



Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Rebecca Dunn, Chair
Cat Evans, Vice Chair
Robert Coltin
Scott Dowis
Jessica Kallweit
Craig Kinnunen
Melissa Lindsay

Wednesday, January 21, 2026

5:00 PM

Central Service Center
1400 Caprice Drive
Castle Rock, CO 80109

Note: This meeting is open to the public. Three or more Council members may also attend this meeting, during which the items listed herein will be discussed. If you are unable to access any portion of these materials due to a disability as defined under Colorado House Bill 21-1110, please call us at 303-663-4440, email the Town's accessibility team at accessibility@CRgov.com or submit an accommodation request form at CRgov.com/A11yRequest.

TIMES SHOWN ARE APPROXIMATE AND MAY BE ADJUSTED DUE TO CHANGES TO THE AGENDA.

CALL TO ORDER

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA

Chair Rebecca Dunn called the meeting to order at approximately 5 p.m. Staff in attendance included Jeff Brauer, Jeff Smullen, Mike Kilman, Brian Peterson, Bob Maloney, Jennifer Martin and Maia Yates. Council Liaison Tim Dietz was also present.

Present 6 - Chair Rebecca Dunn, Commissioner Robert Coltin, Commissioner Scott Dowis, Commissioner Cat Evans, Commissioner Melissa Lindsay, and Commissioner Craig Kinnunen

Not Present 1 - Commissioner Jessica Kallweit

PUBLIC COMMENT

DURING THIS TIME, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE INVITED TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION AND STAFF ON ITEMS THAT ARE NOT ON THE AGENDA. COMMENTS SHOULD BE LIMITED TO NO MORE THAN FOUR (4) MINUTES.

None.

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

[PRC 2026-001](#) Approval of the Minutes

Robert Coltin motioned and Cat Evans seconded the approval of the minutes as presented; the motion passed unanimously.

"I move to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2025 meeting as presented."

Yes: 6 - Chair Dunn, Commissioner Coltin, Commissioner Dowis, Commissioner Evans, Commissioner Lindsay, and Commissioner Kinnunen

Not Present: 1 - Commissioner Kallweit

DISCUSSION ITEMS

[PRC 2026-002](#) CAPRA Accreditation Update and Self-assessment Report

The Commission received an update on the Parks and Recreation Department's recent submission of its CAPRA self-assessment report for reaccreditation in 2026. Staff reported that the self-assessment was officially submitted last Thursday, marking an important milestone in the department's third accreditation cycle.

Castle Rock first achieved CAPRA accreditation in 2015, was reaccredited in 2020, and is now pursuing reaccreditation for 2026, with a slight delay in the overall cycle due to COVID. CAPRA, administered by the National Recreation and Park Association, establishes nationally recognized standards for park and recreation agencies and focuses on quality assurance, accountability, and continuous improvement. Nationwide, just over 220 agencies hold CAPRA accreditation, and approximately a dozen agencies in Colorado are accredited, placing Castle Rock among a limited group committed to professional excellence and public transparency.

Staff explained that the 2026 self-assessment report required documentation of compliance with 154 standards across 10 chapters, covering areas such as mission and vision, planning, marketing and communications, human resources, financial management, park operations, asset management, emergency access planning, risk management, and trends and needs analysis. The report was assembled by the Administrative Division in close collaboration with departmental staff and other Town departments and is housed in the department's Knowledge Owl portal, where it serves both as accreditation documentation and as a living resource for ongoing organizational improvement.

A three-member CAPRA review team, consisting of a team lead and two additional visitors, has been assigned and will begin reviewing the self-assessment materials. Each reviewer will evaluate specific standards to determine whether the department has met the required qualifications. The formal review process will continue through April, culminating in a hybrid site visit scheduled for April 13-17, 2026. During the site visit, reviewers will meet with Council, Commission members, and staff, ask questions regarding documentation and operations, and tour facilities to validate compliance with CAPRA standards. Staff noted that the visit also provides an opportunity to celebrate the department's accomplishments and showcase its work.

Following the site visit, the final accreditation decision will be made by the CAPRA Commission in conjunction with the NRPA Annual Conference, with anticipated notification in September or early October 2026. Maintaining CAPRA accreditation demonstrates that the department continues to meet nationally recognized best practices, reinforces responsible stewardship of public resources, and affirms the Town's commitment to delivering high-quality parks and recreation services to the Castle Rock community.

Commissioner Craig Kinnunen asked about the fundamental standards identified with a star designation, and Jennifer Martin confirmed that those standards are mandatory and must be met in order to achieve accreditation.

Chair Rebecca Dunn commented that the report is very comprehensive and

asked what the largest benefit of accreditation is, particularly given that only about a dozen agencies in Colorado have completed the process. Staff responded that the process gets everyone on the same page by ensuring a shared understanding of policies, procedures, and expectations. Jeff Brauer explained that it sets standards and policies for everything the department does and promotes transparency. He noted that tools such as the recreation programming plan help staff understand what to do and how to do their work in order to provide the best value to the community. Jeff Smullen added that accreditation establishes standard operating procedures for areas such as special events and brings professionalism to agencies across the country in how they operate financially and programmatically. He also noted that it supports staff development and serves as a repository for processes, policies, and procedures.

Bob Coltin remarked that the accreditation materials provide a strong blueprint and tie closely to the department's strategic plan, offering a clear sense of what the organization is about. He acknowledged the significant time commitment involved and expressed appreciation for the value staff find in the process. Jeff Brauer stated that the process has been challenging and exhaustive, particularly as the Town has experienced rapid growth. He explained that focusing on policies and principles and ensuring they are approved and in place has required considerable effort. As a home rule municipality, Castle Rock's governance structure differs from what some reviewers may be accustomed to, which can create challenges when explaining the Town's processes and interdepartmental coordination.

Jennifer Martin noted that the process has been beneficial from a process improvement perspective. Jeff Brauer added that staff have had to explain elements such as at-will employment and the limitations of succession planning under Colorado law. He emphasized the incredible effort from staff, noting that while demanding, the process pushes the team to examine best management practices and understand the rationale behind them. He stated that accreditation builds credibility for the department's work and processes. Staff also invited Commission members to share any ideas for improvement, questions, or concerns, emphasizing their commitment to continuous improvement.

Commissioner Craig Kinnunen asked how CAPRA funds itself. Jennifer Martin explained that the Town pays annual dues and pays a higher fee during the visitation year to cover accreditation costs. The department is also responsible for expenses associated with the site visit, including airfare, food, and transportation for the review team.

Chair Rebecca Dunn observed that accreditation provides an additional perspective and asked whether it makes it easier to secure grants. Jeff Brauer responded that it does assist with recruiting personnel and helps attract high-quality candidates to the organization. Jeff Smullen noted that accreditation aligns with other accredited departments within the Town, including fire, public works, and police.

Commissioner Robert Coltin asked whether the benefits outweigh the costs from staff's perspective. Jeff Smullen responded that the process makes service delivery more visible to the community, helps identify gaps, and drives process improvement that trickles down to staff and increases professionalism. Staff also noted that the process benefits other Town departments, as it requires

coordination with finance, legal, police, and human resources and includes reviewing and assessing their policies. It was further noted that accreditation is proactive, allowing the department to assess and benchmark its practices rather than waiting for something to fail.

Vice Chair Cat Evans commented that the effort is tremendous and, having participated through hospital accreditations, acknowledged that it is quite a process. She stated that as a resident, she takes pride in the work being done and appreciates the Town's proactive commitment to continuous improvement and adherence to best practice standards.

[PRC 2026-003](#) **Update on Lost Canyon Ranch Inholding Acquisition, Guardian Angel Trust Property**

Jeff Brauer provided an update on the Town's planned acquisition of an approximately 35-acre inholding adjacent to Lost Canyon Ranch Open Space, commonly referred to as the Guardian Angel Trust property. He noted that the Town's investment in open space is foundational to the community's quality of life and referenced the acquisition of Lost Canyon Ranch Open Space several years ago. At that time, staff also evaluated this adjacent parcel but were unable to reach an agreement with the previous owner and were ultimately outbid by a neighboring buyer who paid more than \$1 million in cash. Staff later recognized that the parcel included an access easement across the open space, allowing the property owner and any guests to travel through Lost Canyon Ranch Open Space to access the site. While this created potential management concerns, staff determined that the long-term benefits of acquiring Lost Canyon Ranch outweighed the drawbacks.

Jeff explained that after further communication, the current owner, Thomas Sandgaard, through the Guardian Angel Trust, expressed interest in conveying the property to the Town. Staff brought a proposed purchase and sale agreement to Town Council, and Council approved a resolution authorizing the agreement for a price not to exceed \$1.1 million, consistent with Town policy and the community's open space preservation goals. The property is considered strategically important because it protects a sensitive edge area that would otherwise be vulnerable to private residential development and helps preserve the natural character, scenic quality, and tranquility of the Lost Canyon landscape. The acquisition will also improve long-term access, management efficiency, and resource protection within the broader open space system.

Staff are currently in the due diligence period, including survey work, title review, and other necessary inspections. The parcel includes non-tributary groundwater rights and existing well infrastructure. Castle Rock Water has evaluated the associated water rights and will contribute funding toward the purchase, estimated between approximately \$69,000 and \$87,000, reflecting the value of those rights. The acquisition will be funded through the Conservation Trust Fund, with Castle Rock Water's contribution reducing the net cost to that fund. Closing is anticipated in early 2026, contingent upon satisfaction of all purchase agreement conditions, although staff indicated it may occur sooner if due diligence is completed ahead of schedule.

Jeff also shared background information about the property owner, noting that Mr. Sandgaard is a venture capitalist and nonprofit founder. The property features significant views and includes areas referenced in local historical accounts,

including mentions of Horse Thief Cave and canyon features that may warrant further historical assessment.

Commissioner Craig Kinnunen asked whether the parcel would primarily serve as a buffer to the trail system currently being developed. Jeff responded that the Lost Canyon Ranch master plan does not extend trails into the newly acquired area or place them too close to it, but instead locates trails across the valley. He confirmed that the property will largely function as a buffer while also resolving the access easement issue.

Once completed, the acquisition will bring the open space holdings to approximately 720 acres. Jeff added that staff continue to have conversations with neighboring property owners and homeowners associations who may be interested in conveying nearby parcels to the Town to relieve maintenance responsibilities, further enhancing the open space system.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Staff provided departmental updates across recreation and park operations.

Park Planning and Construction Manager Brian Peterson shared a construction update on the Castle Rock Sports Center, currently underway as part of the Brickyard development. He encouraged Commissioners to drive by the site to observe recent progress, noting that two large cranes are currently in place and the project is heavily into precast concrete installation. Crews began on the east side of the building, worked around the natatorium to the south side and pool equipment room, continued west along the recreation courts, and are now moving north along the exterior. Later this week, construction will turn back east, remaining on schedule and marking a critical milestone in the project. Two major trusses are being installed. The first, approximately 90 feet in length, connects the main entrance and basketball courts to the natatorium. Steel decking has been placed, connections completed, and the truss was lifted into place using a 440-ton crane. The second truss, which is longer and heavier, is being framed and prepared with slip-critical and welded pick connections and is scheduled for installation this weekend. Once the trusses are set, the large cranes will no longer be able to enter the building and will operate from the exterior only.

Brian reported that the pool trusses have arrived and have been primed and coated with a high-performance paint system to protect against moisture and corrosion over the life of the building. The underside will also be coated before final enclosure, as it will not be accessible once completed. The building is expected to be fully enclosed next week with precast panels, with two panels temporarily left out near the pool area to accommodate installation of the prefabricated pool, which is being shipped from Italy. He explained that once the pool is installed, crews will construct a temporary "dance floor" over it to allow ceiling systems and other overhead components to be installed. The project remains on schedule and on budget, with \$4.3 million in work completed in December alone, largely due to precast and steel installation and favorable weather conditions. The anticipated opening remains targeted for summer 2027. Commissioners expressed interest in seeing the pool delivery and installation process.

Michael Kilman, Recreation Manager, provided an update on recreation programming and summer camp registration. He reported that summer camp

registration opened at midnight on Martin Luther King Jr. Day and saw unprecedented demand. Within the first minute, 84 registrations were completed; 369 within five minutes; 446 within ten minutes; and 764 by 6:00 a.m. In the first 24 hours, 2,086 registrations were processed, generating approximately \$740,000 in revenue, averaging one registration every 42 seconds. He noted that the department's camps and preschool programs are licensed by the State of Colorado and staffed by certified personnel, contributing to their popularity throughout the county. Many programs are already sold out, with more than 200 participants on waitlists. Multisport camps are sold out for seven of eight weeks, Rock Rec Camp is sold out for nine of eleven weeks, preschool camps are full, KidStage and KidzArt have only one week remaining, and coding is also fully sold out. Mike noted that the future Sports Center will allow the department to add approximately 250 additional camp slots. He also shared that summer season passes will go on sale February 4 and that Winter Ball will take place this weekend. This year's theme is "Trolstice," and due to growing attendance of 500 to 600 participants, the event will again be held at the Douglas County Events Center.

Bob Maloney, Parks Operations and Maintenance Manager, provided updates on several maintenance projects. At the Miller Activity Complex, the indoor playground has been fully disassembled, thoroughly cleaned, and refurbished. Staff have also refurbished 110 flower boxes in partnership with the Downtown Development Authority and are constructing 15 additional boxes in preparation for spring installation. At Philip S. Miller Park, eight sections of the large yellow adventure slide were damaged and replacement sections are on the way. The synthetic turf near the slide is also being replaced due to heavy use, including children sliding on cardboard, and the new installation will feature a more gradual slope to improve safety and durability. In addition, two synthetic turf fields at Bison Park are scheduled for replacement this year. Bob shared that staff interviews have been completed to bring the team back to full capacity. He also announced that John Jorgensen will retire in eight days after 40 years of service. John's crew recently completed the Town Hall project, including installation of the bear sculpture and seating area, and holiday lights are scheduled to be removed on Monday.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

During Commission comments, Chair Rebecca Dunn shared that she appreciates that several of the road names off Dawson Trails Road have been named after Colorado 14ers, noting that she enjoys the connection to the state's mountain heritage.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:02 p.m.