

**MINUTES  
CARBONDALE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
September 14, 2022**

Rose Rossello called the meeting of the Carbondale Parks & Recreation Commission to order at 7:01 p.m. at Carbondale Town Hall on September 14, 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 (Late)

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

Guests: Becky Moller, 907 Wheel Circle  
Denise Moss, 1333 Rock Court  
Marty Silverstein, 1092 Wheel Drive

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**Motion Passed:** Susan Rhea *moved* to approve the minutes from the August 10, 2022, meeting. Leslie Keery *seconded* the motion, and it was *unanimously approved*.

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

Becky Moller informed the commission members that she went with Steve Anthony (Garfield County Vegetation Manager), Eric and Mark Duff to inspect the weed situation at the Nature Park. She explained that Steve emailed her that if a weed management plan is being developed for the Nature Park, the first step would be to contact the Soil Conservation District so they can perform an integral weed mapping plan; this service is free of charge.

Susan commented that her overall impression was that there were fewer weeds this year.

Becky replied that there are still a lot of weeds – they have just been grown over – but the Canada thistle has spread.

Eric added that the Canada thistle has become a problem. He noted that manual extraction efforts related to some of the other weeds such as Scotch thistle, Plumeless thistle, burdock and houndstongue can and have worked except for the Canada thistle so a new strategy needs to be developed.

**RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL FOR HENDRICKS, GLASIER AD NATURE PARK OFF-LEASH DOG AREAS**

Rose explained that there is rule change proposal for the Hendricks, Glassier and Nature Park off-leash dog parks.

Eric explained that he included the rules and regulations that are posted at these parks, with proposed changes highlighted in yellow. He asked the commission members to consider whether the changes should be limited to Hendricks Dog Park or whether the changes should include Glassier and the Nature Park, as well.

Denise Moss addressed the Commission and expressed her gratitude that after reaching out to Eric, he was taking the problem seriously. She referred to her statement included in the packet, highlighting her reasoning for

requesting the rule changes. She added that this is a big conversation at the dog park and many times people are being forced to leave because of an intact dog's aggressive behavior. She also noted that it is provoking negative reactions on the part of owners, as well.

Rose thanked Denise for taking the time to bring this issue to their attention and advised her to please let the Police Department know if someone has crossed a line with their behavior.

Susan asked if the intact male dogs fight with each other. She also noted that when she visited the dog park the sign listing rules and regulations was located at some distance from the entrance and wondered if it should be moved.

Denise replied that the intact dogs seem to gang up on the neutered dogs.

Rose asked if the signage would accommodate this at all three dog parks or whether two signs would need to be posted.

Eric replied that they would update the signage at all three parks.

John replied that he would like to see the important information listed first and possibly to print it in larger font; for example, move rules #4 and #6 to the top. He agreed with Susan that the signage should be moved so that it is at the entrance. John explained that vets are encouraging owners to wait before spay/neutering their dogs until they are at least a year old to help their bone growth and development, but he also supported Denise's statement that owners should be advised to keep aggressive dogs away from the parks. He added that there are members of the community that have been struggling with how to address aggressive dogs for some time, but he thought it was important to try to solve the issue without the Police Department's involvement. He suggested finding some way to log citizens' complaints either with Town staff or through the Parks & Recreation Commission.

Rose suggested utilizing a QR code and sending a picture of the aggressive dog's behavior for identification purposes.

Denise replied that most of the people at the dog park know each other and their dogs, so it isn't hard to track which are the aggressive dogs.

Hollis agreed with John but stated that a protocol needs to be developed because people don't always take the rules seriously. She would like to see more teeth in the consequences.

Becky suggested linking the QR code to the Carbondale Dog Park Friends email, because even though the actions might be happening at another location, they could spread the word. She added that she could put it on Instagram as well.

Susan asked if every non-neutered dog is a problem.

Denise pointed out that the aggressive behavior doesn't begin in unneutered dogs until they are between six and eight months and wondered how best to address the issue without being invasive or confrontational. She conceded that some of the behaviors are dependent upon a dog's personality and how the owner handles it.

John responded that at AKC events no dogs in heat are allowed and explained that it should be handled based on owner responsibility and a dog's action, not their medical condition. He suggested instituting a fine on aggressive behavior.

Ashley proposed accepting the language Eric provided in the packet and pointed out that that language belonged at all three off-leash dog parks. She suggested adding a separate, secondary sign about aggressive dogs not being welcome and how to report any situations.

Hollis suggested creating a subgroup to work out a process for penalties before adopting the new rule language.

Susan suggested editing the language in the current rule #1 to read "Both small and large passive dogs are

welcome...”

Becky suggested substituting “nonaggressive” for “passive.”

John suggested adding a new rule as #2 stating that aggressive dogs are not allowed.

Leslie suggested setting expectatins by including in Rule #1 “aggressive dog behavior is not tolerated or mermitted” and on Rule #4 “if your dogs can’t play without causing dog fights or attacking other dogs while playing you will be asked to refrain from bringing your dog inside the park.”

Denise reiterated her desire to include language specifically stating, “aggressive non-neutered, non-spayed” because that is where that problem is coming from.

Susan replied that if there are too many words, people won’t read the sign.

**Motion Passed:** Hollis *moved* to accept the language proposed by Eric. Ashley *seconded* the motion with the provision that “non-spayed/non-neutered” is included, and it was *unanimously approved*.

Hollis asked if there were commission members interested in serving on a subcommittee to develop the process for penalties. John and Susan volunteered, and Becky indicated she would help if she had time. Becky also indicated that she would reach out to Melissa, a co-organizer of the Carbondale Dog Park Friends.

#### **MARTY SILVERSTEIN PROPOSAL TO NAME 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET PARK “CHACOS” PARK**

Marty noted that he was addressing the Commission as an individual and not as a Trustee. He noted that the Town was donated the park property at 4<sup>th</sup> and Main and he is proposing that the space be named “Chacos Memorial Park.” He explained that Chris and Terry Chacos were enthusiastic supporters of Carbondale and Chris donated much time and effort to making Carbondale a better place. He acknowledged the process for naming a Town park and if the Commission agrees with the proposal, the process for the 45-day public comment period can begin.

Rose appreciated Marty’s presentation and asked if there was any further discussion.

**Motion Passed:** John *moved* to support the proposal to name the recently acquired park at 4<sup>th</sup> and Main as “Chacos Memorial Park.” Leslie *seconded* the motion, and it was *unanimously approved*.

#### **MOU WITH ROARING FORK FOOD ALLIANCE PERMACULTURE GARDEN ANNUAL UPDATE**

Eric provided background on the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Carbondale and the Roaring Fork Food Alliance that was signed in 2016 regarding the development, maintenance and management of the Carbondale Historic Food Forest located within the Thompson Heritage Park. He reminded the commission members that Adrian Fielder, and instructor at Colorado Mountain College, and Erin Anderson updated the Commission last September regarding a maintenance plan for the garden but added that while all the systems were in place when the MOU was created, there is no one willing to continue that responsibility. Eric noted that Parks staff undertook the weed maintenance this summer but since those individuals identified in the MOU are not able to follow through—an unfortunate side effect of a volunteer undertaking—the Town might need to re-think how to manage this location.

Rose asked if Eric was actively reaching out to other volunteer organizations that need volunteer hours.

Eric replied that he had had a conversation with Gwen Garcelon, and she realizes that the effort needs to be reinstated, but Eric also thought it is important to consider other opportunities that didn’t exist in 2016. He pointed out that the first goal is a new maintenance plan noting that the guilds need to be reestablished, and an ADA path throughout the park needs to be created. Eric was confident that the Parks Department could undertake these tasks this fall but reiterated that a longer-term plan is needed.

Susan questioned why these tasks were abandoned by the signers on the MOU. She also asked what it means to be a “historic permaculture garden.”

Eric explained that while Adrian Fielder was interested in having his CMC classes help, he is not willing to be the

lead and reiterated that no one is willing to do so. Eric added that the idea was to have a historic orchard and demonstration gardens of native plants.

Susan thought that the Carbondale Historical Society already had a garden elsewhere and wondered why they couldn't maintain this as well.

Eric explained that they are already caring for the pollinator and kitchen garden, and this is a separate, much bigger, piece of property.

Susan suggested that, if there were overflow applicants for the community gardens, they might be given a plot at this location with the limitations that anything planted must be native and/or heirloom. She pointed out that the Carbondale Age Friendly Community Initiative and Senior Matters is entering into an MOU to create and maintain a park along the Rio Grande Trail and 8<sup>th</sup> Street, and they are wondering who is going to do that work.

Eric thought it was a great idea but noted that there was extra space at Demeters Gardens this year so existing applicants were given the opportunity for a second space; the Hendricks Garden was full, but Eric wasn't sure if they had a waiting list. He pointed out that it still needs to be managed by someone and the community garden managers are volunteers that are willing to put in a lot of effort.

Hollis suggested asking Gwen for any contacts she might have to find a leader to spearhead the program.

Eric pointed out that a decision needs to be made on what the space should be—more community garden space versus open green space that is easier to maintain—because the current idea is not working.

Hollis agreed with Susan and added that while the design and concept are fabulous it is difficult to keep it going without dedicated staff or volunteers.

Ashley related that she participated in a food forest once and it was sponsored by that community's food bank and run by AmeriCorp Vista program. She noted that in her experience across universities, that that is where the interest in permaculture is, and college students are often running the farms.

Rose pointed out that there is a big AmeriCorp and Youth Corp presence in the local area.

**AQUATICS FACILITY MASTER PLAN – NEXT STEPS: MUNICIPAL BOND PRICING PROCESS.**  
**COMMISSIONERS QUESTIONS FOR ASPEN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION NON-ENDOWED**  
**ORGANIZATIONAL FUND DETAILS**

Eric updated the commission members on the Aquatics Facility and pointed out that he included several documents from Hilltops Securities in the meeting packet:

- The bonds went up for sale on Tuesday and it was considered a successful sale with all but \$845,000 of the \$8,000,000 sold.
- The bond underwriter will cover those bonds left unsold to ensure the Town has all the proceeds the voters voted for.
- The closing date is scheduled for September 27<sup>th</sup> and will total \$8,340,000.
- Once the money is in hand, the next step will be to release an RFP for a Construction Manager/Owner's Representative and begin the process to advertise an RFP/RFP for Design Services. Eric estimated that it will take approximately one month after the closing date to hire the CM and approximately two months after that for Design Services.

Susan understood that while there is an optimistic timeline for the pool construction, she would prefer to give a range of time so there are fewer community members upset when the construction doesn't go as planned.

Hollis pointed out that the Town has hired a new Public Information Officer to improve communications.

Rose noted that Hollis included a publication regarding park and recreation agency-foundation relationships in the packet. She suggested that commission members read through it, so they are prepared for the Aspen Community Foundation presentation at the next meeting. She asked that everyone think about questions to bring up.

Hollis commented that she was very excited when she found this publication and reiterated Rose's point about commission members reading it. She added that there were a lot of questions at last month's meeting that the Aspen Community Foundation could answer best and asked if anyone had specific questions that they could build their presentation around.

Susan suggested including a discussion regarding maintaining a general foundation focused on funding a variety of recreation activities versus a specific pool funding source. She would like to discuss how soliciting contributions might change under each strategy and which is more effective. Susan also asked that they clarify whether the Aspen Community Foundation would be the 501(c)3 and Carbondale would have an account somewhat like a bank or whether the Aspen Community Foundation would act as a partner to Carbondale in their efforts to raise money.

Hollis replied that the publication touches on this subject:

"Community leaders also may launch a foundation with the goal of financing a specific landmark project such as a regional or destination park. In these instances, respondents highlight the need for foundations to be flexible in their focus and to evolve to serve other community needs after the completion of the initial project."

Luis reminded the commission members that Brian had brought up a concern about the fee charged by the Aspen Community Foundation for holding the funds. Referring to Susan's question, he thought it was a question about a broader holding fund versus a more focused approach and he thought it would be interesting to see how much of a true partner they are and whether they would be approaching people who regularly donate to them. He noted from a larger strategy in communicating with the community to explain why the bond isn't fully covering the cost of the pool, suggesting targeting programs that trigger emotion like funding swimming lessons.

Rose asked about whether the Aquatics Facility was going to be on a specific list for a fund that awards a percentage to each project or if it is in a totally different section how people find it to donate to the project.

Eric asked that if the commission members have additional questions they would like to see included in the Aspen Community Foundation presentation to please get them to him or Hollis no later than October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

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

Eric Brendlinger, Parks and Recreation Director:

- The Red Hill picnic shade shelter is complete. This was a grant funded project with a second piece for landscaping. The contractor lost their landscaper, and it is unclear when the landscaping will be completed. Eric was able to obtain a one-year extension on the GOCO grant at the board level, so the project should remain in compliance with the terms of the grant.
- The Highway 133 Irrigation RFP has been released for the second time; there was no response for at the pre-bid meeting.
- The shed at the 4<sup>th</sup> and Main park is scheduled for demolition on Thursday. The metal will be recycled, and the concrete and wood will be disposed of.

Jessi Rochel, Recreation Center & Recreation Programs Manager:

- Jessi announced she has been hired as the Executive Director of the Chris Klug Foundation; although she will be leaving her full-time position at the Recreation Center, she will be staying on in a limited capacity to lead Senior trips and teach swimming lessons.
- Blood drives will take place at the Recreation Center on the first Wednesday of every month from 10 to 3.
- Potato Days is planned for October 1<sup>st</sup>. The potato sculpting contest is currently open on Facebook. A Contra Dance is planned for Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup> at the Third Street Center.
- Jessi will be attending the Age Friendly Expo at the Eagle County Fairgrounds on Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Youth Basketball registration opens on October 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- The Gateway RV Park closes for the season on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Reservations for the 2023 season open on October 17<sup>th</sup>.

Luis Yllanes, Board of Trustees Liaison

- Happy to see Denise came before the Commission regarding the dog park rule change.
- Eric covered the Parks & Recreation Department budget priorities at last night's Board of Trustees meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The September 14, 2022, meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm. The next regular meeting is scheduled for October 12, 2022, at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kae McDonald