

MINUTES
CARBONDALE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
July 14, 2021

Hollis Sutherland called the in-person/virtual meeting of the Carbondale Parks & Recreation Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. at Carbondale Town Hall on July 14, 2021.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present for roll call:

Members:	Hollis Sutherland, Chair Rose Rossello, Vice Chair (Late) John Williams, Member Ashley Hejtmanek, Member Tracy Wilson, Member Kathleen Wanatowicz, Member Becky Moller, Member (Late) Brian Soby, Alternate (Late) Celeste Fullerton, Youth Member
Town Staff Present:	Eric Brendlinger, Parks & Recreation Department Director Jessi Rochel, Recreation Center & Recreation Programs Manager Luis Yllanes, Board of Trustees Liaison Kae McDonald, Boards & Commission Clerk

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion Passed: Tracy *moved* to approve the minutes from the June 9, 2021, meeting with one correction on page 3: "Eric asked the owners of the park if the previous weed control included the applications of chemical herbicides." John *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.

PARKS TOUR REVIEW FOR BUDGET PRIORITY EXERCISE

Eric reviewed the previous month's parks tour in the context of the upcoming 2022 budget and to incorporate into the five-year plan. Eric noted that the budget priorities are:

- Upgrades to park playgrounds
 - Hendricks
 - Colorado Meadows
 - Sopris
- Park Bathroom Improvements
 - Given the estimated costs, it isn't feasible to replace playground features and associated bathrooms within the same budget cycle
 - Eric suggested a schedule alternating the replacement of playground features and bathrooms every other year, replacing the oldest bathroom (Gianinetti Park) and inadequate bathroom (North Face Park) first
 - The primary consideration is how ongoing work at the parks can be coordinated with Aquatic Facility bonding
- Bike Park Maintenance
 - When the Bike Park was installed, it was a great amenity, but it requires annual maintenance. Eric has gotten a quote from a bike park maintenance team (not affiliated with TOC staff) to address jump lines that aren't rideable along with other maintenance issues.
 - Because this is an emergency situation, a sole source contract for \$14,000.00 has been awarded to get the bike course in rideable condition. A rebuild would require five to six days at a cost of approximately \$20,00.00, with an ongoing annual maintenance contract of \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Questions/Comments:

Hollis asked where the initial \$14,000.00 was coming from.

Eric replied that it is a Recreation Sales Tax expenditure. He noted that \$5,000.00 already earmarked in the budget for the Bike Park will be used along with money earmarked for subcontracts.

Ashley asked if the bike park is serving needs given there is a great facility in El Jebel along with the myriad mountain bike trails in the vicinity of Carbondale. She wondered if it was obsolete.

Eric pointed out that it still gets good use, especially from younger/less experienced riders and the pump track. He noted that the progression of difficulty from beginner to intermediate/advanced is still there and it would be a disservice to local riders to eliminate it.

Kathy agreed that it was a great asset, and the TOC needs to keep it. She supports the cost of ongoing maintenance rather than spending money on the RV Park.

Tracy also agreed that it was important to maintain the bike park. She reminded the commission members that they had previously discussed finding funding donors in return for signage opportunities at the park. She noted that there is a high maintenance cost with the park, in general.

Eric added that the other long-range asset that needs regular maintenance are the Red Hill trails. He explained that the prevailing topography and type of dirt found on Red Hill presents long-term maintenance challenges. He noted that he is developing a Request for Proposals for maintenance, a design for a secondary bike trail exit, and recommendations for how to fix the Beeline as a Black Diamond exit. He also noted that while some of the money will come from the maintenance endowment created during the Save Red Hill campaign, the remainder will come from the 2022 Parks & Recreation budget.

Tracy noted that Ruthie's Run on Red Hill has been hammered. She was glad to hear that there is a maintenance endowment.

Eric added that the Red Hill Trail System benefits from volunteer maintenance—specifically, RFOV and Corporate adoption of trails—in addition to the endowment.

Hollis asked about the pickleball court/skate park lighting project at North Face Park. She noted that that project is listed for 2025 but wondered if the Pickleball Association pays off what they currently owe for the court completion if they might want to embark on the lighting project earlier than that.

John questioned how much of a priority the lighting project was and thought a pavilion might be a higher-priority amenity.

Tracy asked how fundraising for the pool might affect the timing of other projects.

Eric replied that the question is how much money the TOC needs to raise to afford the bond for the pool and noted that there might be competition among several projects for funding.

Ashley suggested that bathroom renovations at each park be given their own byline in the Capital Improvement Plan. She asked if the Bonnie Fischer playground was off the table to which Eric replied in the affirmative.

Becky observed that she had been in the bathrooms at Gianinetti Park recently and they were much improved.

John requested that the \$25,000.00 earmarked for the Thompson House and History Park improvements be moved up one or two years. He noted that once the Thompson Park Townhome project is completed, the History Park will see increased use and with it the potential for more damage. He would like to see road and parking signs clarified.

Rose added that a crosswalk is needed across Highway 133, as well.

Kathleen asked in the context of pool fundraising, how the capital outlay of \$500,000 is earmarked—if it syncs up with the Recreation Sales tax and General Fund; and, if it does, how do you get extra money for projects?

Eric noted that grant funding is more speculative and can't be guaranteed.

Tracy pointed out that there are still wedding/event opportunities at the Thompson House and would like to see that put on the agenda in the next few months to explore in greater detail.

Hollis added that she would make a note to keep in touch with the Thompson Park Homeowner's Association.

Luis suggested that the parking signage at the Thompson House be completed as soon as possible.

AQUATICS FACILITY MASTER PLAN—NEXT STEPS: RECREATION SALES AND USE TAX REVIEW

Eric noted that a BOT work session is scheduled for July 20th to provide information on next steps and get feedback on funding options. Eric referred to several packet attachments that describe the potential funding options for the new aquatics facility and noted that the Recreation Center bond will be paid in full on December 1, 2024. He also pointed out that he included details on the Recreation Sales Tax and Use Fund, specifically how it is set up, earmarks, balance of revenue, and the fee structure. Referring to the orange column, he pointed out that it gives a good look at last year's revenue and how hard the Recreation Department was hit by Covid. Eric also noted that personnel, operations, and maintenance (which includes \$200,00.00 in debt service) comprises 73% of the annual budget, leaving 27% earmarked for all planned capital projects.

Eric referred to the Aquatics Facility Planner for 2021-2023 that was also included in the packet. There are six phases outlined, with Phase 1 including a Request for Proposals to engage a bonding company that will include a possible ballot initiative for 2024—given the magnitude of the project, additional public process is required; the TOC Manager and TOC Finance Director will write the RFP language. The ballot initiative will ask community members to approve the maximum cost of the bond, which is balanced by what the Town budget can afford; once these numbers are known, that will dictate how much fundraising will be required to cover the gap between the two. Phase 5 will be the RFP for final design and engineering, and Phase 6 will be construction. Construction is anticipated to begin in late summer, continue through the winter and spring with an anticipated pool opening in early summer—that strategy will allow to pool to be open for both, albeit shorter, summer seasons.

Questions/Comments:

Kathleen emphatically supports forward momentum on the project. She pointed out that the public will quickly forget about the recent public process and the project needs to stay at the top of people's minds.

Tracy asked for confirmation about the process for Phase 2.

Eric affirmed that the Bond Company would be enlisted through the RFP process and would be designed to give them direction.

Luis added that the Bond Company is essentially a subcontractor and would provide an assessment of how likely a bond initiative was to pass.

Hollis asked for clarification that the bond initiative would be for the full bond amount, but the actual amount of the bond would be what the Town could pay back, to which Eric replied in the affirmative.

Becky followed up by asking if all agree to go forward with the process, construction on the pool might begin before the bond on the Recreation Center is paid off. She noted that the Master Plan has been out for six months, and construction costs are rising. She also asked if the consultants don't think the bond will pass, would the project continue to move forward?

Eric affirmed that this is part of the process and that is why a consultant is hired to assess what the TOC can afford. He added that they are still in the information-gathering phase and the consultants will flesh out fundraising options and whether construction on the pool would need to wait until the Recreation Center bond is paid off. He acknowledged that there might be a gap between what they can afford and what can be bonded.

Kathleen noted that the Bond consultant is very detailed and what Eric is saying is that any decision requires input from the finance people. She further noted that to be on the municipal ballot, it will need to be in April 2022 or April 2024.

Ashley was complimentary of the packet attachment, and she would like to see that same format moving forward. Rose also agreed with Kathleen.

Hollis conducted a straw poll, and all commission members agreed to move forward with the next step.

Eric pointed out that the packet also contains information on the GOCO Community Impact grant, and he is planning on submitting concept items for the next deadline.

P & R COMMISSION 2021 WORKING MASTER CALENDAR

Eric noted that the Master Calendar for July includes the Parks Tour budget, Chair and Vice-Chair nominations, and the Commission will begin to accept nominations for upcoming vacancies. The deadline for member applications or reappointments is Wednesday, August 4th, and interviews will take place at the Commission meeting scheduled for August 11th. Hollis added that there are three terms ending including John Williams, Tracy Wilson, and Becky Moller.

NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS 2022

Hollis expressed interest in continuing as Chair for one more year to see through the completion of several initiatives she has started. Rose also expressed an interest in remaining as Vice-Chair for another year.

Ashley nominated Hollis and Rose for the positions of Parks & Recreation Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively. Rose seconded Ashley's nomination for Hollis, but there was no vote to complete the process.

REPORT & UPDATES: STAFF AND COMMISSION MEMBERS

Eric Brendlinger, Parks & Recreation Department Director:

- The Parks & Recreation Department is returning to pre-Covid activities with Special Events, a suite of programming at the Recreation Center, a variety of aquatics activities, and the rodeo
- The mobile stage has been used for several special events
- Manual weed eradication is taking place at the Nature Park solar array (thistle), Riverfront Park (absinthe wormwood), Nuche Park and the Bike Park. The Parks Department has been utilizing temporary workers, as well as Stepping Stones at Nuche Park and the Summer Advantage Program at the Bike Park.
- The 30/60/90-day Project Summary has been updated and Eric urged the commissioners to review the spreadsheet
 - The Gateway RV Park internet project is nearing completion. Eric plans to begin the benchmarking process to justify raising camping fees

Jessi Rochel, Recreation Center & Recreation Programs Manager:

- The Recreation Center is returning to memberships and eliminating the reservation requirement. Masks are optional, but there are capacity limits. Facility rentals are not being accepted at this time
- Senior Field trips are being sponsored; there was one trip to Paonia and another trip to Twin Lakes Boat Tour
- The Recreation Center is sponsoring a youth art class with Carbondale Arts—it will be a Mountain Fair theme
- There are two remaining youth hikes
- The Blood Drive continues monthly
- Adult CoEd softball is starting
- The Farmers Market has been very busy
- Our Town, One Table is scheduled for Sunday, August 15th
- Potato Days is scheduled for Saturday, October 2nd—planning is in full swing
- Five Points Film Festival is scheduled for October, as well, so OktoberFest is cancelled
- The O2 Festival has been cancelled

Tracy Wilson, Parks & Recreation Commission Member:

- Have been able to take advantage of swimming lessons this year. The pool looks great and appreciates the entrance move from the bathhouse to the back gate—kudos to Margaret for all her hard work.

ADJOURNMENT

The July 14, 2021, regular meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting is scheduled for August 11, 2021, at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kae McDonald