



To: Mayor and Town Council
From: Clint Kinney, Town Manager
Date: May 6, 2016
Re: Info Update

SCHOOL DISTRICT FUNDING

At the April 18 Town Council meeting, the Council directed staff to prepare draft ballot language that would essentially ask voters if they wanted to increase their property tax rate by 1 mill to benefit the District. School District and Town Staff met after that meeting to put together a plan. The first step identified was that the School District legal staff wanted to research and confirm that utilizing this approach wouldn't jeopardize any of their existing state funding. We have yet to hear back from the District on this issue. Once we do, we can move forward on preparing ballot language. At that April 18 meeting we undertook some back of envelope type math to discuss how this potential rate increase could affect tax payers. As a follow-up to that discussion, the proposed rate increase would cost a home owner about \$8 per year for every \$100,000 of value of the home. So, someone with a \$400,000 home would pay \$32/year and someone with a \$4,000,000 home would pay \$318/year if this tax increase was approved by voters. Below is a letter that Superintendent Maloy recently sent to parents in the District:

Bringing Snowmass Village on Board as a Funding Partner

Aspen School District funding update from Superintendent John Maloy

It is common knowledge that state funding for education keeps dropping. As a matter of fact, the shortfall from the State of Colorado to the Aspen School District is just over \$2 million. The District has been filling that gap with funds from the Aspen Education Foundation and the money collected from the City of Aspen sales tax and other initiatives. But the deficit still grows and the sales tax will sunset after next year. It is unknown whether the tax will be renewed. If the District does not secure funding sources, the District is predicting a net loss of \$5,283,000 by the year 2020.

The District is being proactive with creative, alternative long term funding options so that we can continue to offer the kind of educational experiences to your students that you have some to expect.

It is in that vein that the Aspen School District has approached the Town of Snowmass Village for an increase of funding of \$500,000 a year for the next five years. Seventeen percent of our student body resides in The Town of Snowmass Village and we have asked them to be our partner with our funding needs.

School district representatives met with the Town of Snowmass Village Town Council at their regular meeting April 18, to formally request funds for the future of our school district. At the meeting the District presented its data, answered questions, and discussed

funding options. The Town Council does not feel comfortable with the sales tax model as a funding option and instead has chosen to utilize a property tax increase of 1 mill. The average home value in Snowmass Village is \$4 million. An increase of 1 mill would result in a \$304 property tax increase for that average-priced home.

I am happy to report that after some thoughtful questions about out-of-district students, clarification on use of property tax revenues, and how the state disperses funds collected from property tax, the members of the Town Council unanimously supported to develop language to authorize a ballot initiative. They agree with me, and our Board, that the priorities that make our school district special include such things as: small class sizes, the opportunities our students have with programs like Outdoor Education and Experiential Education, exceptional and caring teachers. These cost money but I hope you agree help make our community special.

TID BITS

- As part of the Ski Company's Environmental Impact Statement preparation process, that is largely being driven by the Ski Company's summer expansion efforts around Elk Camp, the forest service asked the Town to comment. As you will see in the attached letter, we provided feedback that pointed out we expect the Ski Company to apply through our land use process in addition to the Forest Service.
- Welcome to Starr Jameson who was hired as our new Parks, Open Space, and Trails manager. Starr begins work on May 16.
- Speaking of May 16, remember Sky Mountain Park and the North Rim Trail are closed until then in order to preserve the critical calving habitat for elk and other momma animals.
- FCI is gearing up to start the heavy lifting of the employee housing renovation project. Dirt will be moved soon with the anticipation of everything being completed by Thanksgiving.
- Some of our critical TV/ Granicus equipment is on life support. We are planning to "limp through" the May 16 meeting with only one wide angle camera shot. The required new equipment is ordered and should be in place in June.
- At the next Planning Commission meeting on May 11, the Commission is expected to continue discussing the upcoming Comprehensive Plan Review. Their review of the Community Connectivity Plan is scheduled for May 18.
- June 6 is the expected date that wildfire mitigation work will begin in the Faraway subdivision.
- With the approaching spring weather, the ice rink walls came down this week. The rodeo starts on June 8.
- The new Anderson Ranch street banners celebrating the 50th year of the Ranch are now up. They will remain up through October.
- There is some big street construction project going on in front of Town Hall. I will check into it, see what it is and get back to you.
- Look out world, these weekly Info updates are now available on our website.
- There is still a strong odor emanating from around the Viceroy. We are awaiting test results to help us determine the source of the problem.
- March sales tax numbers are in. They show sale tax is up 4.43% for the month and up .46% for the year. The strong March helped to make up for a wimpy January. Lodging returns in March were strong with a 3.55% increase, but even a strong March couldn't make up for a slow start. Year to date, lodging is still down 1.77%

- Divide/Ski Hill Road down to Campground/County Road is open for summer primitive use. There are still icy and muddy spots. We are waiting for the road to dry out before we do our annual grading upgrade of the road for summer public traffic. This gives another primitive access into the town. As always if you see road hazards, down trees, drainage concerns anywhere on any roads please let us know.

CC: Department Directors