

Grand County Trail Mix Meeting Minutes
Tuesday April 13, 2021
Held via conference call only
APPROVED May 11 2021

Meeting called to order at 11:05 am.

Present: Paul Spencer, Brett Sutteer, Katie Stevens, Jacques Hadler, Kya Marienfeld, Steve Schultz, Randall Fox, Marc Thomas, Kim Schappert, Colin Topper, Cory Schurtleff, Brian Murdock
Absent: Kirsten Peterson, Maddie Logowitz, Tyson Swasey, Justin Ricks
Guests: Reid Bakken

Approval Of Minutes: postponed

Trail Mix Business: The final wording for the new County resolution was discussed. The changed document removes the Treasurer position; removes all budgeting requirements; adds the Skiing, Trail Running, and Climbing/Canyoneering representative positions; clarifies that citizen representative must be a full time resident of Grand or San Juan counties; clarifies the method to become a member, or for the Committee to remove a member; and various wording changes. After some discussion, Marc Thomas moved to approve the draft resolution as is; Kya Marienfeld seconded. Approved unanimously. On the subject of a letter of support to the Utah Recreational Trails Program for a grant application for the Grand County Active Trails and Transportation department. The grant will mostly be for maintenance (especially needed since it has been hard to use volunteer labor during Covid), as well as to replace some old wooden cattle guards with metal ones. Marc moved to approve the letter, Kim seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

BLM Update: Katie noted that the spur road to the drill pad parking area on the new Red Onion trail is very rough and only really suitable for high clearance 4WD vehicles. However, if the road was graded, concerns were raised about camping at the drill pad. It was decided to put signage at the turnoff from Onion Creek road and not work to improve the 0.4 mile access road. Maddie will be tasked with creating suitable signage.

The BLM is also looking at how to get a mini-skid steer for similar maintenance issues within the Moab field office.

It was discovered that a section of trail up on Amasa Back, in the vicinity of Rockstacker, was in regular use, and had been painted at some point (possibly in error) even though the section was never authorized. The section is considered useful since it avoids a steep down / up section of the jeep road. Since the section of trail is short, and has been in use for many years, the general feeling was that it would be best to authorize it officially (even though it will require the full regular new trail approval process, a complete EA with archaeological clearance, etc). Jacques Hadler moved to approve the proposal; Steve Schultz seconded; motion passed with 10 yeas, 0 nays, and two abstentions.

Forest Service Update: Brian reports that ski grooming has finished for the season. Current snowpack went from 65% to over 100% with the two large storms at the end of March. Ski season was extremely busy this year with much more traffic than usual.

Biking/hiking trails in the Forest are still extremely muddy and not ready for use.

The EA for the Geyser Pass Road is continuing. It is not clear exactly when the work will be performed, but it will most likely be in 2022.

The Forest Service is working out details of summer projects, potentially including work on the switchbacks on Geyser Pass.

Brian notes that the forest will continue to manage e-bikes as motorized and prohibit them on all non-motorized trails in all circumstances.

Marc asked about the possibility of extending the Gold Basin trail up higher; Brian noted that hikers are free to continue up the mountain, but the Forest Service will not construct a trail there.

Trail Report: Maddie and Tyson were unable to attend, but Chair read a letter from Maddie with some updates, including:

- some details on the grant application, which will also include a short connector trail between the Brands kiosk and the OK Corral
- a huge thank you to Bob Radke and Creative Trails LLC for their design services, heavy machinery and machine operation during the rebuild of the OK Corral. Beth Roberts, Colin Topper, and Mike Baird are also thanked for their work.
- Coney Island and Rocky Tops have undergone a complete round of maintenance and rebuilding
- painting of Deadman's is complete; painting of Amasa Back is complete except for Pothole Trail
- Some sections of the Red Onion hiking trail need a touch up; this will be done with the High Mountain Institute volunteer group at the end of the month
- the City will be installing the restroom at Robin Groff Park on 4/8

County Report: Jacques spoke to his proposal for a one-year trial period to make the paved paths on the north side of town, running along US-191 from 500W north to Lions Park and the river; east from Lions Park to Granstaff Canyon; and north past Arches to US-313. Katie noted that from the BLM point of view that would require an extensive process including a public EA. All noted that this is an extremely complex process because of the number of land owners and managers involved. After an extended but highly useful discussion, Steven Schultz moved to rewrite the proposal into a letter to County, clarifying many points and to clear up some confusing areas; and then to vote on the newly worded letter at the May Trail Mix meeting. Kim Schappert seconded; voting was 10 yea, 1 nay, and 1 abstention.

City Report: Cory noted Chuck Williams' presentation at the March 23rd Council meeting about the regional transportation program as being particularly useful. This includes information about studies on US-128 safety from Moab to Castle Valley; extension of the current 128 pathway further east; the widening of Kane Creek Road; and the extension of the Mill Creek Parkway. The bathroom at Robin Groff Park is in place but not yet operational; but it only needs a few minor items and a final inspection to be fully functional. Work is proceeding on the US-191 project, and will include a full bike path all the way to the new Hawk light at Emma Boulevard.

Biking Report: Colin reports on extremely high trail usage recently, with many trailhead parking lots full to capacity.

Climbing/Canyoneering Report: Brett is working on local concerns about climbing on wet rock faces, and is coordinating with Maddie on increased signage about the issue. He is also looking about other ways to get information out about what constitutes "too wet to climb" conditions. Brett and the BLM are continuing with installing permanent anchors in key locations, and removing glued in bolts at Cable Arch and Funnel Arch.

Equestrian Report: Steve reported on progress on the installation of the Old Spanish Trail silhouettes on the bike path north of town; the DOE UMTRA have issued a memorandum of understanding, which will be discussed at the upcoming meeting of the Back Country Horsemen on April 20th.

Two potential locations for the second set of silhouettes have been identified in the Mill Canyon Road area.

A work party to install signage on the Bijou trail will be scheduled in the near future.

Hiking Report: Marc asked about conditions on the North Klondike Road heading to the Dinosaur Stomping grounds.

Trail Running: not present

Skiing: no report other than what Brian reported on earlier.

Citizens to be Heard: two letters were received and distributed, one from James Gibson of Colorado, the other from Tom Murphy of Crested Butte; both encouraged the expansion of e-bike opportunities in Grand County.

Marc moved to adjourn meeting at 1:10 PM. Kim seconded.