

MINUTES
CARBONDALE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
June 14, 2023

Rose Rossello called the meeting of the Carbondale Parks & Recreation Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. at Carbondale Town Hall on June 14, 2023.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present for roll call:

Members: Rose Rossello, Vice-Chair
 Susan Rhea, Member
 Drew Sorenson, Member
 Ashley Hejtmanek, Member
 John Williams, Member

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion Passed: Susan Rhea *moved* to approve the minutes from the May 10, 2023, meeting. John Williams *seconded* the motion, and it was *unanimously approved*.

ITEMS FROM CITIZENS PRESENT NOT ON THE AGENDA

There was no one present, not on the agenda, to address the Commission.

REPORTS AND UPDATES: STAFF AND COMMISSION MEMBERS

Eric reported that over the last several weeks most of his time has been spent addressing citizen concerns regarding two issues. He explained that there have been scheduling challenges with the Crystal River Restoration Project – the extended high water forced the scheduled in-river construction timeline until later in the project, so they made plans to move forward on the upland components of the project, but the local Audubon group pointed out limitations due to the Migratory Bird Act. Eric pointed out that the Audubon Society is not a regulatory agency, but he did contact the United States Fish and Wildlife biologist as well as Colorado Parks and Wildlife for guidance. He related that the USF&W biologist visited the project area and is composing a letter that will address when, how, and where construction can begin. Eric noted that the project is on a very tight timeline to accommodate not only the Migratory Bird Act but also the in-river construction must be completed by September for the fish, adding that the contractor is confident he can accommodate the tight construction schedule. Eric also noted that they have met with the River Valley Ranch Homeowners Association, so they are aware of the project.

Susan asked if there was anything the Town could do to facilitate the project, such as working longer hours.

Eric pointed out that the Board of Trustees would need to approve any work extensions. He added that he will be meeting with representatives of both the Roaring Fork and National Audubon Societies on Monday to relay the results of the USF&W biologist’s report.

Eric reported that the second issue regarded the four Mexican Rodeos planned for the summer and comments and concerns by unhappy neighbors in the vicinity of the rodeo grounds. He explained that this was an ongoing event – they had hosted the Mexican Rodeos for four years prior to Covid, but with a new promoter the neighbors were nervous about the event. He noted that the promoter had followed the same paperwork process as other events, but the neighbors were spreading inaccurate and discriminatory information. Eric related that there was a meeting between the promoter and the neighbors and the first rodeo this past Sunday went well. Eric added that because one of the concerns was the noise level, Eric took readings from various points at the rodeo grounds and the average decibels were very similar to those he took at the concert in Sopris Park that same day.

Eric noted that they have conducted several programming meetings with the Aquatic Facility consultants to determine square footage requirements. He related that the site plan and cost were both too big so staff will need to reevaluate and simplify programming. He added that considering the costing exercise by the construction consultant and a realistic estimate of fundraising (approximately \$1,000,000.00), the not-to-exceed budget is \$9,000,000.00.

Margaret Donnelly, Recreation Programs and Facility Manager:

- Events completed since the last meeting include:
 - Kids bike rodeo (because of inclement weather they used the gym instead; they had 20 participants)
 - There were 40 participants for the pump track trials.
 - Volleyball is over until the fall.
 - There were 37 registered (33 showed up) for the Tri for the Sun Triathlon that took place last Saturday. They are considering offering a duathlon next year while the pool is under construction.
- Lia started on May 14th.
 - The pool opened on June 8th and due to limited staff is currently operating on modified hours, they hope to have regular hours established by June 19th.
 - The chlorinator is broken; they are hand-feeding chlorine until it is replaced.
 - Swim Lessons will begin in July. They anticipate some classes will fill, but because classes are starting so late, many people have registered elsewhere.
 - Lia will conduct another guard training the last week in June; there are four people currently registered.
 - They will still host the 4th of July Pool Party after the parade. They will offer several in-pool activities, have a cake to celebrate the last season of the current pool and sell pizza slices.
- Both rodeos are underway.
- The Farmers Market began last week, and the loss of the shade trees hasn't yet been a problem.
- Summer Classes and Programs are underway:
 - TBall, Youth Softball, and Youth Baseball have 111 participants combined.
 - Adult softball has 10 teams registered with five additional teams on the waitlist. They would like to accommodate more, but don't have the space.
 - Registration for Youth Hikes and Friday Field Trips is down; they will conduct more marketing to increase exposure.
 - Pickleball Clinics will take place throughout the summer; Margaret anticipates all the offered classes will fill.
- Regularly scheduled fitness classes and the youth art classes are continuing, along with Tae Kwan Do and the monthly Bloodmobile.
- The Recreation Center has partnered with Highwater Farms to be the drop-off/pick-up destination for CSA's in Carbondale.

Luis Yllanes, Board of Trustees Liaison:

- The Board of Trustees approved the proposed pickleball court expansion at North Face Park; Eric will update the Memorandum of Understanding once the funding has been raised by the Roaring Fork Pickleball Association.
- He extended kudos to Eric for handling the issues surrounding the Mexican Rodeo.
- He extended kudos to staff for a well-run Farmers Market
- He related that the new owner of the Batch location is interested in being involved with the Chacos Park Master Plan and may have some funding to contribute.

Rose commented that she has several contacts that are ready to help with the aquatic facility fundraising.

Susan added that she spoke with Niki Delson (Age-Friendly Carbondale) regarding grants funds that they could help procure. She related that Niki anticipated grants ranging from \$5,000.00 to \$30,000.00, but these funds must improve the asset availability for older adults. She noted that the group will need some lead time to apply for any grants and they could be used for a wide variety of projects.

Rose asked what the commission member availability was for the NPR/Girl Scout event at Hendricks Park; based

on a consensus of commission members, Rose will work towards Monday, June 19th at 7:00 pm.

Eric announced that there will be a combined Garfield County Board of County Commissioners and Carbondale Board of Trustees meeting next Tuesday, June 20th at 5:30 pm.

PARKS TOUR: PRESENT PROJECTS, FUTURE PROJECTS, BUDGETING PRIORITIES

Chacos Park

Eric described the improvements that have occurred since the park was donated to the Town. He noted that the next step is the Master Plan process with an emphasis on public input. Eric acknowledged that the park is multi-faceted, and he hopes that provides for a robust planning process. He reported that the Town did not receive the FMLD grant that was applied for, but since the Master Plan is included in the same line item as the Highway 133 Improvements – and since the Highway 133 project is on hold because of the high bids received – the money will be earmarked for the Master Plan instead. He pointed out that the Master Plan will need to be complete before the end of the year so upgrades can be included in the 2024 budget and noted that the Request for Proposal will be released the 1st week in July with responses due in August.

Rose stated that her troop can work on another public engagement badge and if there is an opportunity for them to participate, to let her know.

Eric replied that one possibility for park furniture and amenities is recycled wind turbine blades, noting that they are working with an organization that pairs a funding source for the purchase of the blades with a community in need. He pointed out that they will also need to address the need for shade since four big trees had to be removed.

Sopris Park

Eric pointed out the improvements in Sopris Park, specifically the pad for the Potato Days cauldron, concrete aprons around the drinking fountains and the concrete path leading to the picnic shelter. Eric noted that with the addition of the concrete path they will no longer allow vendors to drive across the park, so the food vendors at Mountain Fair will be located along 7th Street. He added that they are still getting complaints from neighbors about the noise, and he is exploring the idea of hiring a sound engineer to see if improvements can be made.

Ashley commented that she recently worked with someone at the Los Colonias amphitheater that might be a good fit.

Eric pointed out that that is one purpose of the Special Events Task Force and expressed his hope that the neighbors will take advantage of the process.

Susan asked how booked out the park was for special events.

Eric replied that it was heavily used, oftentimes with an event Friday, Saturday, and Sundays in the summer. He added that they pay a Parks employee overtime to come empty the trash receptacles between events.

Luis asked about the Noise Ordinance.

Eric replied that it is spelled out in the paperwork. He noted that the noise ordinance was made more stringent based upon the input from neighbors during Special Events Task Force meeting and he expected more scrutiny this year. Eric added that the reservation process has now come under the umbrella of the Recreation Center, and they are working with the Finance Director to streamline the process.

Glassier Park

Eric pointed out that Glassier Park is one of Carbondale's sanctioned off-leash dog parks. He noted that an RFP has been released for the dog park rules signage and he plans to move the signage at Glassier from the corner to the entrance area. He asked the commission members whether Glassier should be fenced to protect the dogs, pointing out that it could also create a focused entry. Eric added that the horseshoe pits failed the CIRSA audit because they need a backing and that he is looking for a product that lasts.

John commented that fencing would discourage other park users.

Ashley added that fencing the space would turn it into a single use and it wouldn't be clean or green.

Eric pointed out that dog owners also let their dogs off leash in the Bridges field, which is school district property and not a Town Park. He identified the pump house for the Highway 133 irrigation system, noting that the new pump is installed but needs to be connected.

Drew suggested that it would be helpful to install a fence next to the pumphouse which would delineate Glassier Park from the school grounds.

Bonnie Fischer Park

Eric noted that they will be shifting the shed next to the bread oven closer to the parking lot. He explained that the objectives of the Master Plan for this park have largely been met except for the playground and basketball hoops, and without these features the park is more of a passive than active park.

Triangle Park

Eric related that in a cost-sharing endeavor with Three Rivers Little League, they were able to hire a company to complete a laser level of the North Face and Tiny Nightingale ball fields, but the current quote to do the same at Triangle Park was \$21,000.00 – which isn't available in this year's budget. He explained that Triangle Park was neglected through Covid and while he will be including some money for maintenance in the 2024 budget, in the interim they are trying to duplicate parts of the leveling effort, such as dragging the infield. Eric acknowledged that River Valley Ranch is required to help fund long-term maintenance of the park, but what they fund is dependent upon who is on the RVR Board. Eric pointed out that items such as the laser-leveling are for a higher level of service and he doesn't expect RVR to pay for it all.

Rose noted that the grills were gone when she rented the park shelter space a few weeks ago and this was confirmed during the park visit.

Thompson Park Permaculture

Eric explained that the permaculture area looks much better than it has in years past and pointing out the "Guilds," which are areas of symbiotic plants scattered across the park. He added that the Parks crew are going to mow at least once per month, but pointed out noxious weeds that need to be addressed. Eric noted that he would like to see the group grow the volunteer base and provide public information/education signage.

Eric pointed out the Thompson House heritage garden and noted that the Environmental Board Bee Friendly Coalition has petitioned to convert the turf areas surrounding the house to pollinator gardens. He explained that he is hesitant to commit that space to pollinator gardens because he doesn't want to lose that space for public performances.

Ashley commented that volunteer groups have also not had proven track records when it comes to maintaining the gardens.

Other Comments

Eric noted that the Youth Art Park construction is underway, but because it is pro bono it is progressing slowly. He noted that the \$35,000.00 GOCO grant must be closed out by September.

Eric asked if anyone was interested in being the Parks & Recreation Commission stakeholder representative for the Multi-Modal Mobility and Access Plan (M3AP).

Drew responded that he may be interested and asked Eric to send him some information to review.

Luis noted that the Aquatic Facility is a qualifying project for the Public Arts Commission 1% Fund, which means there will need to be allowance for public art in the context of the project.

ADJOURNMENT

The June 14, 2023, meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm. The next regular meeting is scheduled for July 12, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kae McDonald