

MINUTES
CARBONDALE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
July 13, 2022

Hollis Sutherland called the meeting of the Carbondale Parks & Recreation Commission to order at 7:02 p.m. at Carbondale Town Hall on July 13, 2022.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present for roll call:

Members:	Hollis Sutherland, Chair Rose Rossello, Vice-Chair Ashley Hejtmanek, Member John Williams, Member Leslie Keery, Member Susan Rhea, Member Drew Sorenson, Member Brian Soby, Alternate Misha Logan, Youth Representative
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Town Staff Present:	Eric Brendlinger, Parks and Recreation Director Luis Yllanes, Board of Trustees Liaison Kae McDonald, Boards & Commission Clerk
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CONSENT AGENDA

Motion Passed: Ashley Hejtmanek *moved* to approve the minutes from the June 8, 2022, 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.

REVIEW/DEBRIEF OF PARK ASSESSMENT TOOL

Eric commented that 18 of 25 parks were assessed by commission members using the revised OLAT tool. He appreciated the effort and noted that this was part of the process to explore whether this tool satisfies Carbondale's needs and style of park. He pointed out that he included some (not all) of the assessments in the meeting packet and they produced good data points by someone other than staff. He asked if anyone had comments regarding the tool and its useability, pointing out that Drew provided some feedback about possibly improvements including:

- More room for comments
- More open-ended questions
- Adding information on the number of people that can be served by each park
- Add a category to rate the sports amenities provided by a park and their state (whether they need to be repaired, etc.)
- Consolidate some questions where appropriate

John Williams thought the assessment tool covered most topics well and noted that when needed, he added comments in the space to the right of the question.

Hollis wondered whether it would be better to add space by each question or include additional space at the end of the questions.

Drew replied that in some sections the response could have been more detailed. He suggested where prompts in the lefthand column led to a written response, the columns along the righthand side could be removed to provide additional comment space.

Susan noted that she didn't use the third column at all.

Eric pointed out that the third column asked for level of priority and that column wasn't really used.

Hollis commented that she didn't use the third column because the priorities in each park are generally already set. She asked that the headers repeat on all the pages.

Susan added that she also talked with people using the parks for their feedback and she would like to see space to include that direct feedback. She pointed out that the purpose of the assessment tool is to inventory the parks, not provide a prescription for what needs to be fixed.

Hollis responded that the tool could have multiple uses and could also be used for prioritization and budget items.

Eric thought it was comprehensive in both inventorying the parks and providing information on needed repairs.

Ashley commented that when they undertook the task of using the assessment tool it was directed at the older adult population and in trying to adapt it to Carbondale's parks it may be missing some things. She pointed out that they did add some new categories and asked if there was anything that should be added.

Eric suggested under the Sports category to include the size/population using the amenity, the quality of the field/turf, and whether it is a complete amenity (for example, it has benches, water fountain, bathrooms, etc.). He noted that he will scan all the assessments and post them on the Parks Department website for comment.

Ashley reminded the commission members that the assessment tool was still in draft form. She noted that in spreadsheet form, the information can easily be entered digitally.

Hollis commented that as she was doing the assessments, she started looking at other possibilities for park space and asked the commission members whether it triggered any creative thinking.

Susan replied that she did think about the older adult population needs when considering the fields at Hendrick Park and how challenging the surface was to walk on and the fact that there wasn't any shade for the bleachers.

Drew added that the questions also prompted thoughts about how amenable a park was for use and filling the assessment out gave a sense of the park's purpose.

Misha pointed out that there should also be a consideration of whether a park needs a particular amenity – for example, Orchard Park doesn't have any water features, but given that the Crystal River is about three minutes away, there really isn't a need for a water feature.

Leslie noted that the park categories need clarification, not only in using the assessment tool, but also on the website (for example, what is a "passive" park. She also thought it is important to include a list of amenities in the park description on the website.

Ashley stated that the assessment tool will undergo another round of modifications including spellcheck, usability and formatting. She asked whether a field copy was acceptable or if a formatted version needed to be submitted for approval.

Eric replied that once the assessment tool has been formatted, there are volunteer groups that can fill it out.

Hollis added that it would be beneficial to get feedback from the Carbondale Age-Friendly Community Initiative before the tool is finalized. She asked if the seating question would combine benches and picnic tables.

Leslie thought it was important to keep benches and picnic tables separated because there is an important distinction specific to back support.

Ashley replied that the seating language could be clarified.

Eric added that it was important to know the specific number of each seating type to maintain an accurate inventory.

Hollis suggested rewriting the maintenance section to simplify the graffiti section.

4TH STREET PLAZA PARK: PRELIMINARY VISIONING, DISCUSSION AND RANKING OF VISIONS

Eric noted that there is a memo in the packet regarding the newly acquired 4th Street Plaza Park. He commented that as the 2023 budget is considered, it is necessary to consider what the park can become but noted that it is already a well-utilized space. He added that specific to the turf area the irrigation system needs to be revamped because it is currently serviced by domestic water, so one option would be to maintain it as a turf park recognizing that there would be additional costs for the updated irrigation system and continued maintenance. Eric explained that the second option would be to hardscape the area to create a plaza space like that across the street; this option would provide an optimum surface for the ice rink and require limited maintenance but would offer less comfortable seating. Eric explained that the third option would be artificial turf, which would offer a compromise between the first two options. He noted that considering the removal of the shed and the parking easement, there is approximately 6,250 square feet of usable space which leaves the perimeter where the trees are located intact – the trees would require irrigation regardless of which option is selected for the turf area.

Susan asked which of the three turf samples was used for the Bell Mountain Golf and Grass estimate included in the packet.

Eric replied that it was for the middle-height grass and added that he could request an estimate for the long grass, if desired.

Hollis replied that the sample of the longest grass was the softest but thought the example of the middle-height grass was fine.

Leslie asked if the artificial turf would be hotter than natural grass.

Eric acknowledged that the artificial turf does get hotter than natural turf but pointed out that the samples he had with him used a cooling sand infill instead of recycled rubber which helps to mitigate the heat.

Leslie asked if the artificial turf would work well with the ice rink.

Eric replied that they currently have an uneven surface underneath the ice rink that presents a challenging maintenance scenario and if the artificial turf was installed it would provide a flat surface that would greatly improve the ice rink maintenance. He added that with a flat surface, there is the option for synthetic ice in the future.

Leslie asked if it was possible to develop a cost comparison between the natural and artificial turf over the stated 15-year lifespan of the artificial turf.

Ashley asked how the turf would stand up to pets, food, and drink.

Eric replied that they would still need to power wash the artificial turf at least once per week during the busy season but would still save water by eliminating the need to irrigate.

Drew noted that they have artificial turf at his school and there is some compression that occurs after an item has been placed on the grass. He pointed out that there is a clear demarcation in the temperature of the artificial turf between sun and shade.

Luis asked if there were plans to add additional plantings around the park's exterior and possibly reduce the amount of turf that needed to be irrigated. He commented that a hardscape doesn't seem to be in keeping with how the space is currently used.

Eric pointed out that they are still considering all the options and no decisions have been made.

Ashley commented that the border of the park does need to be improved, but that a plaza makes sense in terms of the ice rink and serving the Farmer's Market. She suggested adding more picnic tables to augment the seating space.

Susan agreed that the hardscape would integrate the space with the other side and create a continuous space for events. She pointed out that the ice rink is an important amenity, so it is a big consideration. She expressed concern about the heat level with the hardscape, as well.

Hollis agreed that the heat level is a concern. She wondered how well wheels (i.e., Strollers, walkers, wheelchairs) might go over the surface. She suggested a combination of plants, grass, and hardscape.

John asked if it was possible to have a cost comparison of all three options. He preferred that hardscape surrounded by trees.

Hollis suggested a mobile garden that could provide flexibility in how the space is used.

Leslie suggested a splash pad for the summer.

Eric replied that the industry now can combine a splash pad/ice rink, but it would be a permanent feature. He agreed to develop a cost comparison and bring the topic back for further discussion. He pointed out that the current park area won't pass CIRSA inspection, so it will need to be improved soon.

Susan asked if it was necessary to do something in 2023 and wondered if it could be put off for a year so there would be more money in the budget for bathroom improvements in 2023.

Eric replied that they will need to change the interface from the sidewalk into the park now that the Town of Carbondale owns the space because CIRSA will penalize the Town for tripping hazards. He also pointed out that the power will need to be configured once the shed has been removed.

Brian asked when CIRSA audits the parks.

Eric replied that they get audited twice per year – once as a paper audit and once as a physical. He pointed out that the park will be inspected and won't pass in its current configuration. He acknowledged that they would have two or three months to address the problems, but CIRSA needs to be reassured that they are working on the issues.

DRAFT FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Eric noted that with regards to the draft Capital Improvement Plan included in the meeting packet, the projects highlighted in yellow will carryover from the 2022 budget including the Crystal River Project. He explained that because the single bid on the project far exceeded the project estimate, additional fundraising may be required along with a re-release of the RFP in January or February with the intent of obtaining more competitive proposals. He noted that the grant from Great Outdoors Colorado will need to go through a board decision to extend the grant for two additional years. He added that they are working on some value engineering to help reduce costs, as well. He reiterated that this was a draft Capital Improvement Plan and noted that he will take the feedback balancing the improvement of park bathrooms with the pool project into consideration.

Susan commented that improving the Gianinetti Park bathrooms should be a priority because the park is frequented by a lot of children and older adults and the bathroom doors are very heavy, making them difficult to enter or exit. She also suggested that given the park's proximity to the Heritage Care Facility, ADA improvements should be considered.

Ashley noted that a Signage Master Plan is very important and should be considered for the Capital Improvement Project list because it provides a cohesive vision that lends consistency throughout the park system.

Susan agreed and pointed out that there is no signage at Triangle Park.

John also agreed and would like Wayfinding signs funded as soon as possible.

Eric replied that posting signage and rules is important and pointed out that lockable kiosks will be included in the 2023 budget. He explained that the kiosks could be installed in a central location at each park and would include all the necessary information. He agreed that the Signage Master Plan was a capital improvement and will add it to the

list.

Susan added that a number to call for maintenance issues should also be included in the park information.

John commented that he would like to see the North Face Complex lighting project considered before 2027 because adequate lighting could double or triple the use of the area.

Eric noted that there are two additional playgrounds that require retrofitting but suggested that bathroom improvements could be addressed before the retrofits because the playground equipment hasn't reached the end of its use life.

Ashley wondered where the greenspace for the new developments along the east side of Highway 133 is located. She noted that there is a lot of development and not many parks in the vicinity.

Eric agreed to investigate that issue.

Luis commented that there is some open space within the developments – not a lot – but the percentage as required by the code.

AQUATICS FACILITY MASTER PLAN – NEXT STEPS: TIMELINE FOR BOND UNDERWRITERS. ASPEN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Eric commented that the process is still on track with the timetable as currently set forth and they will be interviewing the bond underwriters in the coming weeks. He added that the bonding ordinance will be on the July 26th Board of Trustees agenda for approval, after which they will hire the bond underwriter. He noted that the packet contains a memo outlining the timeline for the bonding process and helps to explain the Underwriting Consulting Services Request for Proposal and what they will be interviewing for. Eric added that he and Hollis have been emailing the Aspen Community Foundation regarding the capital campaign process for the pool and they will be meeting in person next week. He pointed out that the fundraising will be a way to upgrade or include extra amenities and this is an opportunity for philanthropy to build the facility that the community wants.

Hollis added that she sees the vision as larger than the pool and as a long-term mechanism for community members to contribute money for other park amenities such as lighting. She noted that the pool could just be the start and she is glad the foundation is interested in talking with them.

Susan asked about the pool timing and what happens to the money earmarked for 2023 if the pool groundbreaking doesn't happen until 2024.

Eric replied that they are still retiring the debt on the Recreation Center and some funding will still be required in 2023 to hire the construction manager and finalize the architectural and engineering design.

Susan wondered why the sales tax revenue earmarked to pay down the bond couldn't be spent on other things.

Brian advised saving that money, if possible, to pay down the bond once it is spent.

NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS 2023

Hollis noted that the meeting packet contained a draft description of the role and responsibilities of the Parks and Recreation Commission Chair and Vice-Chair, which follows along with her effort to provide more structure and define the vision of the organization. She asked the commission members to read through the draft and provide feedback and once it is finalized it will be included as part of the Commission resource guide. Hollis noted that applications for the Youth Member are currently being accepted and Misha has reapplied. She also noted that nominations are being accepted for the Chair and Vice-Chair positions and she expressed her interest in continuing as Chair to help complete those projects that have been started.

Susan nominated Hollis for the position of Chair. Ashley seconded the nomination. Leslie nominated Rose for the position of Vice-Chair. Drew seconded the nomination.

John asked if there had been a final decision on term limits.

Hollis replied that while the topic had been briefly discussed, it should be added to an upcoming agenda for a more in-depth discussion and decision.

REPORT & UPDATES: STAFF AND COMMISSION MEMBERS

Eric Brendlinger, Parks and Recreation Director:

- Asked the commission members to review the 30/60/90 spreadsheet included in the meeting packet, highlights include:
 - The 4th Street Plaza shed will be removed soon
 - The Picnic Shade Shelter is contracted for a fall project and the information kiosk at Red Hill is complete
 - The Highway 133 irrigation project will go back out to bid
 - The Youth Art Park will break ground soon and Phase I of the project will be complete
- Recreation Center programming is going well. One Town, One Table will be held on Sunday, August 21st and Jamie Wall is accepting table reservations now
- The Town will be hosting special events in the coming weeks:
 - Friday, July 22nd Big Head and the Monsters will be performing at the River Valley Ranch driving range as a benefit for the ALC Foundation. The mobile stage will be rented for the event and Town staff will set it up and take it down; they will also be involved as part of the traffic control plan.
 - The 51st Mountain Fair will take place at Sopris Park Friday, July 29th through Sunday, July 31st.
 - The August First Friday (August 5th) will host the Car Show.

Luis Yllanes, Board of Trustees Liaison:

- At the July 12, 2022, Board of Trustees meeting, permit fees for the Youth Art Park were waived. At this same meeting, additional security for Mountain Fair was approved.

ADJOURNMENT

The July 8, 2022, meeting adjourned at 8:59 pm. The next regular meeting is scheduled for August 10, 2022, at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kae McDonald