

**MINUTES**  
**CARBONDALE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**February 10,**  
**2021**

Hollis Sutherland called the virtual meeting of the Carbondale Parks & Recreation Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. on February 10, 2021.

**ROLL CALL**

The following members were present for roll call:

Members: Hollis Sutherland, Chair  
Rose Rossello, Vice Chair  
John Williams, Member  
Kathleen Wanatowicz, Member  
Brian Soby, Alternate  
Celeste Fullerton, Youth Member

Town Staff Present: Eric Brendlinger, Parks & Recreation Director  
Jessi Rochel, Recreation Center & Recreation Programs Manager  
Luis Yllanes, Board of Trustees Liaison  
Kae McDonald, Boards & Commission Clerk

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**Motion Passed:** Kathleen *moved* to approve the minutes from the January 13, 2021 meeting. Rose *seconded* the motion, and it was *unanimously approved*.

**ITEMS FROM CITIZENS PRESENT NOT ON THE AGENDA**

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

**ASPEN VALLEY LAND TRUST RESILIENT COMMUNITIES GRANT—CONNECTING COMMUNITIES TO CONSERVED LANDS**

Eric provided some background on the GOCO Resilient Communities grant awarded to the Aspen Valley Land Trust. The GOCO Resilient Communities grant is specifically earmarked to aid in lessening the effects of Covid in Colorado communities. The Aspen Valley Land Trust compiled a multi-partner grant request to address those conserved lands in the Roaring Fork Valley that have been heavily used by the public during the pandemic. The grant was awarded funding and AVL T approached the Carbondale Parks & Recreation Department to become the fiscal agent for TOC-administered property that will be receiving grant funds. Because of the quick time frame required to turn-around the paperwork, project approval went directly to the BOT. An attractive aspect of this grant is that GOCO will allow money already designated for these projects, as well as any other grants that may be awarded for these projects, to double as the matching funds.

The two TOC-administered properties that will receive grant funding include:

- Red Hill Trail Amenities—the grant awarded \$55,000 and this will be combined with \$30,800 already set aside for this project. Funding will be used to install a shade structure, picnic tables, produce interpretive signage, and complete landscaping.
- Riverfront Park Crystal River Restoration Project--\$55,000 was awarded for this project as well and will be combined with the \$30,000 Fishing is Fun grant previously awarded by Colorado Parks & Wildlife. Funding will be used to help build the ADA access to the park and an outdoor classroom.

Questions/Comments:

Rose was appreciative of the work that has gone into these grants.

Brian asked if the improvements will be on AVL T or TOC-administered property. Eric reminded the commission members that while AVL T organized the funding for the purchase of the Red Hill property between Highway 133

and the BLM-administered lands, the plan is that that property will be annexed into the Town of Carbondale. TOC Parks & Recreation department staff currently maintain the trailhead.

Brian followed up by asking if easements were in place to protect this investment. Eric responded in the affirmative and added that the Crystal River Riverfront park space is owned by the TOC.

Luis pointed out the value of the partnership with AVLT and was happy to see the results of the partnership.

Eric added that these improvements are part of the Master Plan and these projects are fulfilling several of the stated goals.

### **INTEGRATED WEED MANAGEMENT PLAN NATURAL LAND MANAGERS FEEDBACK UPDATE**

Eric followed up on last meeting's Weed Management Plan discussion. The plan was also presented to the Environmental Board for review at their January meeting. The Environmental Board requested that Eric consult with natural land managers and incorporate their recommendations into the 2021 plan. Eric solicited opinions from several natural land managers and the results of those consultations are included in the packet. Ultimately Eric chose to work with John Buerger (Bee Safe Consulting LLC); John Buerger is willing to work with the Parks Department on several test plots at the Nature and Bike Parks free of charge to compare his techniques to those where Avenger or a chemical-based herbicide is applied. Data will be compiled and incorporated into the weed logs on each of test areas. The plan is to try John's techniques exclusively within the baseball diamond. The 2021 Weed Management Plan also requests the use of chemicals on several B-list plants growing in areas throughout the bike park that must be eradicated by 2022 as well as some chemical spot-spraying within the roundabout garden. The 2021 Weed Management Plan will be presented to the BOT for approval on February 23<sup>rd</sup>.

#### Questions/Comments:

Hollis was interested to see the results of the test plots. She asked if a test plot will be selected where the hoary crest is located at the Bike Park. Eric replied that he will have to see whether it is feasible to block off an area for a test plot.

John Williams asked if other natural land managers will be used in addition to John Buerger. Eric replied that he included opinions by Mark Duff because he has a great depth of knowledge and Eric has consulted with him before. The other recommendations are from Steve Anthony, the Garfield County Vegetation Manager, who has helped identify various weeds and provided feedback in the past as well. For example, Steve Anthony corrected the Parks Department staff identification of what they thought was poison hemlock—it is actually water hemlock and while it is still toxic to the touch, it is not to the same degree as poison hemlock. Parks Department staff will be manually extracting the water hemlock.

Brian asked if John Buerger can provide FDA certification of safety for the ingredients he uses. Eric agreed to check on this request.

### **AQUATICS FACILITY MASTER PLAN & NEXT STEPS**

Eric shared the language in the press release that will be distributed now that the Aquatics Facility Master Plan has been completed. The press release is the final step in closing out the grant. Eric is hopeful that the "good news" article will get picked up by local media and will direct the public to the website for the completed master plan. Eric also included the BOT minutes in the meeting packet for those that were not able to attend or watch the proceedings. The next steps will include a detailed examination of the Recreation Sales and Use Tax Fund in six months to see how the pandemic has affected the income. A review of this fund will also identify how much money could be applied to the actual pool facility construction and how much fundraising will be required.

#### Questions/Comments:

Kathleen asked if this topic could be a standing item on the agenda—at least every other meeting—so the commission members can continue to stay focused on those planning items needed to achieve this goal. She also added that interest rates are very low right now and it is a good time to finance a loan. She suggested creating a 24" by 36" conceptual sketch to post at either the pool or the Rec Center (or both) to keep this project in front of the community.

Eric suggested adding a QR code that could take people to the actual plan.

Hollis agreed that the group needs to find creative ways to keep this in front of the public.

Eric added that there also needs to be a way for the public to continue to provide feedback—possibly a pull-off card for people to fill out and drop off.

Hollis suggested adding a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section. Eric added that that could be posted on the website.

Rose suggested posting small questions to the Parks and Recreation Facebook page for people to respond to. She added that the actual survey questions could be used on a one-at-a-time basis.

Hollis added that it was a great BOT work session and encouraged all of the commission members who hadn't yet had a chance to either read through the minutes or watch it on You-Tube.

### **PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT QUARTERLY REPORT: OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2020**

Eric has provided the Parks & Recreation Department quarterly report for October, November, and December 2020; the report is prepared for the Board of Trustees, but Eric wanted the commission members to have the opportunity to review it as well. The quarterly report is compiled using the data from the weekly summaries that Eric emails to TOC staff and the commission members. The report also provides a breakdown of programming cost recovery and is a good way for the Parks & Recreation staff to analyze seasonal maintenance activities, events, and programming.

#### Questions and Comments:

Hollis underscored the importance of reading through Eric's weekly summaries and staying current with the Parks & Recreation department activities. She added that it can answer a lot of questions about department staff activities and what information the BOT is provided.

Kathleen pointed out that while she appreciated the level of detail in the weekly reports, she was concerned about the time consumed in preparing them. She questioned whether it was necessary to provide a weekly update and wondered if a monthly update would suffice.

Eric responded that the weekly update is prepared for the TOC Manager and is required from all the department directors. The weekly report is also submitted to the *Sopris Sun* as part of the Town's public outreach.

### **P & R COMMISSION 2021 MASTER CALENDAR DRAFT**

Hollis updated the commission members on the 2021 Parks & Recreation Commission Master Calendar and pointed out that, after discussing it with Eric, some items have been added and some were moved around.

Eric pointed out that he had had a conversation with the Garfield County Federal Mineral Lease grant administrators for feedback on pursuing this grant for playground improvements. The grant administrators conveyed to Eric that the grants are not competitive and suggested substituting practical, utilitarian purchases. Based on this feedback, Eric will shift his focus and allow the Police Department to pursue the grant for needed items; in the long run it may free up money in the TOC budget to fund playground improvements. Eric is planning on removing the FMLD grant deadlines from the Master Calendar but may add other grant opportunities.

Eric also acknowledged the suggestion that the Master Calendar include groups that the Parks & Recreation Department is involved with such as the Environmental Board, the Roaring Fork Pickleball Association, or the Roaring Fork Soccer Club but hasn't yet plugged them into the appropriate places on the calendar.

Hollis added that the calendar can be a valuable tool to keep items from falling through the cracks.

#### Questions/Comments:

Kathleen asked that the Aquatics Master Plan be added to the schedule in anticipation of the budget cycle.

Hollis pointed out that the Gateway RV Park will be on the April meeting's agenda.

Eric added that the Master Plans are all posted on the website for review. He noted that many of them are large documents. Hollis suggested pulling together an Executive Summary for each of the Master Plans to bring commission members up-to-speed quickly as they transition into the P & R Commission.

Brian agreed that an Executive Summary would be a useful tool.

### **REPORT & UPDATES: STAFF AND COMMISSION MEMBERS**

Eric Brendlinger, Parks & Recreation Director:

30/60/90 Staff Work Plan and Outstanding Project Status Report:

- Red Hill amenities are ongoing;
- The 2021 Weed Management Plan is progressing through the appropriate channels for approval;
- There are two big projects Parks Department staff plan to complete prior to the “mow and grow” season—Nuche Park (the Bald Eagle closure will end on March 15<sup>th</sup> after which work on the parking lot will begin) and the White Hill Cemetery fence installation;
- The Miners Park volleyball court border should be completed this spring;
- Electrical work at the RV Park and rodeo grounds is ongoing.

Jessi Rochel, Recreation Center & Recreation Programs Manager:

- Recreation Department staff has started discussing summer programming;
  - All summer youth activities are being considered;
  - Activity offerings will be Covid dependent, but there will be more this summer than last year;
  - Roaring Fork Cycling programming is being discussed as a potential offering;
  - No seasonal brochure will be printed for the summer;
- Youth hockey is ending this week. Unfortunately, conditions at the ice rink have not been favorable for the last few days.
- Will is teaching youth climbing in February. This programming will continue through the spring as long as there is a demand;
- The St. Mary’s Blood Drive is will start again after ice hockey is over;
- Margaret is working on the course for the Full Moon Winter Tri. The event has been modified to accommodate current Covid protocols;
- 51 Letters to Santa were mailed in December;
- Reservations for the St. Mary’s Blood Drive is almost full for next month;
- With Covid vaccinations underway, the Recreation Center is starting to see more seniors participating in the offered programming;
- Push buttons have replaced the touchless feature for the automatic doors because the touchless feature didn’t function well in the colder temperatures
- Margaret hosted a successful Full Moon Triathlon—there were 38 participants and lots of socially-distanced observers.

Rose Rossello, Parks & Recreation Commission Vice-Chair:

- Rose mentioned that she is participating in the upcoming “Light Up The Love” event and asked when TOC permission and/or oversight was required. Eric responded that this is a Carbondale Arts event that is taking place on the Rio Grande Trail; because it is not on TOC property, they didn’t need to get a permit. However, Carbondale Arts did inform the Police Department and TOC Staff about the event.
- Rose pointed out that the swings at the Colorado Meadows playground are still too high off the ground.
- Rose asked about whether there was a governor on the spin feature at Gianinetti Park. Eric replied that there is a governor on the spin feature, and it can’t be removed.

Kathleen Wanatowicz, Parks & Recreation Commission Member:

- Kathleen announced that her firm—PR Studios—has been awarded the on-call strategic communications contract for the Town of Carbondale. She added that she checked with the TOC Manager about the possibility of a conflict of interest if she was on the P & R Commission; he assured her there was not a conflict of interest. She will recuse herself from discussions or

decisions when needed.

Hollis Sutherland, Parks & Recreation Commission Chair:

- Hollis would like to celebrate the P & R Commission successes at next month's meeting.

Luis Yllanes, Board of Trustee Liaison:

- Luis asked if there could be an update on the Special Events Calendar specifically with regards to any changes due to ongoing Covid protocols.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The February 10, 2021, regular meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kae McDonald