

COLUMBINEVALLEYVOICE

FALL 2020



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From Mayor Palmer:

2020 has been an odd year for all of us. But I have to say, I'm not offended when my friends, who don't live here, refer to the "Columbine Bubble". I'm grateful for it. We have been less troubled by the impacts of COVID than most other places; in terms of positive tests, financial impacts and just general impact on our daily lives. For me it doesn't take a pandemic to bring into focus the value of having a strong community which places an emphasis on providing premium (compared with other cities) services and activities. The high number of scrapes, re-models and new home starts this year tells me other people get it too.

Still, I miss the activities we've had to do without this year. So far for instance, we've lost the spring shred event, our summer concert series, fireworks and the full 4th of July after party event. Our Town Trustee meetings are still primarily virtual and to create a safe workplace our staff is working in rotating shifts between home and office, (but Town offices remain staffed during business hours).

But there is one service we provide that remains constant: our Police force. I recently went on a couple of ride alongs with some of our officers and it is enormously reassuring to see their professionalism, training and dedication. They know many residents by name. They know every street. And they patrol every nook and cranny of our Town on a 24-hour basis. Increasingly they are dealing with vagrants/campers coming in from the South Platte area, car thefts, burglaries and more. This at the same time as the State of Colorado has passed new legislation making it harder and more time consuming to contact suspicious persons roaming around Town. Suffice to say, Columbine Valley will not be defunding its police anytime soon.

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MAYOR & BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Roy Palmer, Mayor
(Term Expires April 2022)

Bruce Menk, Mayor Pro Tem
Trustee (Public Safety)
(Term Expires April 2022)

Kathy Boyle,
Trustee (Planning)
(Term Expires April 2022)

Bill Dotson,
Trustee (Finance)
(Term Expires April 2022)

Ed Icenogle,
Trustee (Building)
(Term Expires April 2022)

Mimi Kuchman,
Trustee (Community Affairs)
(Term Expires April 2024)

Jim Tarpey,
Trustee (Public Works)
(Term Expires April 2024)

Mail Correspondence To:
2 Middlefield Road
Columbine Valley, CO 80123

Or Email To:

BoardofTrustees@columbinevalley.org

WILD PLUM UPDATES

- So far 9 home permits have been issued by the Town. This includes 4 Lennar homes on the interior of the site and 5 permits issued to other builders for the custom lots along Fairway Lane.
- Lennar opened their on site sales office and two model homes in August. Home tours are by appointment due to COVID.
- Please remember that Wild Plum is an active construction zone and the site, including streets and paths are still private property.
- DO NOT drive carts on the gravel paths. These are for walking, jogging and biking only. Golf carts will damage this Town amenity.

2021 Town Directory: Send Updates Today

Work is already underway on the 2021 Town Directory. If you have recently moved to Columbine Valley, please be sure to contact the Town staff and provide us with your name and phone number(s) for publication. The Directory also provides an option for multiple numbers (cell phones) and will list the names of children living at home for households that would like to do so. The Town also keeps an unpublished list of email addresses for emergency use if you are willing to provide that as well.

Fill out the enclosed form and return by mail or in person to Town Hall, email dstruthers@columbinevalley.org or call Town Hall at 303-795-1434

From the Mayor, Continued

COVID has and will continue to affect Town revenues. But thankfully, it appears that so far the impact will not be nearly as dire as other municipalities and not as bad as we predicted in our revised budget. Revenues are being buoyed by new home starts. Many of these are one time revenues which we need to be careful not to bake into our baseline budget, but it is still reassuring to see the continuing level of activity.

Speaking of funding, I thought you might be interested in how your property taxes are split and amongst whom. Our Town gets about 7% of your total property tax payments. Arapahoe County, South Metro Fire and South Suburban Parks and Recreation all collect far more than the Town. And the biggest share of property taxes on homes in Columbine Valley is Littleton Public schools, which collects more than 50% of the total.

Finally, looking forward to next year ... I have high hopes for a return to "normal". I'd like to celebrate with an over the top 4th of July. If you'd like to help plan the event in 2021 and/or have ideas (including the 5k run which happened organically this year) we'd love to hear from you.

Spyglass/Fairway Connection Project

Improvements to the drainage/cart connection between Burning Tree and Old Town are scheduled to begin on September 16.

The Town will be replacing the railroad tie retaining walls and re-pouring the concrete. The access will be closed to all traffic from September 15—24th and to cart traffic through September 29. Detours should go through Wild Plum; please do not detour through your neighbors private yards.

2021 TOWN BUDGET

The Town has begun work on the 2021 annual budget. The town budget includes operating, program, and capital expenditures. Staff will be presenting a 1st draft to the Trustees in September with a formal review in October. The process will conclude with a Public Hearing in November and adoption in December.

COOLEY LAKE PROGAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Just south of the new Wild Plum community lies a beautiful lake, river-side forest and refuge for wildlife known as Cooley Lake. The lake is part of South Platte Park, an 880-acre natural open space park owned by the City of Littleton and managed by South Suburban Parks and Recreation, created after the massive flood in 1965. The new trails in Wild Plum Farm parallel the edges of the park, though they do not extend into the Cooley Lake area. We are excited to share this amazing resource with our Columbine Valley neighbors in appropriate ways, and our rangers have been responding to an increase in unauthorized use since Wild Plum trails opened.

The Cooley Area is open to only guided public groups and restoration activities as part of the management plan for South Platte Park. A habitat area like Cooley creates great wildlife watching opportunities throughout the entire park and river system by allowing wildlife a place to rest, feed, court their mates, and raise their young. Respecting the wildlife area shows your commitment to our community and protects nesting areas, prevents wildlife from fleeing, and creates an area free of trash and fishing line that can entangle animals.

South Platte Park provides a variety of opportunities to showcase this special place. Join a free guided walk one Saturday per month (and one Sunday quarterly). Register for canoe programs offered once per month May through October. Request a custom “Rent A Naturalist” program through your HOA or other community group. Volunteer with South Platte Park and help with wildlife surveys, restoration projects, or as a program guide. These are all available through sspr.org/nature. Of course, viewing from the Wild Plum trail is always allowed and encouraged using binoculars or spotting scopes, and the Nature Center regularly offers classes on bird identification and using optics. A careful observer can find hunting bald eagles in winter or osprey in summer. Loon, swans and grebes may be spotted amid rafts of over 1000 mergansers during fall migration. Ducks from as far as Alaska and the arctic feed during the winter. In spring, beaver and coyotes raise their young, and in summer deer rest in the dappled shade of the cottonwoods.

Please help us protect the unique values of South Platte Park by enjoying viewing from the Wild Plum trails only. Appreciate the beauty of the native vegetation, even if it blocks some of your view. And please report those you see who are not respecting this special place by calling the ranger on duty at 303-435-8227 or the Carson Nature Center at 303-730-1022. We welcome the opportunity to get to know our neighbors.

Skot Latona is the Manager of South Platte Park. He can be reached at the Carson Nature Center or skotl@ssprd.org for your questions. Programs are available at www.ssprd.org/nature.

DATES TO KNOW

- **Sept 12:** Haz. Material Collection—see website for details
- **Sept 15:** Board of Trustees Meeting; 6:30 p.m. *
- **Oct 5:** Flu Shots at Town Hall; 7:30—9 a.m. & 5—6:30 p.m.
- **Oct 10:** Shred Event at Town Hall; 9:00—Noon
- **Oct 13:** Planning Commission Meeting; 6:30 p.m. *
- **Oct 20:** Board of Trustees Meeting; 6:30 p.m. *
- **Oct 24:** Prescription Drug Take Back at Town Hall; 10—2:00 p.m.

* Town meetings are currently being held virtually with all opportunities for public participation conducted in writing or online. Please check the Town's web site for more information.

TOWN STAFF

J.D. McCrumb
Town Administrator

Bret Cottrell
Chief of Police

Dana Struthers
Support Services Manager

Stephanie Thelen
Building Dept. Coordinator

Hobbes Hayden
Public Works Manager

Dinae Dreessen
Public Works

Lee Schiller
Town Attorney

Angie Kelly
Finance Director

Phil Sieber
Town Planner

Brent Kaslon
Assistant Planner

Troy Carmann
Town Engineer

Joanna Czarnecka
Senior Construction Manager



FALL SERVICE EVENTS

The **annual flu shot clinic** will be held at Town Hall on October 5th from 7:30—9:00 AM and 5:00—6:30 PM. Additional COVID precautions will be in place. Accepted insurance plans and other information is available on the Town's web site. Shots without insurance are \$37.00 for 4 years + and \$87.00 for seniors.

The Town will host a **prescription drug collection** point at the Town Offices on October 24th from 10 AM to 2 PM. The event is designed to significantly reduce the prescription drugs in homes that are either no longer needed or outdated/expired. Please drop off your unused or expired medications at Town Hall to a uniformed Columbine Valley police officer for proper and safe disposal of these drugs so they don't become a future problem.

The **fall dumpsters** at Town Hall will not be offered this year due to the increased cost of the event and COVID related budget restrictions.