



Village of Taos Ski Valley
Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting
August 26, 2025
10 am
Location: Zoom

Call to Order	Woodard
Approval - Meeting Minutes July 22, 2025	Woodard
Chair's Report	Woodard
Rocky Mountain Youth Corps Crew--August 26-Sept 2, 2025	
---Trail design for erosion control	
---VTSV Council approval to extend 2023/24 contract thru 2026	
--Start of ECTA master planning work—Sept 4 th afternoon (tentative)	
VTSV Chamber report on summer visitation statistics	Vaughan
VTSV Administrator Report	Bellis
Kachina Vista Park	Woodard & all
-Site visit report	
-Recent security reports	
-Management of winter usage	Janet Ratliff-Thomas
Discussion	
Adjourn	



Taos Ski Valley
Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes
July 22, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am by the chair. Present were Steve Hoxie, Kent Kiehl, Janet Ratliff Thomas, and Joan Woodard. The chair noted that a quorum of members was present. Also present were Richard Bellis, Village Administrator; Henry Caldwell, VTSV Councilor; and a few neighbors and property owners.

The first item of business was introduced---approval of meeting minutes from April 22, and June 24. Upon motion and second, the minutes were approved.

The chair reported on the site visit by the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps Field Supervisor. Also present for the site visit was Janet Ratliff Thomas, committee member, and Bob Thomas, home owner. The group review the connector trail from the lower end of Porcupine to the upper end of Kachina Vista Park. It was noted that this trail was not well designed and entails a long section of steep, "fall line" trail near the bottom of the trail, which is unstable and not sustainable. After review of a few options for rerouting and considering the funds available for supplies and crew time, it was concluded that this lower section of the trail should be rebuilt with stabilizing steps. The RMYC committed to phone discussions to finalize the plans for the crew session in August.

The chair reported on the site visit to Kachina Vista Park (KVP). Present for the visit were Joan Woodard, Janet Ratliff Thomas and Bob Thomas (homeowner), Christoff Brownell (business and home owner), Richard Bellis (Village Administrator), and Gabe Vasquez (Director of Public Works). The chair reviewed the purpose of the site visit to plan cleanup of KVP and plan for security with locked gates; both of which will contribute to the match for the Trails+ grant. The group discussed the park noting it is a linear park, with viewpoints throughout. It was also noted that there is usage of the park for hiking, biking, snow shoeing, and cross country skiing. The group discussed the possibility of parking at the top of the park which could be created by building our the area at the upper end of the park using rock and dirt currently stored on the park. It was noted that this could possibly create up to six parking spots as well as a small area for a picnic table. The group walked the length of the park, and discussed the possibility of using the excess dirt and small rock to resurface the road/trail. It was also noted that the large boulders would be useful to secure a few roadside areas along Twining/Zaps/Porcupine at challenging turns in the road that are also steep, and areas where there is steep drop offs. The group concluded that near term cleanup of the excess rock and dirt should be priority to resurface the trail/road, and to improve challenging areas along the main village roads. The group also concluded that a vision document for Kachina Vista Park would be useful next step.

The chair reported on a conversation with Chaz Rockey who is a TSVI representative member of the TIDD board. Chaz provided update on the arrival district planning; updated planning will commence shortly and the PARC will be invited to be involved.

Richard Bellis, Village Administrator, provided updates on a number of topics. Hiker parking is operating well for the summer. July 4th was a busy weekend and it was reported that there were about 300 cars parked in the Kachina Basin area throughout the day. Mr. Bellis reported that work is starting on a joint management plan (Village, NFS, State, Village, etc.) to better manage the overuse of this area. He also reported that an additional plan is being developed to define roles of parking, traffic management, gondola, etc. Mr. Bellis reported that Public Works will install new slats on the benches on Ramming Trail and the chair should contact the PW director.

Steve Hoxie, committee member and TSVI Vice President for Mountain Operations reported on the summer 2025 activities. He reported that Chair 7 is being replaced with a fixed grip triple chair from Leitner Poma of America. He also reported that Maxie's ski trail has been graded to remove some of the features from the previous terrain park. Finally, Mr. Hoxie reported that the RFID systems have been installed at Chairs 1 and 4 and the operation has been better than expected.

The chair directed the committee to a few discussion topics---consideration of parking charge in Kachina Basin, and ideas to manage overuse of Kachina Vista Basin and Williams Lake Trail. Charging for parking is currently in the draft plans and a specific parking plan will define the scope, processes, staffing, cost, and expected funds. Mr. Bellis reported that the NFS stated that only a few of their facilities do have not a charge. NFS provided facilities such as parking and sanitation facilities are supported with these charges.

Finally, the committee discussed vision ideas for Kachina Vista Park. It was noted that the park is used in all seasons. It is a valuable trail area for ski valley visitors who are not interested or capable to attempt the steep trails. It provides amazing views of the valley. It is also used in the winter for snow shoeing, cross country skiing, and biking. The chair noted that avalanche danger is a factor for this area in the winter. Janet Ratliff Thomas volunteered to do research into the topic of avalanche safety, signage, etc. She will report at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 am.



Taos Ski Valley
Parks & Recreation Committee - Kachina Vista Park
Site Visit Report DRAFT
July 21, 2025

Background

A settlement agreement over water rights and other matters between the Pattison Trusts and the Village of Taos Ski Valley, dated May 28, 2002 included a provision dedicating Kachina Road to the Village. The agreement states that “the use will be the present use which is trail traffic, both foot and motorized, can continue up to the time when the road is improved to a public road. The road right of way will be fifty feet with a twenty foot slope and snow storage easement on each side of the road.”

At the Village Council meeting on June 13, 2017, according to the minutes, the Council closed Kachina Road for use during the non-winter months as a village municipal park for hikers, bikers, and for various pedestrian friendly activities. The suggestion was that the road would be closed during winter months due to avalanche danger. With proper signage, a few parking spaces could be designated at either end, with no parking allowed in front of the gates. A plan for emergency of scheduled access to Kachina Road could be ensured via a plan set forth with Public Works and Public Safety Departments. The Council also stated that the PARC would immediately provide the necessary signage, doggie stations, and a few picnic tables and benches. The Council established the closure for an initial period of two years.

On October 27, 2020, the Council passed Resolution 2021-452 Designating Kachina Vista Park as a municipal park for primary use by foot and bicycle traffic. The resolution states that the road will be limited to trail traffic, that during winter months it is safest that the road be closed to vehicular traffic due to avalanche risk, rock fall, and snowmelt drainage, and that the park is to have the designation of recreational trail. Further the resolution states that until the Village has the funding and the desire to improve as a “standard public road with a 50 foot right-of-way, the Village restricts its use to primarily pedestrian and bike traffic. (Note that the Settlement Agreement between the Village and the Pattison Trusts, dated May 28, 2002, states that the road

Site Visit Report

The PARC with the Village Administrator and Director of Public Works, together with two property owners from the ski valley, conducted a site visit to the park on July 21, 2025. One of the purposes of the visit was to define the work for cleanup of the park per the matching funds plans for the 2025 Trails+ grant.

The group reviewed the park from end to end and determined the following actions should be considered:

- the rock and dirt in the park should be used to create a parking area at the upper end of the park for approximately 6 cars and a picnic table (to be moved from the current location near the upper end);
- the dirt will also be used to improve the surface of the trail/road of the park including a dirt berm on the side near the uphill slope;
- the large boulders stored in the park to be moved to address steep drop-offs on Twining Road, Porcupine, and Kachina Road;
- the gates should be repaired or replaced and possibly moved to better locations to present entry by unauthorized vehicles;
- locks on the gates will be upgraded to models that are not easily cut;
- the hand crafted wood bench will be secured with a concrete footing and locking mechanism;
- a large downed tree will be moved to a location defined by Christoff Brownell for crafting of an additional wood bench
- one of the existing picnic tables to be moved to the near-midpoint with small trees and a small spring;
- parking at lower end of park will be cleared to accommodate about 2-4 cars.



Taos Ski Valley
Parks & Recreation Committee - Kachina Vista Park
Vision DRAFT
July 21, 2025

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Vision Ideas

*Year round park for enjoyment of vistas of Taos Ski Valley

- *Trail for hiking, biking in summer; cross country skiing, snowshoeing and biking in winter
- *Interpretive and informative signage to be added throughout the length of park
- *Parking at each end of park
- *Picnic tables and benches at ends of and throughout the park (picnic tables will be heavy beams or concrete to prevent movement)
- *Signage at each end of park will state:
 - no motorized vehicles except e-bikes
 - winter access is at own risk; warn about avalanche danger-QR code to avalanche Ctr
 - no camping
 - no horses
 - dogs to follow village law—strict control, leash advised
- *Locks on gates managed with strict control of keys
- *Absolutely no vehicles during winter avalanche season unless village emergency