



Board of County Commissioners

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Aspen Times: Letter to the Editor

Crown Mountain Park

Recreation districts are formed in Colorado to allow the community to decide what they want their parks and recreation opportunities to be. They have the taxing authority to raise the funds necessary to achieve their goals, upon approval by their community. This is an excellent example of local control. We thought we should clear up the role of County government prior to the election. Although the County has provided assistance with different park improvements and projects like the pump track and senior play space, we do not provide for operational funding or ongoing maintenance. Eagle County does not have a parks and recreation department. We do not maintain parks or provide recreation programs. It is not something we are statutorily required to do nor do we have a funding source to do it. Towns often have parks and recreation departments and provide excellent services for the parks within their town boundaries. When a park is outside town boundaries there can be some confusion about who is responsible for the upkeep, services and programs. A current suggestion that the County pay for Crown Mountain's upkeep and programs is misguided. As an independent recreation district it is the district's responsibility to fund upkeep and programs. It is the district residents who get to decide what programs and services they want and how they want the park to grow and be maintained.

As the Board of County Commissioners we publicly voiced our support of the requested mill levy through a resolution on April 3, 2018.

Before passing the resolution we carefully considered the proposal and compared it to other recreation districts in the County. The Crown Mountain mill levy, which hasn't been increased since the park's inception, is considerably less than others, with the Vail District at 3.76 mills and WECMRD 3.65 mills. The Crown Mountain request seems to be in line with other recreation districts to maintain the park and services the community has come to expect.

The voters in the Crown Mountain Park recreation district have before them the opportunity to take control of their own destiny, including park operations and level of maintenance. We believe the proposed 1.9 mill levy increase will allow the park to be maintained as the jewel it is for the whole valley.

Sincerely,

Eagle County Commissioners

Kathy Chandler-Henry

Chair

Jeanne McQueeney

Commissioner

Jill H. Ryan

Commissioner