

MINUTES
CARBONDALE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
November 11, 2020

Hollis Sutherland called the virtual meeting of the Carbondale Parks and Recreation Commission to order at 7:04pm on November 11, 2020.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present for roll call:

Members:	Hollis Sutherland, Chair Rose Rossello, Vice Chair Ashley Hejtmanek, Member Becky Moller, Member Kathleen Wanatowicz, Member John Williams, Member Tracy Wilson, Alternate
BOT Liaison	Luis Yllanes
Town Staff Present:	Eric Brendlinger, Parks and Recreation Director Jessi Rochel, Community Center and Recreation Programs Manager

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion Passed: Tracy *moved* to approve the minutes from the October 14, 2020 meeting. Ashley *seconded* the motion, and it was unanimously approved with the correction of a typo in the end of season pool report: change time slot reservation information from 1 hour and 45 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes.

ITEMS FROM CITIZENS PRESENT NOT ON THE AGENDA

There were no items from citizens present not on the agenda.

2021 BUDGET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES UPDATE AND BUDGETED COST RECOVERY AND RECREATION SALES AND USE TAX BALANCES

Eric presented an update on the 2021 Budget Goals and Objectives. The initial draft was previously presented at an earlier meeting. Since then Parks and Rec staff have met with Town Manager Jay Harrington and Finance Director Renae Gustine, as well as presented to the Town Trustees. Changes since the initial draft include a more refined look at the grant process with 3 submitted grant proposals for the Crystal River Restoration Project: Fishing is Fun Grant, a Restore Grant with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, as well as a GOCO Resilient Communities Grant on which AVLT is the lead. AVLT was able to piece together multiple projects to go after the grant in an all-encompassing manner in line with the new granting process. In the past, Carbondale Parks and Rec has been fairly successful with submitting and

receiving FMLD mini-grants. However, that pool of money is drying up. Case in point, the department wrote a grant for the second phase of Gianinetti Park and was not accepted. Only 3 mini grants were accepted this cycle (they used to accept 6-8 in each cycle, 2 times per year), and all 3 were in Western Garfield County). The Parks and Rec Department will need to start looking at other sources to continue with Master Plan goals including replacing playground equipment (Hendricks and Colorado Meadows playgrounds are next in line).

Questions/Comments:

Kathleen brought up the previous discussion commission members had in Kathleen's backyard when they went through the capital budget and tried to combine projects together and inquired if that is what the group was seeing tonight. Eric explained that in relation to the new GOCO Resilient Communities grant mission, playgrounds and pools do not really match up. Hollis reminded everyone that Ashley took minutes of the meeting and they were in the Parks and Rec Commission meeting packet in October.

Rose questioned whether the Town had utilized all the bear-proof trash cans that they received from Aspen. Eric responded that yes all of them had been used to fill in the downtown core, and explained the Town is using the Conservation Trust Fund to continue to replace 4-6 trash cans each year with bear-proof ones, as well as guarantee that anywhere there is a trash can there is also a recycling option.

Rose also asked whether fixing the muddy trail sections in Nuche Park was being addressed. Eric responded that according to the Master Plan, Nuche Park is intended to be left in its natural state. However, this is allowing for vehicles to go in and drive everywhere. As such the plan is to build a dedicated parking lot with chicane access for pedestrians and a locked gate for Town vehicular access for ditch clean up in the spring and access to the pump. Rose questioned whether gravel or wood chips could be used on the trail section that is always muddy no matter the time of day or year and is growing with people going around it. She asked whether the RFOV could be used to fix it. Eric said that area would need to be assessed and might be a spot that would need to be raised. He explained that a fence and dedicated parking is slated for a springtime project. All have been approved with the RVR Homeowner Association. The Town wanted to perform the work in the fall but as the area has a seasonal closure for the bald eagle habitat, they ran out of time. Additional Nuche Park improvements are part of the 5-Year-Plan with the intention of going after Colorado Parks and Wildlife granting options in 2022.

Tracy had questions about the climbing wall inspection scheduled for December 2020. Eric said the norm for the industry is to inspect every 3 years, supported by the manufacturers and our insurance company. Tracy said that there had been a shift in the industry standard according to the Climbing Wall Association for steel structures and it is now 5-7 years. Eric said he would look into it.

Eric pointed out the 2nd and 3rd line of Rec Center goals and explained that it is predicted for 2021 that expenditures of the Rec Center will decrease by 13%, but revenue by 71%, and cost recovery for 2021 will only be 21%. Historically cost recovery for the Rec Center has been 62%. Parks and Rec is the department being hit the hardest by COVID on the revenue side, and

this non-sustainable model will eat through reserves fairly fast. The department is taking a conservative approach hoping it is not going to last long. The department is maximizing its facilities for what they can do during a pandemic but not at the risk of staff or patron health. The plan will be to continue moving slowly. Jessi explained that the new fogger the Rec Center purchased will mostly be used for the climbing wall and specialty uses (i.e. Town Manager Jay Harrington used the machine to disinfect the Police Department front desk and offices). Due to the expensive nature of the solution and the fact that Rec Center staff is already trained to thoroughly wipe down high-touch surfaces after each use, the fogger will be supplemental to what is already being done.

Kathleen questioned whether there had been any confirmed cases of COVID at the Rec Center. Jessi responded not yet. Eric explained how everything is reservation and class-based so contact information is being captured. There is also hand-sanitizer located throughout the facility and temperature checks are being conducted for youth classes.

Luis expressed gratitude to the staff for getting creative with the gym—including sport court rentals and the HVAC system. Tracy echoed Luis' comments and questioned whether the cost recovery model is concerning. If things continue this way what about spring outdoor programming—is Red Hill a source of potential income with training or running camps. How can the department maximize outdoor planning for the Spring? Eric described how the department is looking into an archery program and a track-setter for the Rodeo Grounds to create trails for fat biking and cross-country skiing. Eric also said both ice rinks would be a go again this year with small group skill-building hockey programs but no adult broomball.

Kathleen asked what the bottom line is and are we going to be ok. Eric responded that he thinks so. The reserves are good, but we may not be able to have the necessary reserves to match future potential grant sources for large capital items. In 2024 the department will be done paying the debt-service on the Rec Center (\$200,000), so as long as the pandemic ends before 2024 the department should be fine.

Hollis questioned whether there was any information on the numbers coming in from the new City Market. Luis explained that Finance Director Renae Gustine is being conservative, but they will see the final budget for approval in the December Board of Trustees meeting. He thought sales tax was up 3-4%. Rose said that the Smithy and Peppinos were doing better the last couple months than ever before.

Eric said the 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan is a working document. He wanted to make sure everyone has access to it and can ask questions. He said the pool project has moved up to 2023-2024 and some other initiatives have been moved out (i.e. the North Face Park lighting project is now at the end of the five years). He color-coded it with more detail as far as the grants go. The 5-Year Plan is dependent on what grants are accepted.

NOMINATIONS FOR VACANT COMMISSION POSITIONS AND RE-STATEMENT OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

Rose said the female high schooler she knows is still interested but just had a project due. The male student she knows is not interested but knows some others that may be. Becky asked whether an ad had been put in the paper. Eric said the information is on the website, but he has not paid to do an ad. Becky asked about the weekly info in the Sopris Sun. Eric confirmed that usually commission vacancy announcements are put on the website, in the weekly report, and a paid ad (in combination with other commission vacancies). Hollis said some of the members have expired in commission terms. Eric confirmed that Hollis, Rose, and Ashely were up in September 2020. Ashely confirmed she is willing to continue. Eric said that a recommendation to the Trustees at the next meeting will make it official. Tracy said she is interested in the vacant position instead of being an alternate. Eric said he could advertise for the alternate and youth positions. Rose confirmed her female student has completed the application. Becky reiterated that the commission should advertise all positions and not hand-pick commission members. Luis shared that the Trustees had a youth program with two students involved last year and the Board had opted to not do it again this year with what is going on. He said he is not saying to have or not have youth members, he thinks the commission should go ahead, but he wanted to share that information. Eric said with Kae McDonald out on medical leave applications should go to Town Clerk, Cathy Derby.

Kathleen said the commission contact list has mistakes. Capitol is spelled wrong for her. Hollis told everyone to check the list and submit corrections.

REPORTS AND UPDATES

Eric said the Aquatics Master Plan is being presented at a Trustee work session next week. The Trustees in the September session asked to really vet out the location behind the Rec Center, including the potential for cost savings with a shared front desk, and the opportunity to utilize that space and have everything in one spot for efficiency purposes. The Design Workshop design work had previously focused on the current location on Main Street, and so they went back and used the kit of parts from the design charrette and looked at what it would look like behind the Rec Center along with a Rec Center expansion. The Trustees also directed Eric to speak with neighbors of both locations. Eric emailed all the adjacent neighbors. Some wanted an opportunity for more feedback so Eric and Design Workshop hosted a virtual meeting with neighbors from both locations today that resulted in a robust conversation about future plans. While nothing had been produced or presented to public, some neighbors from near the Rec Center location felt they were in a position of defense as the kits of parts on the Rec location was presented without feedback from them first. The meeting gathered some frank feedback and very good direction on the function of the Promenade Park and surrounding open space. Design Workshop agreed to adjust the final design, including pulling out the conceptual design and including the neighbors' concerns in the final document that will be presented to the Trustees next week.

Rose explained that she had listened in on the meeting and thought we had done a really good job of sharing information throughout the process. The neighbors today said it was the first time they were hearing of things, but Rose disagreed saying there have been so many opportunities. She said she felt a lot of anger in the meetings today, with the neighbors saying we did not notice

or knew how much we've thought of them. She said if we do start looking at that area again, she hopes that we can get them to be involved. In general Rose said she disagreed with a lot that was said today.

Kathleen said that she was glad Rose brought that up. She thought the comments were blown out of proportion and that we were just doing due diligence as part of the process. Her question was how it was left when the meeting concluded. Rose said Design Workshop did a great job putting people's minds at ease. She said they told the neighbors they were being heard, that is what the team was already thinking, and thanked them for their concerns. Eric said they were not throwing out the design but if we were to move forward with the location, they will put overlays on the design and explain the issues. This is part of the public outreach process and now we have data to look at and this location has been properly vetted. Hollis asked if the paperwork would be available prior to the work session. Eric said it will be in the Trustee packet which will be available Friday to everyone. He instructed people to go to the Town website and download the agenda to access it. Hollis asked if it is a meeting or a work session. Eric confirmed it is a work session but that they publish packets for those, too.

Becky said that she has not been as involved with the pool working group but that it doesn't seem to have been keeping the public that informed. She said if what we are hearing is that people don't know what the project is means we need to do a better job of communication all around. Eric commented that that is one of the Trustees' main goals—that town operations are better communicated to the public across the board. Luis agreed. He said COVID has presented a unique challenge, but he thought the survey was very well received, meetings have been well attended, and all efforts were made to reach out to the community.

Kathleen said she is a big proponent of having a dedicated web page with what is happening right now including a current project status report. Rose agreed saying it should be jazzy so people want to check it out. Kathleen said the current page has good background information, but she wants November 2020 what is happening now information and a summary analysis. Eric liked that suggestion but said it is a fine line to not put out information that is in draft form.

Rose questioned whether the Rec Center location for the pool was just to answer the Trustees' questions or whether it is back on the table as a possible location. Eric said they wanted to know if it was a potential cost savings option—could we operate one control desk. However, pool mechanics and the locker room associated to the pool would still be stand alone. They wanted to know if we had really looked at a shared front desk space which we think would require a total remodel of how the Rec Center currently operates. The design exercise included what a future expansion of the Rec Center would look like and whether it would be able to house the desired kit of parts. It would but with a lot of other challenges, a remodel of the Rec Center, and a loss of parking.

Eric said the department is in project mode: the Red Hill Trail Improvement Project is starting, the Gianinetti Park improvement is starting next week, and the Miners' Park volleyball courts are in process as is the RV park electrical upgrade.

Hollis asked what the project at Miners' is and whether it was part of the 30-60-90 day plan.

Eric explained that there is a border and weed barrier being installed around the sand volleyball court because grass is growing into the courts. The work at Gateway RV Park includes digging for 50 amp electrical, and staff is also digging for the electrical work at the Rodeo Grounds.

Eric said he is usually setting up the Special Events Task Force this time of year—one meeting in November to recap the current year's events, one meeting in December to discuss events for the coming year. This year we will combine the two meetings into one in December and set the 2021 calendar (what events will remain virtual, what will happen in person, etc). Anyone is welcome to be on the Task Force.

Rose questioned whether the Town can put on some sort of winter fest like Steamboat and Telluride: shut down main street and bring in snow and do activities, like cross-country skiing and horse races. She said she knows a couple people interested in funding and wondered whether the Town would be interested in doing something mid-February. Eric said he would be happy to show the paperwork process to those interested in putting in on, but that the Town probably is not interested in this at this time. Tracy said she has access to some good event insurance information from putting on Bike Week and could send some links. Eric said now's the time to look into it. If groups come to him in January or February to put something on it would be too late.

Jessi reported on the upcoming Turkey Trot: limited numbers, staggered start times, looking for volunteers. She offered updates on the current Rec Center hours (6am-4pm, Monday-Friday, 9am-1pm on Saturday, closed Sunday), Rec fitness classes and programs (new 6am classes Monday-Friday, Youth Art Fun Classes, Youth Climbing, and Taekwondo), as well as the numbers from the latest Blood Drive (43 participants and 34 pints collected), and plans for December (adding a 4:30-5:30pm time slot and continuing Art Fun and Youth Climbing). She reported that numbers for the Rec Center were up (from the 50s and 60s for all weight and cardio machines each week since June to 90s and 100s plus 80 for the fitness classes).

Luis commented that the Trunk or Treat was a success and said thanks again to the Parks and Rec Department staff.

Becky asked about what happened with the leaf and branch recycling and whether it was taken somewhere. Eric said it was run by Public Works and Streets and ended last Sunday. Becky questioned whether the branches were being chipped and put in the parks. Eric said the Town used to put the leaves at the permaculture garden at Thompson House, but since COVID they didn't have the work days they usually do and so didn't want it. He said the leaves go to a local farm and he was unsure about the branches. Becky said she would send a dog park email about putting chips in the muddy spots.

Kathleen expressed the need for a standing agenda item at the top with an aquatic update. She said it needs to be at the top of the meeting and cover what is the current status, what needs to happen next, and what are the current public involvement options.

Rose also suggested that the agenda include something about COVID numbers and what we are doing. Hollis said that has been happening and sees it woven throughout the discussion and not

as a standalone item, and Luis said that Eric puts it in his weekly report. Becky suggested just one or two lines stating what happened last month and how we handled it and what is happening this month and how we plan to address it. Eric said the park pavilions used to allow 25 people and now it is 10 people from 2 households, so we had to change everything we are doing with those. He said he will try it. Becky asked that the update be on the weekly report. Eric said that Garfield County is doing a good job updating COVID numbers every Friday along with a snippet of current rules and he will include a link to that page.

ADJOURNMENT

Tracy made a motion to adjourn the November 11, 2020 regular meeting, Rose seconded, and it was unanimously approved. The next regularly scheduled meeting is set for December 9, 2020 at 7pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jessi Rochel