



DATE: July 10, 2020
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Ryan Mahoney, Town Manager
RE: Weekly Update
CC: Department Heads

The 4th of July holiday was reported to be successful, yet without issues across departments. The pool was open and was full of families enjoying the day. The Police Department reported very few issues, including the use of illegal fireworks. Public Works kept an eye on trash collection, which seemed to have moderated in the last few weeks.

Staff participated in regional discussions in preparation for the holiday weekend around messaging. We coordinated the use of the variable message boards to remind visitors (and residents) of the requirement to wear face coverings.

Discussions with our regional partners are starting to shift toward the fall and a hopeful return to school as well as a successful ski season. Both will be threatened if we do not individually take responsibility to adhere to the five commitments. Pitkin County has just released a strategy to address the clusters of COVID infection we have seen in recent weeks. The [poster](#) that they created discourages social contact in confined spaces. It reminds people to avoid the “three C’s” which, when overlapped, lead to higher infection rates. The three C’s include “avoiding Closed spaces, Crowded places and Close contact settings.”

The Eagle County Commissioners penned a letter this week to Governor Polis urging his administration to develop a uniform strategy for testing across the state, and to build the infrastructure to support a robust testing system. This request comes as we are seeing an increase in the number of cases and longer wait times (6 to 8 days) for test results.

The “box it in” strategy of controlling COVID-19 infections relies on fast turnaround times for testing (48 hours). This allows the county public health departments to do contact tracing to contain cluster outbreaks. Contact tracing essentially begins with positive test results.

The Swinging Bridge trail maintenance project is complete. With the help of community volunteers, Town staff and the Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers, this maintenance project came to fruition. This project was initiated as an effort to expand downtown parking this summer. Town staff worked with the School District to secure parking at the Elementary School. The lit path between the School and downtown provides an easy and safe way to travel between the two locations. Here is a photo from the stairs leading down the path toward downtown.



Police

We continue to receive calls and enforce/educate the public about COVID-19 requirements.

Met with residents near the intersection of Elk Run Drive and Lupine Circle who had concerns about people not stopping for a stop sign in the area. Our entire PD has made many stops in this area and hoping this makes an impact. Residents were happy with our efforts and Chief Knott was working with Public Works to get more signage and install stop bars in the roadway.

Over the weekend, one of our on-duty patrol vehicles was 'egged' while parked at the PD parking lot. Unknown suspects.

Public Works

Holy Cross and their Contractor are working on the Town streets. The project is near completion and all that is needed to finish is to pull wire through the conduits they installed in the streets and hook it up.

Public Works assisted with the reconditioning of the Swinging Bridge Trail. It was a group effort involving The Roaring Fork Volunteers, Rick Stevens, Timberline Construction and Public Works. The trail looks great and is a complement to the Town.

The Town's water well 13 needed some improvements after an irrigation leak was discovered. The irrigation leak was on a 4" inch line that originated from RE-1 school property. The two wells on the property were connected at one time to supply additional water if needed by either entity. The connection is no longer needed, so it was excavated and capped. Additional improvements were made to the drainage and cross connection protection was added.

Public Works is currently painting curbs, trimming trees and bushes, and working with a Contractor to repair sidewalks and install concrete bases for two new solar streetlights.

Planning

Willits Town Center – Time this week was spent working on construction related items such as street cut permits and utility coordination. Additionally, Staff worked on the building permit for TACAW and the site plan review and foundation permit application on Block 4.

Other Development Review/Applications – Staff spent considerable time on special event activity permits, interpretations, dealing with complaints and construction related items around Town. The public hearing and first reading for the automated car-wash application in Southside was held at the last Council meeting and Staff has been having conversations with the business owners and the Basalt Business Center West HOA about funding potential for the parking spaces on Southside Drive associated with the car-wash application. Staff will present the funding options for the Southside Drive parking at second reading of the car-wash application on Tuesday evening. Additionally, Staff is working on the review of the St. Vincent's Church expansion application that will be reviewed by the P&Z in early August and that will likely be reviewed by the Council in late August/early September.

Pitkin County Coordination – Pitkin County has launched a program two weeks ago to make amendments to its Growth Management System. The major impetus of the Commissioner's direction is to better address how the County's land use code deals with Climate Change. This past Thursday the discussion focused on environmental impacts of larger development and of demolition prior to the end of a residence's useful life, and how to disincentivize that from happening. Their input meetings will continue through most of August.

Basalt Early Childhood Coalition – The Coalition had its monthly meeting today. Topics of discussion included advancing capacity building in the Basalt area, the potential to fill tuition assistance gaps with help from the Aspen Community Foundation and encouraging qualified staffing capacity. One area program reported the recent resignation of three of its lead teachers and will need to fill those positions by August. Building qualifications in teaching staff will likely become a focus in the Coalition's 2021 program.

BPAC – The Basalt Public Arts Commission (BPAC) met on Tuesday and Thursday. It has received a modest number of Artist Relief Fund and Art Collection applications. It reviewed the request for proposals for the concrete barrier painting project and will review the applications received next week.

NWCCOG – The Northwest Colorado Council of Governments met on Thursday. A decision on 2021 dues was reached to keep them the same as for 2020. Basalt's expected contribution will be \$4,334 for NWCCOG and \$1,326 for the Water Quality and Quantity Committee (QQ). NWCCOG has submitted comments on the US Forest Service's planned changes to their administrative parcel leasing program. One of the organization's programs, formerly the Alpine Area Agency on Aging, has changed its name to Vintage. It was discussed that some member governments have seen increased public participation for meetings held virtually.

Recreation

The Arbaney Park Pool has started to offer Water Aerobics. The long running class has been a big hit with our locals in the past. The course usually runs in conjunction with CMC Aspen campus but was cancelled this season. The instructor and pool staff offered the class instead through Basalt Recreation.

The offering runs on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:10 - 9:10 a.m. for 6 weeks. The class is full at 12 participants.

This week we made more room for Camp Chip-A-Tooth to bring an additional 30 participants to the pool. Camp Chip brought two additional groups of 15 on Thursday at a slower time in the schedule. They really enjoyed the limited pool time during this hot week.

We have two lifeguards-in-training through online certification and the use of a full sized manikin. This is offered through Aspen Recreation. These future lifeguards will assist the remainder of the season as we start to lose staff upon their return to school.

Kids Camp at Arbaney Park has been sold out and we are hopeful to continue that for these last few weeks. They are enjoying these hot afternoons at the local river beaches.

It is hard to believe but staff is starting to prepare for the Fall/Winter offerings by reaching out to former instructors and brainstorming for new and fresh programming. With any luck, we will be able to offer a full schedule of activities to the community.

Finance

Now that the audit is over, it's time to start the 2021 budget! Ryan and I will be discussing the budget calendar with department heads on Monday morning, and will be sharing that calendar with the Finance Advisory Board and Council shortly thereafter for additional input. The calendar drives the timelines and the process for the 2021 budget, so it is a critical step in the budgeting process.

The Town is now opted-in to receive CARES act funding. We continue to receive guidance for this grant from the State of Colorado, but it will allow the Town additional funding for future COVID community support.

Ryan and I met with the new Council members individually to review the financials and financial processes of the Town this week. The intent of this training is to provide financial context to help new council members to hit the ground running. Thank you to the Town's new Council members for taking the time to meet for this important training.