



## The Civics Class Edition

This Bull Moose is a little different. I want people to be able to affect change, and the best way to do that is understand how things work.

As part of my campaign I've met so many people who are new to the area. They have questions about how government decisions are made. Hopefully this Bull Moose helps answer some of those questions. If you've been here a while (or your whole life), you probably already know most of this, but perhaps there's a nugget or two in here for you.

Finally, if this doesn't appeal to you, and are looking for what's happening, just skip to the Few More Thing section at the end.

On to a primer on some of Summit County government — especially what impacts development.

## You probably don't live in Park City

Those of us in the Snyderville Basin have a Park City address, but if you live past the white barn, you probably live in unincorporated Summit County. Park City does not govern you. You are not going to get a vote on open space this November.

When you are concerned about road projects, you need to contact Summit County. When you have a safety issue, the Park City Police department doesn't come to help you, but a Summit County Sheriff's deputy will.

If you live outside of Park City, what you really care about is the Summit County government. It is generally located in Coalville (with the exception of the Sheriff's Department which is located by the Home Depot). If you get a chance to go to the Coalville courthouse, it's pretty interesting. It looks a bit old and intimidating, but people there are so friendly. It is the sort of place where you could walk into almost any office and have a 20-minute chat about almost anything.

The point is that Summit County government is where the action is if you live outside Park City. The good news is that the people in Summit County government are pretty approachable.

## The County Manager is the skipper

The County Manager is a gentleman named Tom Fisher. He manages the county's department heads and makes ultimate decisions. He serves as the leisure of the County Council. So, since you vote for the council, you indirectly cast a vote for him. If you like what he is doing, you can let him know at [countymanager@summitcounty.org](mailto:countymanager@summitcounty.org). If you don't, you can let him know too. The buck stops there.

Ultimately, he is responsible for what happens with most things in the county. So, should you need to escalate something past an individual department, he is the person to go to.

## The County Attorney is one of the most important positions you will elect here

Yes, I am running for County Council, but I am under no illusion that it is the most important elected position in the county. I believe that title goes to the County Attorney. I'm always amazed at the breadth of knowledge our County Attorney (and his/her attorneys) has. They always seem to know every aspect of an issue.

Yet, when you are choosing one you need to know where they stand on core issues. The County Council is probably not going to go against advice from the County Attorney's office — nor will anyone else in county government. When the County Council goes into closed session, and the County Attorney (or one of her deputies) provides a legal opinion, the council is likely going to follow that. Of course, as we have seen over the past few years, legal opinions do vary. So, whom you choose does matter.

As an example, with the condos near Maxwells that were the subject of the Save Newpark Campaign, who do you think really decided that? The County Council? Yeah, they voted. However, I'd wager that decision was really made per advice given by The County Attorney's Office.

So, the next time you have an opportunity to choose between two candidates for County Attorney, you should ask them about areas of your concern. The choice is important. This year, Margaret Olson is running unopposed. In 2022, you may get an opportunity to ask those tough questions again.

## Most development starts with the Planning Department

Any development in Summit County is going to begin with the Planning Department. They are responsible for directing a development's path through the county process. The Planning Department is also responsible for putting together staff reports on developments and educating Summit County's two Planning Commissions.

Pat Putt heads up the Planning Department. You can email him (or someone in his department) if you have questions about a proposed development. For instance, if you want to know more about the indoor soccer facility proposed for Silver Creek, or other developments, you could email Mr Putt at [pputt@summitcounty.org](mailto:pputt@summitcounty.org). He'll likely direct you to whichever Planner is working on the project.

## Most development then goes to one of the Planning Commissions

Planning Commission has to be one of the most thankless, non-paid, appointed jobs in the county (or universe). Planning commission members sit through hours of discussions about building. One week they may decide whether a driveway slope is acceptable, the next whether a dock can be built on a stream, and the next whether Whole Foods should be allowed to exist on Kilby Rd.

There are two Planning Commissions in Summit County. One is the East Side Planning Commission which handles development outside the Basin (i.e. Kamas and beyond). The other is the Snyderville Basin Planning Commission (SBPC). The one that most of us interact with is the SBPC.

The SBPC is the first line of defense in making sure development is done correctly. They listen to the Planning Department to understand a development. They direct the Planning Department on issues they find with a development. Finally they make decisions about how and whether a development should happen. If the person requesting the development doesn't like the decision from the Planning Commission, then they can appeal it to the County Council.

The Planning Commission is also responsible for creating what is know as the General Plan. This describes how development should be handled. If you have a few minutes and have never looked at what the county is planning, [you may want to see how it will impact your neighborhood.](#)

## The conditional use permit is not your friend — unless you are a developer

You'll often hear elected and appointed officials say that they are changing the zoning or providing more entitlements but the public shouldn't be concerned because it will take a conditional use permit to do X.

What I have learned about conditional use permits is that unless a development harms human welfare or a problem can't be mitigated, then a conditional use is typically allowed. The key is that nearly every problem can be mitigated. If the potential issue is that a development may be blaring music too loud — then the condition is that the music is turned off at 10 PM. If the potential issue is that lighting from a development will light up the neighbors' houses — then the condition will be that the lights should point downward. If the potential issue is that a development increases traffic — then the condition to fix it will be to put in roundabouts or maybe add a bus stop.

So, before any increased entitlements are allowed on land, you need to know what's possible given the new zoning. For instance in the General Plan, the hill at the entrance to Jeremy Ranch is suggested to become zoned Neighborhood Commercial. What's allowed in Neighborhood Commercial zoning with a conditional use permit? Hotels, groceries, gas stations, medical clinics, bars, ski-lifts, restaurants, any other general retail (buildings less than 5,000 square feet), and a host of other uses. Some of those may be appealing to you, but if some are not, then a conditional use permit decision probably isn't going to prevent a development. If you don't like it, you need to stop the zoning change before it happens. Zoning is outlined in the Development Code, which can be found [here](#). What you'll see are the different zoning types within the Basin and then a table of what can be done in all the zones.

## The County Council is your chief representative with Summit County

You are responsible for electing the County Council. It's not a regional election, so everyone in the county votes for all members — regardless of where you live. The term is 4 years. This year, two council members are up for election. In 2020, three will be up for election.

The County Council is responsible for ultimately approving the County Manager. The County Manager hires for every other un-elected position. The County Council approves the budget — thus they approve where money is spent. They also rule on appeals to Planning Commission decisions and other exceptions. They approve ordinances and make land purchases. It's an important job that impacts us all.

## There are other areas that matter in Summit County

There are many areas within Summit County Government. I don't mean to slight them by not covering them here. Many do very important things from ensuring food is safe, to handling animals, to assessing property values, to managing the libraries, and many other things. Here is a [list of most of the departments](#) in the county.

## A few more things

Back to the normal programming. Here are few more things happening in Summit County:

### **Budget**

The 2019 Summit County Recommended budget will be presented to the County Council this week. This is a review of the 2018 budget and the Manager's recommended budget for 2019.

As part of this, a document has been created to introduce the budget to the County Council. It's a great overview of what is happening in the county. For instance, you learn that in Summit County

government, total benefits make up almost 55% of employee compensation. Across the whole country, benefits typically make up about 31% of employee compensation. You also learn where revenues come from and what the major expenses are. The recommended operating budget for 2019 is \$55.6 million — a 2.5% increase from last year. There are then capital projects on top of that. It's a good read if you have a few minutes and like that sort of thing.

**Private soccer field in Silver Creek**

The Snyderville Basin Planning Commission will meet Tuesday at 4:30 PM to discuss allowing a 14,000 square foot indoor soccer fields in Silver Creek. The land is currently zoned Rural Residential, so an accessory building of this size requires a conditional use permit and the recreation facility itself requires a limited use permit. The owner is requesting a Limited Use Permit, which appears to cover both requirements. The staff report further defines the application and includes statements from neighbors opposing the project.

If you care about this development, you should try to attend the meeting at 4:30 PM. If you work, like most of us, and can't be there, then you can email planner Ray Milliner with your thoughts.

**The big rumor**

The big rumor around town is a Vail acquisition of Deer Valley. Usually I don't like to talk rumors, but rumors are one of the things that make small towns small towns. In this case, I've heard it from a number of people (that of course doesn't make it true). I'd guess many of you have heard the rumor too. That said, it also has the feel of a rumor I heard in college when allegedly Aerosmith was going to show up and play a free concert. Instead it turned out to be the Gin Blossoms. So, who knows the validity of the rumor. It could go a number of ways.

I only bring it up because you may want to consider the concept of someone else big buying Deer Valley if you live within the Park City boundaries — as it may inform your vote on the open space bond. I've never really thought about the impacts of a Deer Valley sale, but once I heard the drumbeat of rumors getting louder it made me start considering what it could mean:



Even if the rumor isn't true, and Deer Valley isn't sold this year, it wouldn't be surprising to see it sold in the next few years. If you are voting on the open-space bond, you may want to consider how that outcome may shape your decision.

## Consider writing-in Josh Mann

I am running for Summit County Council Seat E as a write-in candidate. One of the most important things I hope to accomplish is to provide better communication between the County Council and the public. The Bull Moose Newsletter is an example of what I hope to provide if elected. I want to provide information in a timely enough manner that action can be taken to protect what we most want in Summit County.

If you like what you read here, please consider **writing in JOSH MANN for Summit County Council Seat E**. If you'd like more information, please visit my website at [www.joshmann.com](http://www.joshmann.com), email me anytime at [summitcounty@joshmann.com](mailto:summitcounty@joshmann.com), or follow me on [Facebook](#).

Please forward this to anyone you feel may be interested. If you'd like to sign up for the Bull Moose Newsletter, [please click here](#).

Thanks for reading.

