. Kristin Memmott provided an overview of the Naturalist Virtual Programs currently being offered by the City of Aurora due to COVID-19. These include Pre-K Star K Kids, Superpowers of Owls, Think Like a Prairie, Nature Book Club, and Snakes in the Snow. Kristin also presented a short teaser of the Superpowers of Owls program.
- II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: Tom Isaacson motioned to approve the agenda. Wayne Gallagher seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
  - **January Minutes** – Suzie Cress motioned to approve the January minutes. Tom Isaacson seconded the motion. Motion carried by popular vote.
- IV. PROS MANAGEMENT REMARKS:
  - a. **Compiling Ideas for 2021 OSB Annual Action Plan**
    - i. Pat Schuler mentioned the need to update the Annual Action Plan this year, and OSB members came up with the updated plan below (draft only). Members also discussed inviting the Chair of the Parks Board to a future OSB meeting in March to foster collaboration and understanding between the boards. Pat Schuler and board members discussed keeping trails on Triple Creek Corridor natural but still accessible and compatible with ADA requirements and the possibility of purchasing a track chair. There was also interest in a Buckley Buffer space tour this year.

Tentative 2021 OSB Annual Action Plan:

- 1. Provide advice to Open Space staff on stewardship of existing properties and potential acquisitions.
  - 1.1. Visit sites and assess on-site conditions.
  - 1.2. Provide input to OS staff on planned and ongoing projects and priorities.
  - 1.3. Review and provide recommendations on changes to Rules and Regulations for Parks, Open Space and Reservoirs as required.
  - 1.4. Recommend properties that should be priorities for acquisition.
- 2. Assist in identifying funding opportunities and supporting grant applications.
- 3. Be actively involved in and keep other Board members informed on specific projects such as:
  - 3.1. Triple Creek corridor

- 3.2. High Line Canal Conservancy
- 3.3. Urban Wildlife Management Plan
- 3.4. Land Use Management Plan
- 3.5. Weed Management Plan
- 3.6. Open space components of the Comprehensive Master Plan
- 3.7. Senac Nature Center
- 3.8. Morrison Nature Center
- 3.9. Plains Conservation Center
- 3.10. Buckley Buffer

4. Increase public participation in open space plans, policies, programs, budget and projects by performing community outreach and encouraging civic engagement. Examples of such actions that might be taken are below:

- 4.1. Attend Ward meetings, Arapahoe County Open Space and Trails Advisory Board meetings; Adams County Open Space Advisory Board meetings
- 4.2. Meet with HOAs, advocacy groups, elected officials
- 4.3. Partner with the Parks and Recreation Board on items of mutual interest
- 4.4. Participate individually or as a group in community celebrations/events/service projects.
- 4.5. Assist in education efforts regarding Aurora’s wildlife viewing opportunities and issues, including coyotes, birds, and prairie dogs
- 4.6. Invite council members to OSB meetings
- 4.7. Provide more opportunities for guests to attend OSB meetings and field trips.

5. Encourage and support better coordination among Aurora Water/Urban Drainage/PROS, in such efforts as the Integrated Management Plan and Weed Management Plan. Partnership with the Parks and Recreation Board.

6. Provide outreach to and seek support from community organizations that compliment PROS projects and programs.

7. Review this plan biannually and develop the next year’s action plan by December of the current year.

V. REPORTS: None.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS: None.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS: None.

IX. ISSUES TO CITY COUNCIL:

- Virtual Programs offered by the City of Aurora Nature Center and the wide-reaching impact they have had
- Arapahoe County Grant for PCC and forming a committee to work with that
- 2021 OSB Annual Action Plan

X. CHAIR'S REMARKS: Vicky Samuel complimented the cottonwood work at Coal Creek. She also mentioned how well-maintained it is.

XI. GUEST COMMENTS: None

XII. MEMBER COMMENTS & DISCUSSION:

- a. **Tom Isaacson**- Saw a coyote with mange at Cherry Creek and wanted to know if mange cases are on the rise. Pat Schuler mentioned it has been on the rise for the last few years but there is no involvement in issues such as these. Tom also asked if the City is providing passes for OSB members again this year. Pat said yes and we are now working to get those out to the members.
- b. **Steve Kennedy**- Enjoyed some time at Pronghorn recently and saw several families out and about.

- c. **Bob Hunchberger**- Seconded Steve’s comments about Pronghorn. Saw 25 mule deer (including two bucks) and a Pronghorn deer his last time there. Inquired if there is some plague in prairie dogs as he noticed a sudden decrease in seeing them around. Pat said it may have been a natural or manmade incident but was not the City of Aurora.
- d. **Brad Stratton**- Saw around four juvenile bald eagles at Pronghorn.
- e. **Wayne Gallagher**- Saw a prairie falcon at Coal Creek. Mentioned new panorama display at PCC. Other board members complimented the new display.
- f. **Suzie Cress**- Inquired about ending of term limits of board members. Pat responded she had reached out to the City Clerk’s office but not heard back just yet and asked members whose terms are ending soon to reapply. Suzie also commented that the stroller and two tires were cleaned up at Sand Creek, but mentioned there is a big truck tire. Pat responded that the City was unable to remove it and Urban Drainage will be removing it as soon as the weather improves enough.
- g. **Mark Christopher**- Wanted to know if schools are still sending students to PCC as it has seemed empty recently. Pat mentioned the center itself has been closed a lot recently, and while there have been some programs recently, they were put on by other organizations and not the City of Aurora. Schools are also not doing field trips currently due to COVID-19.

XIII. ADJOURN: Tom Isaacson motioned to adjourn. Brad Stratton seconded the motion. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

The next meeting will be on February 23 at 5:30 P.M via WebEx.

Victoria Samuel, Chair

*Victoria Samuel*

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Lauren Morales, Recording Secretary

*Lauren R. Morales*

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