

**MINUTES
CARBONDALE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
October 12, 2022**

Hollis Sutherland called the meeting of the Carbondale Parks & Recreation Commission to order at 7:02 p.m. at Carbondale Town Hall on October 12, 2022.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present for roll call:

Members:	Hollis Sutherland, Chair Rose Rossello, Vice-Chair John Williams, Member Leslie Keery, Member Susan Rhea, Member Drew Sorenson, Member
Town Staff Present:	Eric Brendlinger, Parks and Recreation Director Kae McDonald, Boards & Commission Clerk
Guests:	Jessi Rochel Trevor Cannon, Roaring Fork Pickleball Association Jeff Dickinson, Roaring Fork Pickleball Association

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion Passed: John Williams *moved* to approve the minutes from the September 14, 2022, meeting. Susan Rhea *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.

RECOGNITION OF PUBLIC SERVICE: JESSI ROCHEL, TOWN OF CARBONDALE PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY CENTER MANAGER

Eric presented a memo to acknowledge Jessi's service to the Town of Carbondale Parks & Recreation Department. She was employed with the department for 14 years:

"Much was accomplished by the department under the guidance of the Parks & Recreation Commission during her tenure. She helped to open and program a new recreation center, she was integral in our special event offerings, kept seniors alive with prescription and food deliveries during covid, gave people a reason to volunteer because she made it fun...always. We will miss her smiling face and her enthusiasm. She inspired kids to seniors "to get out and do something" and was a great example of the benefits of an active lifestyle and the joy of recreation. The Parks & Recreation Commission and the staff would like to thank her for sharing her knowledgeable perspective on all things Parks & Recreation related. We wish her luck in her future endeavors and thank her profusely for her valuable service to the department."

Hollis commented that Jessi will be leaving a hole that will never be filled and she will be missed.

Rose agreed and explained that she applied to be on the Parks & Recreation Commission because of Jessi and prior to that she attended numerous events that were hosted by the Parks & Recreation Department.

ANNUAL MOU CHECK-IN WITH ROARING FORK PICKLEBALL ASSOCIATION

Trevor Cannon, recently appointed President of the Roaring Fork Pickleball Association, and Jeff Dickinson were present to report on the Roaring Fork Pickleball Association's activities. Trevor provided a summary of the current state of pickleball:

- Land for the six dedicated pickleball courts was approved four years and the RFPA raised

\$350,000.00 to build them. He thanked the Commission for the gift to the community and noted that the RFPA and the Town of Carbondale Parks & Recreation Department have had a good partnership.

- In the past four years the sport of pickleball has grown exponentially and the RFPA has grown to more than 350 members with an estimated average age of 50. Trevor noted that in the evening the pickleball courts are filled with high school and young adults (30 years and younger) and that more than 100 people might play on any given day between June and mid-September.
- Trevor explained that they offered an event last Friday evening for four hours with 60 participants and 25 people on the waiting list; he noted that the Darien tennis courts were also full during that time. He plans to offer another event this Friday as well. He added that evening play is surging because that is when working adults come to play.
- Trevor pointed out that the RFPA greatly appreciates the dedicated courts and, to date, has handled most of the maintenance (including painting and re-painting the pickleball lines on the Darien tennis courts), maintained a lost and found, provided first aid, and has purchased 25 temporary nets. He noted that the temporary nets don't last long and asked if the Parks & Recreation Commission would consider approving a recommendation for the purchase of six heavy-duty nets at a cost of approximately \$2,000.00 each (\$12,000.00 in total). He added that they would appreciate having the cracks on the Darien courts filled as well, but added that after a conversation with Eric, that process might be more complicated than anticipated. Trevor explained that given the heavy use of the Darien courts for pickleball, the demand justifies the cost of the heavier duty nets and pointed out that RFPA anticipates filling the dedicated courts on their allotted Tuesday and Thursday evenings to provide playing time for their working RFPA members, so the temporary nets would help satisfy overflow play on the Darien courts.

Hollis asked if RFPA membership was Carbondale specific.

Trevor estimated that roughly 80% of the members live in the 81623 zip code.

Leslie asked what an RFPA membership cost.

Trevor replied that memberships currently cost \$75.00 but that they would like to reduce that cost while offering more for the membership. He added that they would like to install a bulletin board at the courts with contact information and a way to petition for a reduced membership cost.

Jeff added that members of the RFPA often act as a de facto welcoming and management committee for those unfamiliar with play at the North Face courts.

Leslie asked how the temporary nets would be stored and how would they be protected from vandalism.

Trevor replied that they haven't yet worked that out and pointed out that if they are locked up, someone that knows the RFPA combination would have to be available to access the nets. He pointed out that the proposed nets are heavy and quite long, so they would be hard to steal.

Leslie asked if their will be lights installed at the pickleball courts.

Eric replied that they received a quote for lighting that covers all the facilities at North Face Park.

Susan asked whether there was equally heavy use of the Darien courts by tennis players and wondered if they could be converted for more frequent use by pickleball players.

Rose commented that she sees a lot of people playing tennis at the public courts at River Valley Ranch.

Trevor noted that the cracks on the Darien courts discourages a lot of tennis players from using those courts, but he also pointed out that the recent increase in use of the Darien courts by tennis players might be because the courts at the Glenwood Springs Recreation Center are torn up.

Jeff commented that he would also like to see more dedicated pickleball courts in Carbondale and he noted that he has discussed where they might be located with Eric.

Leslie pointed out that statistics from the Sports Fitness Activities Top Line Participation Report show that participation in pickleball grew by 39% with 4.8 million new players for 12.2 million total while tennis grew by 28% with 4.9 million players for 26.2 million total. She noted that although it might not be mirrored in the Roaring Fork Valley, tennis is also growing.

Trevor added that it is hard to measure the positive economic impact of pickleball and the overall benefit to Carbondale but noted that he hopes to find a way to document those numbers in the coming year. He pointed out Carbondale currently maintains the best facility between Denver and Salt Lake City.

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL FOR HENDRICKS, GLASSIER AND NATURE PARK OFF-LEASH DOG AREAS

John opened the topic by noting that he and Susan had met several times and once with the Police Department Ordinance Officer to discuss proposed rule changes for the Hendricks Dog Park.

Susan added that she had also had conversations with community members and many related that they just don't go to the dog park any more because of confrontations. She explained that they made the effort to compose the verbiage, so it has a more positive vibe. She wondered if the effort should only focus on the Hendricks Dog Park or if they should include the Nature Park as well but pointed out that it seems the confinement of dogs at Hendricks creates more of the problem.

John commented that the rules included in the meeting packet were developed in concert with Susan (he noted a typographic error in the third line of page two – it should read “resolved” and not “evolved”). He added that since they re-wrote the rules, conversations with the Ordinance Officer and others led them to the consensus that people don't read signs and at a recent trip to Douglas County he took a picture of the sign at their off-leash area. He pointed out that that sign is twice the size of the sign currently posted at Hendricks. He noted that while it is better practice to address problems as they arise, most of the people just leave because of negative dog behavior rather than engage in an uncomfortable confrontation. He suggested several other options:

- Create a website to allow people to communicate and/or report negative behavior
- Create a volunteer patrol comprised of knowledgeable volunteers
- Keep the rules limited: 1) keep the gates closed, 2) pick up after your dog, 3) call 911 (or the Police Department non-emergency line) for any issues or emergencies.

John suggested creating a large (2' by 3') happy sign with key wording like that of Douglas County's to post at the entrance to the Hendrick Dog Park with a second sign posted near the center of the park that is larger than the current one that lists the rules of use in more detail. He wasn't sure if it was necessary to have the same signs at the Nature Park.

Hollis pointed out that the signage should be consistent at both parks.

John thought since Glassier Park was so small that large signs were necessary.

Hollis thought there was value to the volunteer patrollers and related that it works well for keeping playing time at the golf course moving efficiently. She thought by attaching authority to the volunteer patrollers, it might help remove the uncomfortableness of confronting the participants exhibiting bad behavior.

Drew commented that training is key because the volunteers might be inserting themselves into a charged issue. He suggested that the training should focus on how to approach both people and animals because by doing so, they might make the situation worse.

Eric replied that he wasn't sure that would be a good idea and that that is not what the Police Department wants because it promotes human conflict at the dog park.

John suggested having a local vet or dog trainer present a seminar on how to handle various situations and that it might be a “win” for local dog trainers because they might obtain some clients. He thought that the Ordinance

officer could be the one to train the volunteers.

Hollis asked about next steps.

Eric thought the proposed rule changes were good and it will make it more enjoyable to read. He thought it was important to ensure all the necessary language is posted in the park and noted that they are having conversations about how to brand the signage at all the Town's parks.

John pointed out that per Town Ordinance, the Ordinance officer doesn't want anything posted on the signs that can't be enforced.

PROPOSAL OF INFLATIONARY RECREATION CENTER FEE INCREASE FOR 2023. SCHEDULE A

Eric opened the topic by noting that there is a five-year plan to review the recreation center and pool fees for inflation increase. He commented that the increases reflected in the packet attachment represent a 3 to 5% increase (rounded to the nearest dollar for convenience) and are being proposed during this year's budget cycle. He added that in reviewing the pool fees that found that only a handful of recreation center pass holders were taking advantage of the add-on package so to simplify the fee structure, those options were eliminated. He pointed out that they are trying to streamline all the fee structures where feasible.

Hollis asked if he was comfortable with the proposed fee increases as compared to other recreation facilities in the valley.

Rose pointed out that the fees at the Snowmass Recreation Center are higher and it is a smaller facility.

Eric replied that because there isn't a pool attached to the recreation center it is hard to compare to the other facilities in the valley.

Leslie thought the proposed rates were acceptable and commented that she doesn't want to see them get raised too high because it might prevent some members of the community from affording the amenities.

Eric pointed out that pre-Covid, the recreation center enjoyed a 65% cost recovery which was in-line with industry standards and noted that they are working to get back to that level.

Susan asked if the increase in fees will cover any added expense incurred due to the current rate of inflation. She also pointed out that there were several line items that needed to be swapped:

- Youth and Seniors monthly and 3-month membership fees should be \$31.00 and \$76.00, respectively
- Adult monthly and 3-month memberships fees should be \$46.00 and \$122.00, respectively

Eric replied that they did take that into consideration, and they are hopeful the fees will cover the increased expense. He pointed out that if they can achieve the 65% cost recovery again, that savings can be used to pay off the pool bond.

Motion Passed: Rose *moved* to approve the proposed fee increases with the changes noted by Susan. Susan *seconded* the motion, and it was *unanimously approved*.

AQUATICS FACILITY MASTER PLAN – REVIEW COMMISSIONER'S QUESTIONS FOR ASPEN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION NON-ENDOWED ORGANIZATIONAL FUND

Eric commented that the money is real, and his next step is the RFP/RFQ for the owner's representative.

Hollis noted that the Aspen Community Foundation representative will attend the November meeting and in developing the question and discussion points she reviewed the past meeting recordings and minutes.

Eric asked that if there are any additional questions to please email him prior to the next meeting packet being posted.

INTERNAL COMMISSION OPERATIONS – THE TIMING OF APPOINTMENTS AND STAGGERED ROTATIONS

Hollis commented that this topic was included so commission members could begin thinking about this topic for the November meeting. She is proposing one of the positions that expires in 2023 be reduced to a two-year term so there is a more even rotation of vacancies. She also noted that the suggestion for term limits needs to be considered after consultation with the Town Manager because it could affect all the boards and commissions rather than just Parks & Recreation.

Rose suggested making sure the Chair and Vice-Chair memberships remain as three-year terms.

Hollis pointed out that other items to be considered eliminating the Special Meeting requirement for the appointment process and to move the terms from beginning September 1 and ending August 30 to beginning in May and ending in April because that would capture the Parks tour and budget process. She asked that if anyone had other options they would like to discuss, to please forward it to Eric before the next packet is posted.

REPORT & UPDATES: STAFF AND COMMISSION MEMBERS

Eric Brendlinger, Parks and Recreation Director:

- There were 36 applications for Jessi's position and of that number they conducted six in-person interviews, two of which were in-house candidates. The position has been offered to Margaret Donnelly and through that process they found a promising candidate that could fill the pool programming and facility maintenance position. They have made an offer to this candidate, contingent upon passing the required background checks.
- The Red Hill picnic shade shelter is complete, and the landscaping is scheduled for November. Those tasks will fulfill the outstanding items remaining on that grant and the grant will be closed out by the end of the year.
- Sopris Park improvements are underway and include a cement pathway from the parking area to the picnic shade shelter and upgrade the drinking fountain and surrounding pads to be ADA compliant.
- The Special Event Task Force will meet on November 1st and December 6th in Room 1 at Town Hall.
- Eric reported on his recent attendance at the Parks and Recreation Conference and noted that he shared how the Hendricks Park playground equipment was selected with A-to-Z Recreation (who will be installing the new playground equipment). He also noted that he attended two seminars on water-wise turf and smart irrigation systems.

Hollis Sutherland, Parks & Recreation Commission Chair

- Shared that she participated in the recent Highway 133 walk which included TOC staff, Board of Trustees, and other Boards and Commissions representatives along with Colorado Department of Transportation staff. She noted that CDOT staff was informative and suggested strategies to create a safer crossing at the Cowen Center and representatives from the town were able to share their concerns about vehicular speed, among other things.
- Reported that Carbondale Age Friendly Community Initiative has indicated a willingness to complete park assessments. Eric noted that they suggested undertaking assessments on the same parks that members of the Parks & Recreation Commission assessed to test the tool.

Rose Rossello, Parks & Recreation Commission Vice-Chair

- Noted that in the Special Events calendar, Dia de los Muertos is listed as Friday, November 5th but the date should be listed as Friday, November 4th.

ADJOURNMENT

The October 12, 2022, meeting adjourned at 9:01 pm. The next regular meeting is scheduled for November 9, 2022, at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kae McDonald