

1. ROLL CALL

Present- Committee Members: Chairperson Tom Kiddoo, Vice Chair Pat Nolan and Pam Warren

Town Council: Lindsay Hardy

Staff: Director of Recreation John Curutchet, Recreation Center Aquatics Coordinator Michael Labagh, Town Manager Eric Heil, General Government Manager Ineke de Jong and General Government Intern Emily Myler

Absent- Councilor Scott Prince and Mayor Sarah Smith Hymes

Late Arrival- Committee member Kathy Ryan

Ineke de Jong asked the record to reflect the meeting was called to order at 11:03 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Committee Member Pam Warren made a motion to approve the agenda for 1/19/21, Committee Member Pat Nolan seconded the motion. Committee Chair Tom Kiddoo declared the agenda approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made.

4. STAFF REPORT

Introducing the 2018 Probolsky Research Community Survey and the 2021 Community Survey.

Director of Recreation John Curutchet screen-shared the presentation included in the January 19 packet materials (available on www.avon.org/packets) and said that the staff report had not changed. Moving to slide #2, he introduced the topics of discussion for the meeting:

- A. Overview of 2021 Community Survey Process
- B. Review of Survey Questions from 2018
- C. Discussion of Potential Survey Questions for 2021

Director of Recreation John Curutchet said the open-ended question on the 2018 Community Survey regarding attitudes about recreation in Avon yielded little usable data.

The Committee commented/inquired:

- A. It was helpful to just see some of the information from that question, but it is disappointing that 50 percent of participants did not have an answer. This may guide the Committee in crafting survey questions in the future that elicit more and higher quality feedback.
- B. Director of Recreation Curutchet responded that the question didn't elicit the response they were hoping for, but that the Committee can provide more direction on more "actionable questions" to ask for the upcoming 2021 Community Survey.

Town Manager Eric Heil added that the Town learned a lot from the Wildridge Community Survey and that the Town will use that experience to direct the 2021 Community Survey as well. One question to consider is how detailed questions on the town-wide Community Survey should be, as opposed to a survey focusing specifically on recreation.

The Committee commented/inquired:

- A. In the context of the overall Community Survey, the Recreation Center questions are just a small subset, so there are a minimal number of Recreation Center questions that can be asked.

Town Manager Heil responded that the Community Survey is hopefully going to run every 2 years from now on and there will be some repeat questions to track changes over time. Recreation is an important issue to ask more questions about this year and there should certainly be more questions than the three which were on the last Community Survey. He proposed around 10-12 questions focusing on recreation on this year's Survey.

The Committee commented/inquired

- A. Committee Member Pam Warren thanked Eric for providing the number of questions so the Committee can better prioritize which questions they want to ask.
- B. It seemed like there wasn't much in the 2018 Survey that could be used, most people just said what they personally wanted. Is the Town were consulting with the public on how much budget should be put towards the programs they request?
- C. Director of Recreation Curutchet said that this survey is more for collecting data surrounding what the community wants to present to council, and then the Town can start to talk about the budget.
- D. Town Manager Heil responded that the Survey will focus more on preliminary public attitudes regarding possible recreation changes. Also, it should cover questions beyond than the Recreation Center and having to do with recreation as a whole with at least half of the questions asking about "recreation comprehensively in Avon."
- E. It would be helpful to have a "competitive analysis" comparing our recreation to other communities. The Town can see what is missing to be competitive and position Avon as the "recreation center of the Valley."
- F. Director of Recreation Curutchet responded that it is part of this exercise to do that kind of analysis of local providers and neighboring communities. This upcoming Survey, if done well, will have more questions on recreation and we can get an idea of where Town staff's and the Committee's own thoughts lie as well as what the community believes we should be doing.

Town Manager Heil added that he thinks it is important that every idea gets thrown on the table, regardless of how whimsical or unrealistic, then the Town can sort through them. The Recreation Department is doing this comparative analysis. Avon is unique in that the Recreation Center is in the middle of the accommodations district

The Committee commented/inquired:

A. It is important to collaborate with partners like The Westin early on to see what amenities their clients might need and use.

5. STAFF PRESENTATION: COMMUNITY SURVEY

Director of Recreation Curutchet moved on to discuss the schedule for the 2021 Community Survey on slide #2 of the presentation. He let the Committee know they will be meeting in February to get input from them on questions.

Town Manager Eric Heil mentioned the Town would be using the analysis of other communities as well as the Bang the Table platform to generate interest from the public before the Survey is implemented in May.

Director of Recreation Curutchet discussed the results of the Probolsky Survey on slides #3-11. He touched on data surrounding demographics of Survey takers and trends in their answers surrounding the Recreation Center as a whole, the pool, programs and trails and paths. He then went over goals for the Community Survey from slide #12. He highlighted the goal of increasing participants from 355 to over 2,000 as something to consider on the Committee. After that then went over the general questions which the Survey should have on it from slides #13-16. He suggested that the questions start more specific and elicit responses specific to core topics the Recreation Department is considering. Then at the end, the Survey can include broader questions around recreation holistically. The number and order of questions should keep in mind survey fatigue.

Director of Recreation Curutchet said questions should point towards what the Recreation Center could mean to the community beyond just a gym such as serving as an emergency center or a special event center.

Director of Recreation Curutchet moved to slide #14 and said there should be questions on adding a competitive pool to the Recreation Center, elements to elevate the Recreation Center to create a more luxurious environment, multipurpose rooms and teen and childcare services.

The Committee commented/inquired:

- A. Committee Chair Tom Kiddoo acknowledged the Recreation Department for putting this report together and praised them on how comprehensive it is. He commented that many athletes, including swim teams, are attracted to the area due to high altitude training, but the Town doesn't have the facilities to host competitive swimmers. Competitive facilities could bring people to town who would use Avon's amenities and boost the local tourism economy.
- B. Town Manager Eric Heil asked Committee Chair Kiddoo how hosting swim meets might affect their off-season tourism.
- C. Committee Chair Kiddoo responded that large swim meets usually bring "up to 1,200" families which stay several nights in hotels nearby since the Recreation Center is close to tourism amenities. He said that since Avon is a resort community it could draw a lot of tourism from hosting swim meets.

- D. Director of Recreation Curutchet commented that it has been a challenge to get any teams to come train or compete in the current pool.
- E. Committee Chair Kiddoo agreed that there aren't the amenities to host a team or a competition.
- F. Council Member Lindsay Hardy agreed that she doesn't bother swimming in the current pool due to crowds and size.

Committee Member Kathy Ryan joined the meeting at 11:36 a.m.

- G. Town Manager Heil said that Surveying is an art, and the Committee should think about the way these questions should be introduced on the Survey. Some of these topics are more involved than a 2-3 sentence question that can fit on the Survey. He suggested Bang the Table could be the best place to get this detailed feedback and create a vision of what Avon recreation could be.

Regarding slide #15, Director of Recreation Curutchet said that the Survey questions should continue to focus on recreation as a whole in town, outside the Recreation Center, including the whitewater park, Nottingham Lake and access to the National Forest. The Committee should focus on getting everything on the table and not limiting themselves to the more traditional focus areas.

Regarding slide #16, Director of Recreation Curutchet said health has been something challenging to focus on for the Committee, but areas like air/water quality, mental health, food supplies etc. should be included on the Survey.

Director of Recreation Curutchet went over slide #17, which includes links to comparative analysis on peer community recreation facilities and programs.

The Committee commented/inquired:

- A. Council Member Warren thanked Director of Recreation Curutchet FOR THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS information. She commented that it would be helpful to see how town demographics will change over time. She POSED the project as posing short term vs. long term changes for recreation. For example, if the overall town population is trending towards increased age, the Town should be including more programs for older adults. She wondered if anyone on the staff has these demographic predictions to share and see how that plays into the plans for expansion.
- B. Director of Recreation Curutchet responded that he doesn't have these predictions, Right now the Recreation Department is working on a model of youth vs adult programs when many other Recreation organizations are adding specific senior programs and that is something the Town is aware of and wants to be in front of.
- C. Council Member Warren said that the Survey is an opportunity to reach seniors.
- D. Council Member Pat Nolan agreed and mentioned that there weren't very many senior participants on the 2018 Survey and the Committee needs to increase this by including specific questions on senior programming and reaching out to that population to increase their participation.
- E. Council Member Warren thinks this is a great opportunity to learn more about what seniors may need from the Recreation Center.

Town Manager Heil agreed that it would be important that the Town use the Survey to better accommodate the needs of an aging population while maintaining the "family-friendly atmosphere of the Recreation Center."

The Committee commented/inquired:

- a. Council Member Kathy Ryan remarked on how many older adults are in the area that she isn't in touch with and that upcoming COVID vaccine activities are a good way to reach that population as they come together to receive their vaccines.
- b. Town Manager Heil went over slide #18 regarding the possibility of adding investment questions to the Survey. The Town is not at the point of asking the public about the financial aspects of expanding recreation in Avon, but he said that it is important to be mindful of what cost these programs might be as the Survey is implemented. The budget is not set yet as the Town is in a very basic policy phase and from there, the Town can hire professionals and consider what will fit at the location and what it might cost. However, at this point it is premature to ask financial questions of the public.
- c. Council Member Warren thanked Town Manager Heil and remarked that the Committee should first have the direction to support policies and then it can work to understand the cost. However, the Survey can pose questions which shed light on how expanding recreation might increase usage as well as how much the public is willing to spend on recreation. Then the Town can understand how the expansions might affect its finances and which expansions might have be the best investments.

6. CLOSING REMARKS

Director of Recreation Curutchet reminded the Committee that they should look for an invite for a meeting on the Survey on the third Tuesday of February. Town Manager Heil let the Committee know to email him and Director of Recreation Curutchet if they have any ideas before the meeting. Town staff will try to supply the Committee with some draft questions to respond to before the February meeting.

Director of Recreation Curutchet asked about guidelines for Committee emails and restrictions on "replying all." Town Manager Heil said that the Committee is not allowed to have dialogue between more than three members via email, so if the Committee has any ideas, he suggested they email it directly to himself or Director of Recreation Curutchet.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at appx 11:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Emily Myler
General Government Intern