



## **THE SPOKES SPEAK - GEARED TO SERVICE**

### **Rotary Club of the North Fork Valley**

POB 1543, Paonia, CO 81428

WEB SITES: [rotary.org](http://rotary.org) [rotary5470.org](http://rotary5470.org) [northforkrotary.org](http://northforkrotary.org)

Meeting Thursdays at Noon in the Paonia Town Hall

District 5470

Club 1180 - Chartered 12/20/22

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**LAST MEETING: July 23, 2020 (Virtual Meeting held via Zoom)**

President Elect Ed Bliss presided.

Visiting Rotarians: none

Other Guests: none

Key Guest: No key guest

(Annette now has the key).

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- We had 52% turnout for the Zoom meeting today.
- Fifth Thursday will be via Zoom with breakout rooms. Randy will set it up.
- Anyone wishing to take over as Newsletter Editor is welcome to do so. Contact a Board Member.

#### **PROGRAM: North Fork Pool District and Ball Fields**

President Elect Bliss introduced speaker Lenore Cambria, District Administrator for the North Fork Pool, Park and Recreation District. The Recreation District encompasses the residents of the North Fork Valley and manages facilities at Crossroads Park in Hotchkiss including the North Fork swimming pool, soccer fields, bicycle trails and pump track as well as baseball and softball fields currently under construction. In Paonia, the Rec. District is under contract to manage and maintain the Apple Valley pickle ball and tennis courts and the skateboard park in Town Park. As District Administrator, she writes grants and was able to secure over \$900K to construct the four ball fields that are almost complete. She is also active with the local Bell Creek Band as well as the Kids Pasta Project.



Ms. Cambria provided an update on activities related to the Recreation District. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic presented a number of challenges for opening the pool this year. PPE and cleaning products, waivers and programming for the reservation system cost about \$5K. Social distancing is required in the pool so reservations are required and only a limited number are available each session. The number depends on the activity being accommodated. For example, swim classes are limited as instructors are not able to enter the pool and only one child is allowed in each lane. Enhanced cleaning protocols were also instituted. It was not possible to run the pool bus. The virus mitigation plans were reviewed and approved by the local Health Department.

For lifeguard training and certification, a training mannequin was purchased since lifeguards are currently not allowed to touch one another.

New state-of-the-art baseball/softball fields, complete with dugouts and scorekeeper boxes, are currently under construction and are expected to be completed by the end of August. They will not be available for use until next Fall as the grass outfields need to get established. The fields are expected to be a real draw for tournaments and should provide a boost to the local economy. Additional grants and donations will be required to provide shade structures for the bleachers.

A “bike-skills course” is also under construction to provide various obstacles to help mountain bikers develop the necessary skills to safely negotiate mountain trails. A small course to help young kids learn to ride their bikes was also constructed. This was funded in partnership with The Nature Connection. A total of 3.5 miles of hiking and biking trails was constructed as a result of this partnership, some of which connect with the High School. Well-behaved dogs are allowed.

Soccer fields are also available, but team sports have been discontinued during the pandemic, except for a small amount of Tee-Ball.

Having all of the ball fields in one place (as opposed to being split between the Fairgrounds and Crossroads) should enhance both safety and convenience for parents and participants, and was a big part of the rationale for obtaining the construction grants.

Also underway are plans for a big improvement to the skate park in Paonia Town Park. It has yet to be determined whether the existing facility will be upgraded, or a completely new one constructed. This will be up to the Town of Paonia to decide. The Rec. District is contributing \$10K to the effort, and a Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) grant is being pursued. Individual cash-match donations are being accepted as well.

Last year, it was necessary to resurface the tennis/pickle ball courts at Apple Valley due to flood damage. A group of pickle ball players volunteered to clean the mud from the courts, resulting in significant savings for the resurfacing effort.

The District has received several awards, including the Colorado Special District Association’s Collaboration Award and the Crawford Chamber’s Nonprofit of the Year. The Colorado Lottery Starburst Award is anticipated for next year, once the ball fields are completed.

Q and A

Q: The pool is a “spectacular” amenity for everyone in the county. What is the possibility of having a pool cover so the pool does not have to close when the high school lifeguards return to class? The season is currently very short.

A: The idea is being investigated, but there are more costs than just the cover, including increased chemicals and power for heating the water. Lifeguards would also be necessary, and would need to come from the community (not students).

Q: What additional plans are in the works to develop the Rec. District? For example, an indoor Rec. Center (at the old Chaco Building) has been discussed.

A: More ball fields and an additional concession stand are being considered. An additional employee to manage the ball fields may also be necessary. A dog park has also been requested, but it is unclear where this might be located. A ball pit and outdoor basketball hoops are also under consideration. The Board is always looking for new ideas.

Q: Are the ball fields at Volunteer Park under the Rec. District’s jurisdiction? They are currently unusable due

to weeds.

A: No. It is a volunteer effort and has been neglected this year since team sports are not taking place due to the pandemic.

Q: Is there any consideration to obtaining easements to create a bike trail from town or from the fairgrounds?

A: Yes. Easements have been identified but would require a pedestrian bridge over the river, which was considered prohibitively expensive. However, Delta County is considering purchasing property and spearheading such a project.

#### UPCOMING MEETING PROGRAMS:

Date	Speaker	Program	Member
7/30/20		Fifth Thursday	
8/6/20	John Poulos, Mountain Coal Company	Update on the West Elk Mine	Betsy Marston
8/13/20	Felix Belmont's Tribute	Honoring Felix's Service to Rotary	Jackie Parks
8/20/20	Judy Livingston	Paonia Historic Society	Kevin Parks
8/27/20			Karri Polson
9/3/20			James Schott
9/10/20			Peggy Szvetecz
9/17/20			Greg Thompson
9/24/20			Bain Weinberger
10/1/20			John Zachman
10/8/20			Judy Beggs
10/15/20			Felix Belmont
10/22/20			Bill Bishop
10/29/20		Fifth Thursday	
11/5/20			Sarah Bishop
11/12/20			Norm Lewark
11/19/20			Nick Lypps
11/26/20		Thanksgiving	

