



Village of Taos Ski Valley  
Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting  
Sept 23, 2025  
10 am  
Location: Zoom

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| Call to Order  | Woodard              |
| Approval - Meeting Minutes July 22, 2025 & August 26, 2025           | Woodard              |
| Chair's Report   | Woodard              |
| Rocky Mountain Youth Corps Crew—Project report                       |                      |
| ECTA master planning work—report on Sept 4 <sup>th</sup> etc.        |                      |
| Removal of hanging baskets---September 29—need volunteers            |                      |
| VTSV Chamber report on summer visitation statistics-June, July, Aug. | Vaughan              |
| VTSV Administrator Report  | Bellis               |
| Kachina Vista Park   | Woodard & all        |
| -Discussion of winter management                                     | Janet Ratliff-Thomas |
| Discussion of possibly Trails+ Grant request 2026                    | Woodard              |
| Other Business   |                      |
| 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 Meeting Minutes  
August 26, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am by the chair. Present were Janet Ratliff Thomas, Dan Vaughan, and Joan Woodard. The chair noted that a quorum of members was not present. Also present were Richard Bellis, Village Administrator, and a few neighbors and property owners.

The chair reported that the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps crew is arriving in the ski valley today, and will camp near the base of the Bull of the Woods trail. They will be working on the connector trail to the upper entrance of Kachina Vista Park. She invited members that might in the ski valley to stop by and meet the crew. The chair also reported that supplies for the trail design for this work is supported by funds from the prior contract with the RMYC which the VTSV Council voted to support a new completion date for the contract to allow expenditure of the remaining funds. The remaining funds may also support a crew at the beginning of 2026 summer.

The chair announced that the Enchanted Circle Trails Association will be in the ski valley on September 4, 2025 for the kickoff of the master plan development for PARC. The meeting will start at 9 am in the Firehouse conference room and will include a field visit to existing trail and other infrastructure. One of the first steps will be an inventory of the existing trails etc. PARC members are invited, and a zoom link will be established for the conference room meeting.

Dan Vaughan, director of the Taos Ski Valley Chamber, reported on the visitation statistics. For Hiker Parking area, visitation is relatively constant from 2024. It is up 12% from 2023, and down 21% from 2022. For all locations in the ski valley visitation is up from 2024 by about 12%. The most popular days are Friday and Saturday. Dan will provide a report next month which will include the month of August, and then, due to budget cuts the license for use of this tool will end on September 5.

Richard Bellis, Village Administrator, reported that the use of a bull dozer to prepare roads for the winter with a new treatment approach and to commence cleanup of Kachina Vista Park. Rocks have been moved to provide some security to block access by four wheeled vehicles. It was noted that a truck and two motor cycles intruded into the park recently. Mr. Bellis reported on the new chipper which has been applied to reducing the slash piles and is available to the RMYC if needed. Mr. Bellis also reported on an upcoming meeting with the USFS on the Kachina Basin and Williams Lake usage management. He stated that emphasis is on use of a shuttle and the planned gondola to reduce traffic.

The chair reported that village counselor, Henry Caldwell, volunteered to do some basic maintenance of the Ramming Trail. The chair asked for interest from an organization to adopt

the Ramming Trail for on going maintenance. The commitment for adopt a trail is to organize volunteer sessions for maintenance.

The chair initiated a discussion on the usage of Kachina Vista Park. Janet Ratliff-Thomas reported on a review of the issues with usage of the park in the winter. Janet reported on contact with the NM Department of Transportation to request information on winter safety. Janet also reported on standard signage for this area and the urgency to post signs before the ski season and first snow. Janet also noted that this is a hazardous area year round---in the summer there are mud, loose rock, rock slides, uneven terrain, water runoff, etc. The discussion concluded with a discussion of the legal risks.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 am.



Taos Ski Valley  
Parks & Recreation Committee - Kachina Vista Park  
Vision DRAFT (revised)  
September 15, 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 “use of Kachina Road as it is presently used, which is for trail traffic, both foot and motorized, can continue up to the time as the road is improved to a public road. ...the road right-of-way will be fifty feet width with twenty foot slope and snow storage easement on each side of the roadway.”)

## Vision Ideas

\*Seasonal park for enjoyment of vistas of Taos Ski Valley

- \*Closed in the winter due to avalanche danger
- \*Trail for hiking, biking in summer
- \*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
  - Closed in winter; Danger avalanche hazard
  - Summer hazards—loose rocks, rock slides, dirt and mud slides, uneven terrain, water runoff
  - no camping
  - no horses
  - dogs to follow village law—strict control, leash advised (note that in wilderness areas dogs are required by federal law to be leashed)
- \*Locks on gates managed with strict control of keys by Public Works Director
- \*Absolutely no vehicles during winter avalanche season unless village emergency; snow storage will not be in the park—snow removal vehicles restricted to outside of park boundary



**STATUS BOARD**

HEADWALL  
CRAGS  
CASPER BOWL

|      |        |
|------|--------|
| OPEN |        |
|      | CLOSED |
|      | CLOSED |

**GRANITE CANYON  
HEADWALL  
WARNING**

WHEN YOU PASS BEYOND THIS SKI AREA  
BOUNDARY YOU ARE LEAVING THE AREA OF  
SKI PATROL SERVICES INCLUDING AVALANCHE  
HAZARD REDUCTION MEASURES AND TRAIL  
GROOMING. YOU ARE ENTERING A HIGH RISK  
AREA WHICH HAS MANY HAZARDS INCLUDING  
BUT NOT LIMITED TO AVALANCHES, CLIFFS AND  
HIDDEN OBSTACLES. YOU ARE AT RISK FROM  
THESE NATURAL HAZARDS. YOU ARE  
RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR DECISIONS AND  
ACTIONS, YOUR OWN RESCUE, FOR THE COST  
OF YOUR RESCUE, AND YOU WAIVE ALL  
CLAIMS FOR INJURY. YOUR LIFT TICKET  
FURTHER DEFINES YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES.

 