Canon City Area Metropolitan Recreation and Park District
575 Ash Street
Canon City, CO 81212
(719) 275-1578

BOARD MEETING MINUTES
July 14, 2026

CALL TO ORDER The Canon City Area Metropolitan Recreation and Park District Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Board President, Cooper Trahern, in the board meeting room located at 575 Ash Street.

ROLL CALL
Board Members:

Present:	Cooper Trahern	
	Melissa Smeins	
	Andrew Palmasano	
	Kristina Post	
	Sean Rodgers	
Staff:	Kyle Horne	Executive Director
	Dawn Green	Finance Director
	Jaimee Southern	Kids Klub Director
Attorney:	Dan Slater	
Guests:	Ed Norden	Mike Banker
	Burl McCuller	Amy Schmisseur
	Chris Woods	

ACCEPTANCE OF CONSENT AGENDA

Board member Andy Palmasano made a motion, seconded by board member Sean Rodgers to accept the consent agenda as written for the July 14, 2026 regular meeting. Motion carried unanimously, all present voting aye.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Burl McCuller read an unpublished letter he wrote to the Daily Record after the Recreation District's board meeting on June 9th. He spoke about the current state of the pool project, including the City's position.

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Executive Director – Kyle Horne reported:

The District has secured $115,000 in funding for the Harrison Mini-Pitch through a grant from U.S. Soccer, and donations from the Canon City Noon Lions and Dale Biggerstaff. The District is still waiting to hear about the grant request to Black Hills Energy. Kyle is in contact with Musco and the cost for the court system has increased, but the District's fundraising efforts should be able to handle the increase. Concrete work will need to be done before the court system is installed. District staff will reach out to United Companies for a possible donation for this portion of the project.

Kyle recognized parks crew members for working on the weekends to make sure the District gets water on the parks. Now, Rouse Park is only getting watered on Sundays and when using City water, watering is only taking place two days a week. If the City goes to Stage 2 water restrictions, the parks won't get watered. Board member Sean Rodgers asked what would happen if the turf died. District crews would aerate and overseed to try to bring the turf back or could possibly switch to more drought-tolerant grasses- but not on the sports fields. The goal is to keep the parks as alive as possible until next spring. The board discussed synthetic turf and the District's ditch rights.

Pathfinder Park is being used by those displaced by the Aspen Acres Fire. District crew members have been checking on the bathrooms. The County is helping with animals needing shelter. Kyle recognized Jaimee Southern, the Kids Klub staff and the Kids Klub kids for organizing and holding a donation drive for the fire victims. Amy Schmisseur commented that volunteers, working in shifts, helped take care of the 600 animals brought to Pathfinder Park. The Fremont County Fair Board said the County Fair is moving forward. Amy said the Red Cross shut down its operations on Thursday, but the Humane Society could use donations.

The Big Horn Roundtable has been working on accessibility issues and is looking at a track chair program. To engage the community in this effort they will be having an open house on October 1st with a track chair to look at. Kyle has been in contact with the District's insurance company regarding liability. More conversations with the City and the County are needed on this project.

Kyle will meet with City representatives on Thursday to find solutions for E-bikes and E-motorcycles on the trails. The District received more complaints today.

District staff are looking to make signage improvements on the Riverwalk using the Whitney Memorial Fund donations received.

Kyle recognized the Programs staff for a solid summer. Saturday's track meet was a success, but hot.

The carport's installation is complete.

The annual SDA (Special District Association) conference is September 15-17 in Keystone. Kyle asked if any board members were interested in attending. None were, but board member Melissa Smeins spoke about the virtual option.

Board member Andy Palmasano asked about the time frame for the Mini-Pitch project. Kyle said the project has just started, and the District is waiting to hear about the Black Hills Energy grant application. The project requires a 10-to-14-week buildout, and the concrete pad needs to be cured for 30 days before the Mini-Pitch arrives, hopefully in mid-September. The District may have to demo the existing basketball court as a broom finish is needed on the 63’ x 88’ concrete pad (with an estimated thickness of three to four inches). The District will contact United Companies about a donation. Logos of donors can go on the court.

Dan Slater:

No report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Discussion on Long-Range Pool Planning

The City will be holding a meeting on June 21st at 7:15 p.m. with presentations on what to do with the sales tax. The Recreation District Board recommended stopping the collection of the tax. However, there is a group of citizens who believe they have a viable path forward for the pool.

At the June 1st City Council Meeting the City passed a motion stating they would no longer participate in the District’s pool project. Kyle said it would be difficult to partner with them unless the City goes back on that. Board member Cooper Trahern stated the Recreation District has been “sitting at the table” for the pool project the entire time and now it seems to be in limbo. Conflicting statements from the Mayor regarding City funding for pool operations do not help. Mr. Trahern believes the City needs to come to the Recreation District if they have a proposal. Board member Kristina Post agrees that the District is in limbo regarding the pool and is looking forward to hearing what will be presented on June 21st. Board member Melissa Smeins pointed out that the public will be bringing ideas to the City at that meeting. Board member Andy Palmasano stated that if the direction is towards a seasonal pool, it doesn’t move the community forward. Board member Sean Rodgers said citizens are passionate about the project and there are good intentions to make it happen, but those only advance the conversation so far. There are barriers to constructing the pool. He read Fred Toney’s prior motion regarding the City’s involvement in the pool project. (This was included in the board packet). Mr. Rodgers said this is where we are at and there is a serious need for further conversations with the City. Board member Andy Palmasano said it is unfortunate that it landed in the City’s lap (after operational funding was voted down).

There are two upcoming City Council meetings on July 21st and August 3rd. The next Recreation District board meeting is August 11th. Kyle said the City’s last regular council meeting before ballot language is due is August 17th. Board member

Cooper Trahern suggested the board take no formal action tonight but open the meeting for public comment.

Kyle spoke to Todd Snidow, the bond underwriter, and it is legally allowable to include operations in a modified tax question, but will it sunset? The District can't answer questions about construction or operating costs right now.

A public comment period opened. Ed Norden said people have passion to see a pool built. He is part of a committee that will present at the June 21st meeting. He said the City would want to know if the Recreation District is open to a pool project. He defined the fact that with the District's budget, they can't build a pool – a partnership is still necessary to make it happen. He requested the Board keep an open mind.

Kyle provided copies of a letter from Cathy Trujillo regarding the pool.

Board member Cooper Trahern informally asked the other board members if they would reengage with the City if they came up with a direction for the pool. There was board consensus.

Discussion on School District Facility Fees

Kyle provided a report to the board on facility fees. The need for cost recovery is understood. However, in the School's original proposal the fees would increase to $25 per hour for both indoor and outdoor use by year five. The Recreation District made a counter proposal. Kyle discussed outdoor field use with Adam Hartman. Their staff does not prep the school fields the Recreation District uses, the Recreation District's parks crew does it. However, the Recreation District does prep the fields when the School District uses our facilities. The newest proposal is reciprocal- with no fees for outdoor use. Indoor use, however, has definite hard costs. The proposal would start at $15 per hour for program use, except Kids Klub which would be $12 per hour. Kyle sees this proposal as a win-win situation. He would like to see this incorporated in a MOU (memorandum of understanding) as boards and administrators change. It is important to get something in writing.

Board member Cooper Trahern commented that what they are offering is fair. Kyle said that the Kids Klub facility fee will eventually get up to $20 per hour. The increased facilities fees will start in August. Board member Andy Palmasano asked about the need to raise program registration fees. Kyle responded that District staff are looking at shifting the deadline for early registration discounts and possibly instituting a late registration fee which other Districts do. These options would help absorb the increasing costs while keeping fees affordable.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion on Kids Klub School Year Modifications

Kyle stated that there are concerns about one of the facilities at which Kids Klub operates and asked Kids Klub Director, Jaimee Southern, to give a report on the recommendation to close one of the sites. She stated each facility has state requirements that must be met regardless of the number of children attending. These include always having two staff members on site, one of which should be director qualified. For the last three years attendance at one of the three Kids Klub sites has been low. There were several days last year when no child attended, yet staff salaries, facility fees and the license fee had to be paid. Other required expenses include cleaning supplies, snacks and rec supplies. Each site undergoes state audits each year. Finding director-qualified staff is difficult due to the substantial requirements. The District had to obtain a hardship waiver from the state to provide sufficient staff to keep the doors open at McKinley Elementary.

McKinley Elementary has low Kids Klub enrollment. Two of the regularly attending students will be aging out of the program, leaving only three regular attendees. In looking at the numbers, McKinley is showing a loss of approximately $25,000. If this site remained open this school year from August to December, it would result in an approximate $11,000 loss. Ms. Southern recommends closing the McKinley site.

Board member Melissa Smeins asked about the effect on staffing from closing a site. Ms. Southern answered that now is a good time as she is losing staff members after the summer. Board member Kristina Post asked if the McKinley students could be bused to another site. Kyle answered not with the routes the School District uses. This was looked at in the past. Responding to a question about the licenses, Ms. Southern said she could ask the state if the license, which is good for a year, can be kept inactive to see if attendance numbers might increase. McKinley is also seeing declining student enrollment. Board member Cooper Trahern said it is important to trim expenses when feasible. Board member Sean Rodgers said it is important to see how effective the District is being with taxpayer dollars. He wants the District to be a positive force in the community, but we need to be aware of metrics. Ms. Southern said it is unrealistic to increase Kids Klub fees for the overall good of the program.

Board member Kristina Post made a motion, seconded by board member Sean Rodgers to approve the closure of Kids Klub at McKinley Elementary the 26-27 school year. Motion carried unanimously, all present voting aye

Discussion on Potential GOCO Planning Grant with Fremont County

The 2015 Eastern Fremont County Trails and Open Space Master Plan is outdated. Fremont County is looking at a Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) grant to update the plan to explore attainable parks and recreation projects in the County. (A copy of the draft letter of intent to apply for the grant was included in the board packets.) They are seeking a $150,000 grant and would like the Recreation District to participate. Kyle Horne suggests partnering on this with the County along with other agencies. A discussion on financial commitments, the availability to use Conservation Trust Fund dollars, potential in -kind work, and the need to align with the goals with Pikes Peak Outdoors, Envision and other regional partnerships followed. Board member Andy Palmasano sees this as necessary for future growth and recommends the Recreation District participate in the planning grant project.

Board member Andrew Palmasano made a motion, seconded by board member Melissa Smeins to move forward with the letter of intent for the GOCO planning grant as drafted and commit $10,000 to this project. Motion carried unanimously, all present voting aye.

Discussion on Streaming of District Board Meetings

Attorney Dan Slater stated that the Recreation District is fully compliant with the open meetings law. The meetings are recorded, the minutes are taken in detail and posted on the website and agendas are posted before the required deadlines, for instance regular meeting agendas are generally posted the Friday morning before the board meeting. Streaming the meetings is not a requirement, and no special districts in our area stream them. If we were to stream them, they would have to be accessible requiring close captioning with equipment that captures everyone's voice including audience members. A system, such as an Owl, could be used but the District would have to invest in the equipment. Kyle estimates a $2,300 equipment cost which does not include any additional IT related expenses.

Chris Woods addressed the board on this topic by reading a letter he wrote. He feels the taxpayers deserve better transparency. Residents unable to attend in person could live stream the meetings on social media and would not have to file paperwork to listen to a meeting. He believes it would reduce rumors and earn public trust through openness.

A board discussion followed. Board member Cooper Trahern question the tone of the letter – that the Recreation District is not being transparent. Board member Sean Rodgers stated that we are in a new age. He does not have a problem with live streaming the meetings, nor does board member Kristina Post. Ms. Post does have an issue with people online questioning the District's transparency but not reaching out to the Board members about their concerns or for information. But Mr. Rodgers, as does Mr. Trahern, do have an issue with the non-streaming of meetings being equated with a lack of transparency. Also, live streaming the meetings won't necessarily bring more clarity to those confused about an issue such as the pool project. Mr. Rodgers stated the District operates with integrity.

The meetings are recorded and a copy can be obtained by filling out an online CORA request and bringing in a thumb drive.

Mr. Trahern stated there will be IT maintenance costs associated with streaming the meetings which require financial resources. Mr. Trahern does not feel it is necessary for the small district we are operating in. Kyle Horne said larger local entities, such as the City of Canon City, the School District and the County all have full-time IT personnel. He spoke about looking into options with accessibility as a concern (close-captioned, no audio drops). Other issues to explore include how to record it, live stream or YouTube upload, and data storage. He has looked at numerous Recreation District websites and only one streams their board meetings.

At the end of the discussion, the board would like staff to explore costs and options for virtually streaming the meetings or placing the audio recordings on the website.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Board President, Cooper Trahern adjourned the meeting at 8:58 p.m.

Submitted by:

/s/ *Dawn Green*
Dawn Green, Finance Director

Approved as written or amended:

/s/ *Cooper Trahern*
Cooper Trahern, Meeting Chair