



Town of Castle Rock

Agenda Memorandum

Agenda Date: 1/16/2024

Item #: 13. **File #:** DIR 2024-001

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of Town Council

Through: David L. Corliss, Town Manager

From: Jeff Brauer, Director of Parks and Recreation

Discussion/Direction: Pickleball Facility Summary and their General Operation

Executive Summary

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide Town Council with an overview of existing and proposed pickleball facilities and their general operation as directed at the November 21, 2023 meeting.

Background and History

A key goal identified within the Town of Castle Rock's 2030 Comprehensive Master Plan is to enhance residents' quality of life and foster a distinct Town identity by providing a highly-accessible and well-distributed system of recreation facilities, parks, open space and trails.

To this effect, the Town of Castle Rock Municipal Code requires the dedication of 8 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Land dedication is defined in the subdivision regulations and is established during the zoning process for new developments. Land transfers are typically made at the time of subdivision plat.

An essential component of offering outstanding community services is ensuring everyone has access to a wide variety of recreation offerings, regardless of age and ability, to further healthy lifestyles. As an industry standard, Town parks are delineated into categories by park size and recommended/expected uses in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. These classifications, listed from largest to smallest include: Regional Parks, Community Parks, Neighborhood Parks and Pocket Parks. Maintaining these park classifications is essential to ensuring children have access to nearby playgrounds, the community has access to athletic fields and courts, and the region has access to open space, trails and amenities like the Amphitheater and Challenge Hill at Philip S. Miller Park.

In general, as parks increase in size/classification, their uses and visitors also increase. For example, Butterfield Crossing Park is classified as a Community Park, which is the second largest park type. Uses expected within a Community Park include, but are not limited to, off-street parking, athletic fields, sports complexes, lighting and play features.

The location where the pickleball courts were installed at Butterfield Crossing Park replaced lit inline hockey and basketball courts. Although the facility use type changed during the 2023 renovation, the amenity locations within the park did not, as demonstrated in the images below, making pickleball an acceptable use as defined by a Community Park.



Sport Court Location at Butterfield Crossing Park | Prenovation, April 2021



Sport Court Location at Butterfield Crossing Park | Post-renovation, August 2023

Douglas County was recently named number one as the most physically active county in the nation in the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s annual PLACES report. In recent years, the demand for pickleball courts has grown exponentially and the desire to place new courts has been strongly expressed for every recent park renovation and new park construction project in Castle Rock. In 2023, Pickleball was the fastest-growing sport in the nation for the fifth consecutive year in a row, with 48.3 million U.S. adults (19% of the adult population) having played at least one game in the last 12 months, according to the Association of Pickleball Professionals.

To meet this demand, the Town has installed courts at a variety of parks distributed throughout Castle Rock, while also maintaining a balance of active and passive recreation at these facilities. Beginning in 2017, pickleball courts have been installed at Founders, Deputy Zack S. Parrish III Memorial, Cobblestone Ranch and Butterfield Crossing parks. Two new courts will also be available for public use at Emerald Park, which is currently under construction in Plum Creek, in 2024. Once Emerald Park is complete, the Town will feature a total of 27 dedicated courts. To further meet demand, Park Operations and Maintenance staff have painted pickleball lines on tennis courts at both Rhyolite Regional and Gemstone parks. Although not intended to be used for pickleball, players have also used the courts painted for youth tennis at Bison Park because they are similar in size. All of the courts throughout Castle Rock, whether designated as pickleball or painted, have been highly beneficial for open/general community use, as well as league play organized through the Athletics Division. There is one privately-owned court on residential property that Town staff are aware of.

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Location	Courts	Lights	Hours Programmed	Court Hours	Distance to Resident Property Line	Distance to Resident House
Butterfield Crossing Park	6	Yes	8 am-noon (3 days/week) 6-8 pm (1 night/week)	8 am-10 pm	122 feet	182 feet
Founders Park	7	No	8 am-noon (3 days/week)	Sunrise to sunset	124 feet	147 feet
Deputy Zack S. Parrish III Memorial Park	6	No	8 am-noon (3 days/week)	Sunrise to sunset	250 feet	274 feet
Cobblestone	6	No	8 am-noon (3 days/week)	Sunrise to sunset	914 feet	952 feet
Rhyolite Regional Park (tennis/pickleball)	1	Yes	None	Sunrise to 10 pm	275 feet	303 feet
Gemstone Park (tennis/pickleball)	1	No	None	Sunrise to sunset	375 feet	395 feet
Emerald Park (proposed)	2	No	None	Sunrise to sunset	336 feet	356 feet

In June 2017, Athletics staff introduced the Town's first outdoor adult pickleball league at Founders Park (indoor leagues had historically been offered at the Recreation Center gymnasium). At its start, the league featured 75 participants with play held Monday through Friday. Since then, the outdoor program has experienced significant growth and now features pickleball classes, leagues, tournaments and clinics. In 2023, there were 1,509 registrations in outdoor pickleball programming with over 100 people on the waitlist.

The Town has also experienced vandalism at its pickleball courts. On July 5, 2023, the nets were cut at Butterfield Crossing Park; Incident Report 2023-00025669 can be referenced in Attachment A.

Discussion

On Tuesday, November 7, 2023, a resident petition was submitted to Town Council. The petition stated, "Pickleball Court at Butterfield Park - Disturbing, irritating, and annoying sounds coming from pickleball courts and the pickleball players -yelling, screaming in competitions starting as early as 5:30 am to as late as 11 pm, seven days per week. Players come from all over the Denver Metro area due to their pickleball court closures. The closest residence property line sites 92 feet from the court, with noise readings at 70+ decibels. The sounds echo throughout the neighborhood and can be heard as far away as W. Mountain Vista Lane. Residents cannot enjoy the peace of their backyards or leave their windows open due to their noise issues. It is causing disruption and impacts quality of life negatively!" In summary, 41 signatures were on the petition from 32 different households. The petitioners can be further summarized by household and nearest park:

- Butterfield Park: 19 households signed the petition
- Founders Park: 7 households signed the petition
- Emerald Park: 5 households signed the petition
- Mitchel Gulch: 1 household signed the petition (no pickle ball courts are planned for this park)

As pickleball continues to rapidly evolve and expand across the country, jurisdictions have

experienced growing pains mostly in regards to noise complaints from adjacent residential. To address the complaints, managing agencies have instigated moratoriums on new pickleball construction, applied blanket setbacks ranging from 500 to 600 feet from residential and limited the hours of play, which helps to reduce noise during sensitive morning and evening timeframes.

In evaluating the operations of existing and future pickleball courts, it is important to keep in mind that parks are Town amenities for all residents as well as visitors. Within any park, noise will be generated by users whether it's a grass field, playground or sport court. Staff are very aware of this and actively work with developers to locate park parcels and arrange lots adjacent to parks to reduce potential conflicts between park visitors and residents. While staff cannot guarantee lots won't back up to parks, we do try to avoid these layouts early in the design process. Therefore, it is also important that residents understand that they are buying a home adjacent to a park parcel which will have visitors who generate noise. While some residents may see parks as an ideal amenity, others may not. Residents should also be aware of the different types of parks and park usage their homes may be near.

Moratoriums and Distance of Sport Courts from Homes

Given high demand and significant community participation in the sport, a blanket moratorium is not recommended to prevent the construction of new courts. When assessing pickleball court distances from homes, a 500-foot setback requirement is likely not a reasonable approach in Castle Rock. A 500-foot radius, for example, would cover nearly the entirety of Bison Park in The Meadows. In fact, Cobblestone Ranch Park has the only pickleball courts in Town that would meet a full 500-600 foot radius setback (see figures below).



Figure 1: 500' Radius Circle at Bison Park



Figure 2: 500' Radius at Cobblestone Ranch Park



Figure 3: Parrish Park Pickleball Courts with 500' radius, installed prior to Butterfield.

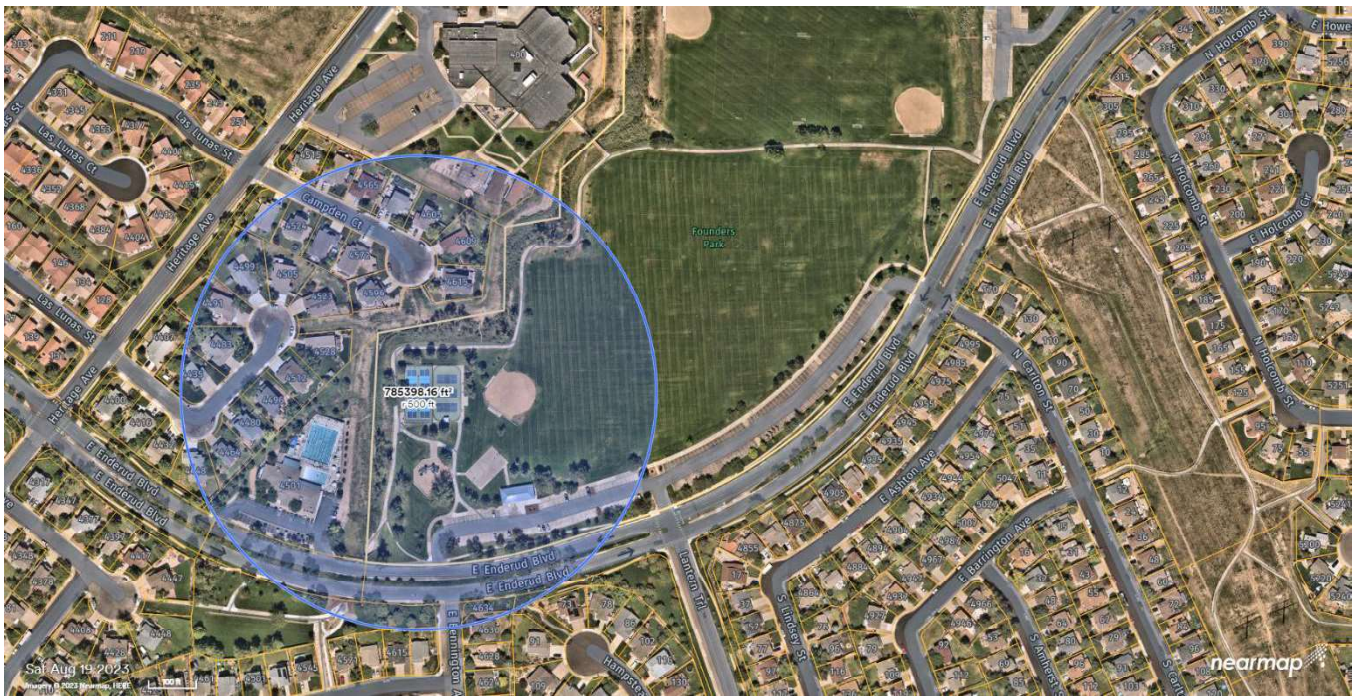


Figure 4: Founders Park Pickleball Courts with 500' Radius, installed prior to Butterfield



Figure 5: Rhyolite Park Pickleball Court with 500' Radius, installed prior to Butterfield

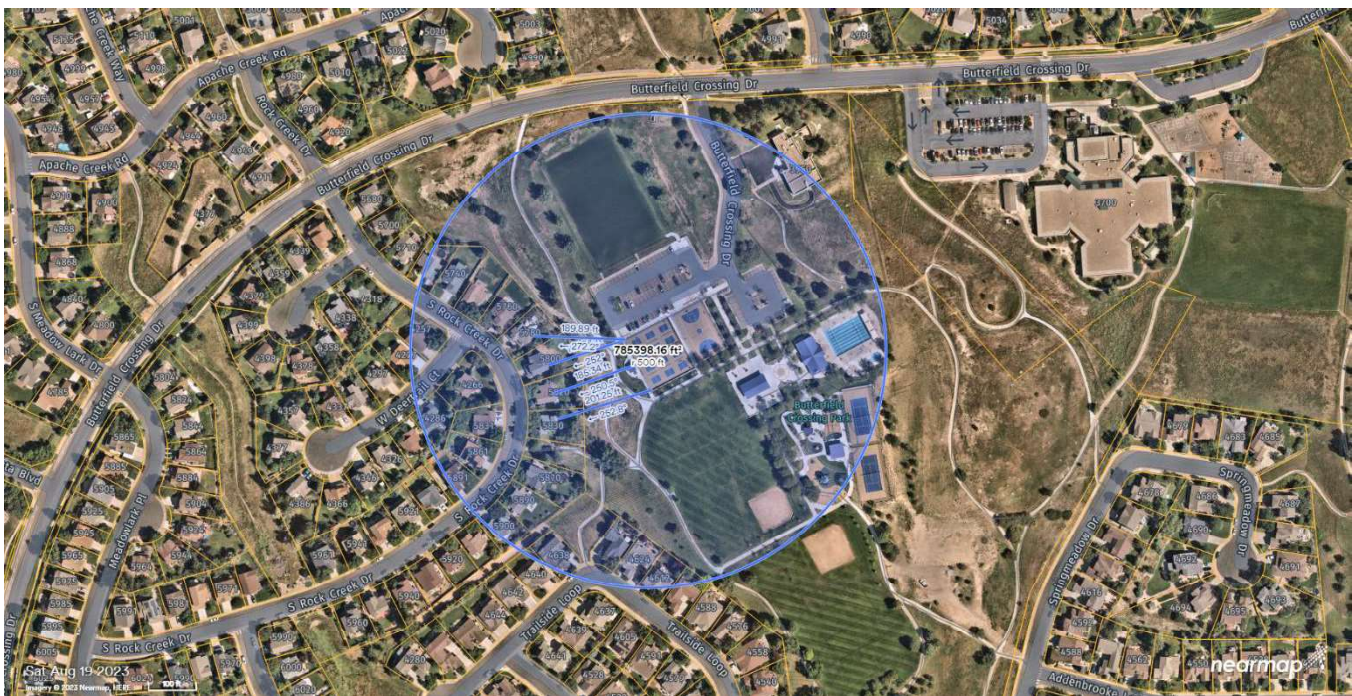


Figure 6: Butterfield Crossing Park Pickleball Courts with 500' Radius



Figure 7: Gemstone Park Pickleball Court with 500' Radius, installed prior to Butterfield.

In an effort to assess if the courts can be moved further from homes, staff have also evaluated relocating existing courts. Castle Rock has unique and characteristic topography, which dramatically limits the available areas where flat sport courts can be installed. For example, Butterfield Crossing Park has flatter areas to the west near homes, and while it includes a substantial undeveloped eastern portion, this eastern area is too steep for sport courts and has existing utility conflicts. The post-tensioned concrete slabs used for pickleball courts are also very expensive to install and cannot

be relocated or easily demolished.

Hours of Play and Noise Reduction

The Town of Castle Rock's municipal code determines that, "All park and open space areas shall be closed to public use between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. unless excepted in writing by the Director of Parks and Recreation." The code further defines a noise disturbance as, "Any noise level measuring in excess of fifty (50) decibels at or immediately adjacent to the property boundary upon which the noise originates..." For reference, 50 decibels is equivalent to a quiet conversation, a quiet suburb, a quiet office or a quiet refrigerator.

To date, the only pickleball complaints the Town has received have been regarding Butterfield Crossing Park, whose courts are further from adjacent homes than other existing courts. To help mitigate the noise concerns at Butterfield Park, the Parks and Recreation Department reduced the hours of play from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. to 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Staff have also programmed the court lights to turn off at 9 p.m. to further limit evening play.

The Parks and Recreation Department has also taken proactive measures to ensure that Town-organized pickleball league activities and court rentals are not scheduled during sensitive morning and evening hours. This includes mostly restricting programmed play to the hours of 8 a.m. to noon. Butterfield Park also features an evening program once per week from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Programming and rentals at the courts are run seasonally from mid-May through October. Any play on the courts before 8 a.m. or after 8 p.m. is not Town organized.

Based on sound measurements taken at the property line adjacent to Butterfield Crossing Park, staff measured 40-48 decibels during pickleball play and are therefore not exceeding the Town's noise disturbance limit. However, it is also worth noting that decibel readings ranged from 40-58 when people were cheering. While opinions surrounding pickleball vary from players to residents, it is important to note that industry leaders are aware of the noise concerns seen across the country and are working to offer solutions.

In September 2023, USA Pickleball announced a new line of quiet certified paddles and products. This quiet line strives to deliver products that are 50% quieter or more than current equipment on the market. As this sport continues to evolve, the paddles and equipment will only continue to improve out of necessity so the popular sport can survive.

In addition to equipment, engineering future courts and upgrading present courts with sound screens could offer a potential, yet costly solution. Staff received quotes from two sound screening vendors to provide enhanced noise reduction at Butterfield Park - Acoustiblok and Sport Sonic Guard. Acoustiblok is rated to reduce noise by 10-15 dB, and Sport Sonic Guard is rated to reduce noise 28 dB. Unfortunately, although the pickleball fence at Butterfield Park was engineered to accommodate the additional wind load for the windscreen, the nature of the sound panels blocking all wind would require additional fence reinforcement to accommodate the added load and weight. Preliminary estimates are offered below:

Acoustiblok: \$74,335

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Acoustiblok Reinforcement: Approximately \$28,000

Approximate total: \$102,335

Sport Sonic Guard: \$28,790

Sport Sonic Guard Reinforcement: Approximately \$23,000

Approximate total: \$51,790

While sound screens may be a viable, yet expensive solution, for limiting sound, they would create several undesirable side effects, causing additional concerns. In order to be effective, the sound screens must cover the entire fence top-to-bottom and are entirely opaque. The opaque screening would cut off the courts from the adjacent shelter and seating area, reducing the social gathering/community aspect of the courts. The reduced visibility will also inhibit visitors from knowing if the courts are available or not without opening the court gates. The screens would further block the majority of the Town's security camera views of the courts, which may increase vandalism. Finally, the screens will also block sunlight from hitting the walk on the north side of the courts, which will cause ice buildup on the walk and ADA parking stalls in the winter months.

The Parks and Recreation Department has also considered planting additional trees behind the residential homes at Butterfield Park to provide a visual buffer to the courts. While trees will not reduce the noise, they can provide a visual break to the courts, although they will take time to grow to be effective. Staff is also open to evaluating and discussing making Butterfield's pickleball courts Quiet Certified courts by using the newly established "Quiet Certified" product lines verified by USA Pickleball, such as the Owl Paddle. This could include posting signage at the courts that only Quiet Certified paddles and equipment are allowed. Further discussion will be needed to determine the best way to implement Quiet Certified requirements and what penalties and enforcement should be utilized.

Additional Considerations for Butterfield Crossing Park

Within Castle Rock's parks, the Town strives to provide high quality, top tier amenities that our residents request through public process. Butterfield Crossing Park, like all of our parks, went through a public outreach process in 2020/2021, where staff received overwhelming support and feedback requesting pickleball courts. During that master planning process, the pickleball courts were shown to the public and adjacent residents in their current location. Due to the rapidly evolving nature of the pickleball sport there was very little publicity about pickleball noise at the time of the master planning for the park improvements, and the existing pickleball courts in Town had not received noise complaints from adjacent residents. It is worth noting again that some of these existing courts are actually closer to residential homes than Butterfield's pickleball courts.

Since Butterfield Park's pickleball courts were a substantial investment, their location was intentionally selected for several reasons, including existing site constraints and the location of the previous lit sport courts in the same area. As with any renovation project, there are existing site constraints that needed to be addressed such as the location of existing parking lots, facilities like Butterfield Crossing Pool, the pavilion, as well as an existing water mainline to the east of the new tennis courts. Staff also needed to maintain the existing softball/baseball fields for programming and the Music in the Meadows events. Taking the existing site conditions, as well as the topography on

the site into account, the areas available for sport courts, which are designed to be very flat with a 1% slope was very limited. Due to these constraints, the existing, lit inline hockey and basketball were identified as an ideal location due to the already relatively flat surface, as well as knowing that the renovation would be replacing lit sport courts with lit sport courts. Additionally, upon evaluating placing the tennis in the current pickleball location, the size of the tennis courts was too large for the available area. While pickleball being played at Butterfield is new, the use of the area for athletic sport courts or lighting is not new and is an expected use within a Community Park.

Staff Recommendation

While staff believe pickleball is a valid park use at Butterfield Crossing Park, the Parks and Recreation Department wants to be good neighbors and find a balance in community needs and desires while reducing concerns. Staff have been actively pursuing and researching options to help mitigate noise concerns surrounding pickleball. Solutions could include:

1. Ensuring future courts are placed 200 feet or more from residential property lines
2. Engineering future pickleball courts to include sound screening
3. Further limiting hours of play at Butterfield Park or at all pickleball facilities

Additional tools could be considered as options to explore, but would require further discussion, staff assessment and budget allocation:

4. Evaluating “Quiet Certified” Court requirements at courts within 200 feet of residential property lines and adopting methods for implementation and regulation
5. Hiring a third-party specialist to further analyze and provide noise and mitigation solutions

Parks and recreation staff recommend adopting a 200-foot distance standard from residential property lines on future new pickleball construction, excepting the courts already proposed and under construction at Emerald Park. The proposed buffer would offer a guideline to be used and considered when master planning new park and existing park improvements, while also allowing flexibility to potentially place courts closer to residential property as sound proofing technology improves and changes to the game occur.

Proposed Motion

There are no recommended motions at this time as the intent of this agenda item is to provide information for future action if desired by Town Council.

Attachments

Attachment A - Incident Report

COPY



Incident Report



Print Date/Time: 01/05/2024 13:26
Login ID: crleanderson2

CASTLE ROCK POLICE
ORI Number: CO0180100

Incident: 2023-00025669

Incident Date/Time: 7/5/2023 9:21:13 PM
Location: 3952 BUTTERFIELD CROSSING DR
CASTLE ROCK CO 80109
Phone Number: (303) 917-8582
Report Required: No
Prior Hazards: No
LE Case Number:

Incident Type: DIST
Venue: Castle Rock
Source: 911
Priority: 1- IMMED RESP
Status: IN PROGRESS
Nature of Call:

Unit/Personnel

Unit	Personnel
212	2214-CORRIEA
214	2007-YOUNG
252	2210-BEATTY
262	2224-SNIPE
	2024-JAKUBIK
313	2305-REED
CAT12	1621-DINGES
O12	1916-BREDEHOEFT

Person(s)

No.	Role	Name	Address	Phone	Race	Sex	DOB
1	RP	VERIZON		(303) 917-8582			
2	RP	ZUNIGA, CHRIS		(303) 917-8582			
3	SUBJECT	RHODUS, MATTHEW DOUGLAS	5780 S ROCK CREEK DR CASTLE ROCK CO 80109	(720) 328-8006	WHITE	M	01/12/1997
4	SUBJECT	RHODUS, SCOTT ALAN	5780 S ROCK CREEK DR CASTLE ROCK CO 80109	(303) 726-8300	WHITE	M	09/15/1970

Vehicle(s)

Role	Type	Year	Make	Model	Color	License	State
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Disposition(s)

Disposition	Count
CM	1

Property

Date	Code	Type	Make	Model	Description	Tag No.	Item No.
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07/05/2023 : 22:08:42 cr\gyoung Narrative: NO DAMAGE WAS DONE TO THE COURT
 07/05/2023 : 22:08:30 cr\gyoung Narrative: I SPOKE WITH SCOTT WHO ADVISED THAT HE HAS EXPRESSED HIS DISTASTE WITH THE PICKLE BALL COURTS BEHIND HIS HOUSE TO HIS SON. HIS SON WAS INTOXICATED THIS EVENING AND DECIDED TO TAKE MATTERS INTO HIS OWN HANDS BY ATTEMPTING TO "HAMMER AWAY" THE PICKLE BALL COURTS.
 07/05/2023 : 21:56:11 cr\kwinkler Narrative: 214 -- ADDING NOTES
 07/05/2023 : 21:56:04 cr\kwinkler Narrative: 212 -- FWD CALL NOTES TO A11 // LIKELY SUSP OF PICKLEBALL NET DESTRUCTION
 07/05/2023 : 21:51:41 cr\kwinkler Narrative: IN 252
 07/05/2023 : 21:50:48 cr\kwinkler Narrative: 263 -- MATT IS IN BACKYARD SPEAKING WITH HIS FATHER

 07/05/2023 : 21:49:08 cr\kwinkler Narrative: 252 -- CLR OF RESD
 07/05/2023 : 21:45:50 cr\kwinkler Narrative: O12 -- DAD IS SAYING PARTY IS INTOX / UNK IF STILL ARMED W/HAMMER
 07/05/2023 : 21:44:10 cr\kwinkler Narrative: 252 -- CONFIRMED MATTHEW RHODUS
 07/05/2023 : 21:43:54 cr\kwinkler Narrative: CAT12 -- CLR OF THE HOUSE // DAD SAYS HE RAN OUT OF THE BACK // WILL CHECK THAT SIDE OF THE PARK

 07/05/2023 : 21:42:27 cr\kwinkler Narrative: 263 -- WILL WATCH TO MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T COME BACK
 07/05/2023 : 21:42:02 cr\kwinkler Narrative: 252 -- DAD IS SAYING SON WENT OUT THE BACK
 07/05/2023 : 21:39:16 cr\kwinkler Narrative: 212 -- RP DOESN'T WANT TO PRESS CHARGES
 07/05/2023 : 21:38:22 cr\kwinkler Narrative: O12 -- IN CONT // SUSP MAY BE SCOTT'S SON & HE JUST WENT INSIDE

 07/05/2023 : 21:35:56 cr\kwinkler Narrative: 214 -- WALKING UP ON FOOT NOW

 07/05/2023 : 21:34:15 cr\kwinkler Narrative: 263 -- NO DAMAGE / MINOR SCRATCHING

 07/05/2023 : 21:31:10 cr\rbrekke Narrative: BUTTERFIELD NV NE LOT VIEW, 2118
 07/05/2023 : 21:30:22 cr\rbrekke Narrative: CAN SEE THE MALE YELLING AT PTYS ON THE PICKELBALL COURTS

 07/05/2023 : 21:26:30 cr\rbrekke Narrative: RP IS WEARING BLK SHIRT AND SHORTS ON PICKLE BALL COURT FOR CONTACT
 07/05/2023 : 21:26:01 cr\rbrekke Narrative: MALE CAME FROM THE RAVINE AND THAT IS THE SAME DIRECTION THAT HE LEFT AT
 07/05/2023 : 21:25:16 cr\rbrekke Narrative: RP HAS PHOTO OF THE MALE
 07/05/2023 : 21:25:11 cr\rbrekke Narrative: 2 OTHER PEOPLE BY THE REVINE NEAR WHERE THE MALE WENT
 07/05/2023 : 21:24:44 cr\rbrekke Narrative: RP CONTINUED TO IGNORE HIM
 07/05/2023 : 21:24:36 cr\rbrekke Narrative: RP ADV HE WAS JUST PLAYING PICKLEBALL AND THE MALE APPROACHED AND BEGAN YELLING AT THE RP THEN PULLED OUT THE HAMMER AND SAID HE WANTED TO FIGHT THE RP
 07/05/2023 : 21:24:02 cr\rbrekke Narrative: MALE HAD SUNGLASSES ON
 07/05/2023 : 21:23:40 cr\rbrekke Narrative: NO ASSOC VEH
 07/05/2023 : 21:23:29 cr\rbrekke Narrative: MALE IS ON FOOT
 07/05/2023 : 21:23:25 cr\rbrekke Narrative: MALE LS HEADING WEST OF THE PARKING LOT THRU THE HOUSES
 07/05/2023 : 21:22:59 cr\rbrekke Narrative: NO INJURIES

 07/05/2023 : 21:22:31 cr\rbrekke Narrative: WM,30S, 5'7, TOOL BELT, JEANS

 07/05/2023 : 21:21:45 cr\rbrekke Narrative: MALE HITTING THE COURT W/ A HAMMER
 07/05/2023 : 21:21:33 system Narrative: Narrative added from associated Call #: 576 - Remote call CFS # 482 has been canceled [DCSO]
 07/05/2023 : 21:21:33 system Narrative: Narrative added from associated Call #: 576 - Call Dispositions: CC [DCSO]
 07/05/2023 : 21:21:27 cr\rbrekke Narrative: ON PICKLEBALL COURT
 07/05/2023 : 21:20:57 system Narrative: Narrative added from associated Call #: 576 - Location Updated: 3952 BUTTERFIELD CROSSING DR [DCSO]
 07/05/2023 : 21:20:49 system Narrative: Narrative added from associated Call #: 576 - MALE THREATENING RP ON PICKLE BALL COURT [DCSO]
 07/05/2023 : 21:20:39 system Narrative: Narrative added from associated Call #: 576 - Mapped call type 'TRANSFER LAW' for

COPY

remote call type 'TRANSFER LAW'.

07/05/2023 : 21:20:39 system Narrative: Narrative added from associated Call #: 576 - Location: 14700 MISSION WALK LOOP Beat:

04 Quadrant: SM44 District: Y32D [DCSO]

07/05/2023 : 21:20:39 system Narrative: Narrative added from associated Call #: 576 - Call Source: 911 [DCSO]

07/05/2023 : 21:20:39 system Narrative: Narrative added from associated Call #: 576 - Call Status: IN PROGRESS [DCSO]

07/05/2023 : 21:20:39 system Narrative: Narrative added from associated Call #: 576 - Call Priority: 2 [DCSO]

07/05/2023 : 21:20:39 system Narrative: Narrative added from associated Call #: 576 - Call Type: TRANSFER LAW [DCSO]

07/05/2023 : 21:20:39 system Narrative: Narrative added from associated Call #: 576 - Remote CFS# 482 Transferred from [DCSO]