

**EVRPD candidate answers were limited to 750 characters per answer.**

**1. Fitness is very important to everyone. How should EVRPD adjust fees so that lower-income individuals and households can access the services?**

*David Boon*

It was my understanding that children on free or reduced lunch (F/R) are offered a reduced fee for EVRPD programming and services. I believe that families are given a scholarship application to fill out and then that is passed on the EVRPD Foundation for support so the family get a discounted rate based on their income level. If that is not the case, it should be. Families below a certain yearly income could be offered reduced fee's which would include their children and the adult family members as well. Most non-profits that provide service to children and/or adults have sliding scale fee structures. Costs for recreational activities and accessibility should not be limited by income levels. Access should be affordable to all.

*Scott Dorman*

Fitness is very important and should be available to everyone in our community. The Mission Statement for the EVRPD is to provide "Access to everyone", the objective is for "Active participation/use in programs and facilities by all ages, abilities, and income levels. The Estes Valley Recreation and Park Foundation provides scholarships and membership assistance to qualifying individuals and families who are financially challenged. It covers 50% of membership or program costs and is available to anyone who qualifies for free or reduced lunch from the school district or who receives any form of assistance from the County including food, housing, or energy. In 2021 the District provided 21 scholarships for memberships and/or youth programs.

*Candy Sulzbach*

I believe that anyone residing within the District boundaries and paying property taxes that go to the EVRPD, should pay the same fees to access facilities that charge a fee. However, there are lots of ways that the Rec District is involved in promotion recreation for lower income families. For "Bright Christmas", over 100 families received 6 time punch cards for the Community Center. The 18 hole Golf Course offers a Junior Golf program that is a very low cost program for children and teens. They are given a free set of golf clubs and instruction is provided for a very small fee. The Community Center has a Foundation for the less fortunate, as well. These are all great ways to help provide recreation for lower income households.

*Eric Throne*

It's important that EVRPD does all it can to provide access to the entire community it supports. Its own mission statement references the goal of supporting "all ages, abilities, and income levels." It's also critical that the needs of the entire community are considered in program

development, and that we create options that match the diversity of the community we serve. The Estes Valley Recreation and Park Foundation creates a platform to accomplish this. Directing sufficient resources and effort towards this foundation will go a long way to ensuring we are not only meeting the needs of the entire community, but providing access to all as well.

**2. What are your ideas about further development of walking and cycling trails throughout the Estes Valley?**

*David Boon*

I am not certain about the number of actual miles of walking and cycling trails we have in the EP Valley. I frequently use the Estes Park Lake trail and the connecting trails into town. There may be lots of opportunities for further development, I am just not aware of them. I would like to see additional trails that are ADA accessible to some of our climbing areas in the valley. The key issues, and there maybe more, to expanding walking and cycling trails are costs and locations. An open dialogue with the community members, Town of EP, county interests and private landowners could help identify possible additional walking and cycling trails and the challenges and opportunities we will face for their further development.

*Scott Dorman*

Trails are vital to outdoor recreation. EVRPD works with the Trails Committee to maintain the existing trails we manage, and for development of new trails. Building and maintaining trails is a major undertaking and expensive. We spend almost \$400k annually for trail maintenance, mainly for the Lake Estes Trail. Funding is through collaboration with other entities - the Town of Estes Park (TOEP), Larimer County, RMNP and grants. We are currently collaborating with the TOEP to extend the Fall River Trail from RMNP. In 2021, the EVRPD contributed \$550K toward this project and we have \$150K allocated this year for that project. We have already completed the engineering portion for the Dry Gulch/Devil's Gulch to Lumpy Ridge trail extension.

*Candy Sulzbach*

I do think there is a great need to develop some cycling trails in and around the Estes Valley. There are very crowded roads, especially in the summer, and with narrow shoulders, it's not safe for cyclists. Many mountain communities in CO have a great walking/cycling path system and it would be great to have such a path system in the Estes Valley. Of course, careful planning would be required with development of a path system. The locations of walking/cycling paths and their impact on the Estes Valley would need to be determined. And, cost of design and construction would be an important factor that needs to be determined before final decisions can be made. However, I am supportive of this type of development.

*Eric Throne*

Outdoor recreation is part of Estes Park's identity. Many studies support the concepts that time outdoors, moderate exercise, and enjoyable recreation all improve health and well being. Building an expanded trail network, not just for recreation but also to provide additional and safer forms of non-motorized travel throughout the region, enable numerous benefits to the community. It's important that future planning, budget considerations, and development include options for additional trail development in the discussion. Ultimately it comes down to availability of funds and priorities as to when and how trail development could be expanded. 3.

**3. What are your ideas for extending hours later in the evening to better serve all community residents?**

*David Boon*

We should provide as many recreational opportunities for as many of our residents as possible. The hours currently used by the Recreation Center are common operational times for city recreational facilities in Northern Colorado (Fort Collins, Loveland, etc). Extended hours must be balanced against the costs associated with increased staffing and operations. If the revenue sources and budgets are sufficient to serve our community with extended hours then I am all for it. Let's see what the community members would recommend to which days/hours they would like extended and at what locations. One option might be to extend hours on the most "requested" day(s) if that would result in a significant increased use by the community.

*Scott Dorman*

I would like to see the hours extended at the Community Center to at least 9 PM on weekdays. The Recreation District is facing hiring challenges, as are many local businesses. If staffing needs could be met, I am fully in favor of extending hours at the Community Center. However, as far as I am aware there have not been many requests for extending the hours at the Community Center, however, I think this is a very good opportunity to improve access, if needed. Checking online I found that our current hours are in line with other recreation centers along the front range from Ft. Collins to Boulder.

*Candy Sulzbach*

It depends on the facility and the demand for extended hours. A study for the specific facility that wants to extend their hours should be completed to see if it's economically feasible to be open longer. Based on this study, I would support it if it makes sense, economically.

*Eric Throne*

This ties into the discussion around access for all. If there's an unmet need that ties to later hours, it should be a discussion to consider, if it hasn't been already. The idea of extended hours would also need to consider the associated costs, and whether the demand and utilization of those hours support what it takes to provide them.

#### **4. What specific ideas do you have to further expand EVRPD recreation services?**

*David Boon*

I have been working closely with EVRPD, providing youth tennis programming and to get tennis courts resurfaced at Stanley Park. I am working with the USTA about grant opportunities to offset the costs of this project. The EVRPD Board has approved funding. ADA accessible climbing opportunities in the EP valley is something that I would love to see. We have world class rock climbing in the valley and very little, if any, ADA accessible opportunities for those that would seek out that recreational opportunity. I want to hear from the community about what other ideas they have to expand recreation activities like more youth focused areas (skate park, game rooms and gather places for our youth after school).

*Scott Dorman*

I am always open to considering any new recreational activities that the community would desire. Safety of existing facilities is paramount. The tennis courts are scheduled to be replaced and the skateboard park will be rebuilt as part of the Stanley Park Master Plan. New pickleball courts will be added. Some of these will happen soon and some will need to wait for adequate funding. I believe we currently have a large variety of recreational activities available including: Tennis, pickleball, basketball, baseball, softball and lots of other adult and youth sports programs, swimming, Community Center activities, shooting range, camping, parks, bike and hiking trails, marina w/ fishing and boat rentals, and golf.

*Candy Sulzbach*

As mentioned above, the development of walking/cycling paths in the Estes Valley would be beneficial to many people. Otherwise, I think the EVRPD offers a great variety of recreational services now.

*Eric Throne*

Expanding services, where resources exist to do so, that are of interest to the community and that increase the utilization of our network of community recreation options, should be an important initiative of EVRPD. In alignment with the mission to support "all ages, abilities, and income levels," it's prudent to periodically review current programs and facilities, compare it to the needs and interests of the diverse populations and age groups it supports, and identify opportunities to fill any gaps discovered. Community input should also be considered as new programs are weighed, and EVRPD should be actively engaging the community to let it decide what programs should be a priority to consider for development.

#### **5. How can this board better communicate with the public on a regular basis?**

*David Boon*

EVRPD posts their minutes on their website which is available to all community members to stay informed of the Board activities. The EVRPD meetings are open to the public and they do take questions and input from the audience that attends. Additional communications could be through E-Newsletters, open forums and workshops to collectively identify opportunities within the EVRPD boundaries. I believe in collaboration and partnerships and that works with communications as well. We can all do more collectively than independently and would look for opportunities with other agencies like the US Forest Service, National Park, Larimer County, Town of EP, EP School District, and others.

*Scott Dorman*

I would continue to utilize our digital media to get information out to our residents and visitors. The EVRPD website has a treasure trove of information about the district and upcoming events and activities. You can also find current and past Board meeting minutes and agendas on the website. Additionally, there are district activities printed weekly in our local newspapers, which could be expanded. The board meetings are on the third Tuesday of every month at 6 PM and everyone is welcome to attend. My email is on the EVRPD website if anyone wishes to contact me about anything related to the Recreation District.

*Candy Sulzbach*

I know the Town of EP has a system that public can sign up for to receive emails re: Meeting agendas, Minutes, etc. It would be nice to have a system where residents could contact the EVRPD and sign up to receive similar emails about Board business on a continual basis.

*Eric Throne*

I'm not aware of current concerns or gaps in communication to be addressed, so it's difficult to answer at this time. It's important that the board and EVRPD maintain proper transparency and communication, and that regular mechanisms are in place to share key information with the community. If there are opportunities to improve communication in the future, it would be imperative that the board and EVRPD leadership work to address those gaps moving forward.