

CASTLE PINES NORTH



METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

June 19, 2019

Metro District Director Denise Crew led successful effort to dissolve Parks Authority & transfer \$719K to City of Castle Pines Parks & Recreation Fund

Among her responsibilities as a Castle Pines North Metro District Director, Denise Crew served as a governing member of the Castle Pines Parks Authority. Crew's previous experience on the Highlands Ranch Metro District Board, combined with her passion for parks, and her general frustration over confusing and redundant parks administration and funding in Castle Pines, prompted her fellow directors to appoint Crew as their representative to the Parks Authority.

In her low-key, unassuming way, Director Crew has quietly spent the last nine months on the Parks Authority working to consolidate parks planning, appropriations, and governance functions under one jurisdiction and thereby eliminate administrative redundancies and inefficiencies.

After months of focused leadership, and after some last-minute wordsmithing during the Parks Authority meeting on June 17, Director Crew — along with Castle Pines City Council's appointed representative to the Parks Authority, Ward I Councilwoman Deborah Mulvey — persuaded the Parks Authority's president and governing body to sign off on a final Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to dissolve the Parks Authority and transfer its remaining \$719,000 fund balance to the City of Castle Pines Parks & Recreation Fund.

"Colleagues, as you know, I have always believed that disbanding the Parks Authority was a first step toward making our community's parks funding and governance structures more efficient, clear, and transparent," said Director Denise Crew during the Metro District's board meeting that same night. "The terms of the dissolution require the City of Castle Pines to apply all principal and interest on the \$719,000 fund balance to existing or new parks, trails, and amenities, specifically within our established neighborhoods, whose residents historically paid the Master Association's annual assessment," she said.

At Crew's request, the Metro District Board voted unanimously to approve the IGA. President David McEntire signed the IGA on behalf of the Metro District, while Mayor Tera Radloff signed on behalf of the City.

The Metro District currently owns and maintains three parks, including:

- a small 1980's-era pocket park, called **The Retreat Park**,
- the 15-acre **Coyote Ridge Park** that opened in 2001,
- and the two-acre **Daniels Gate Park** that opened in 2001.

Separately, the City of Castle Pines owns and maintains the 11-acre **Elk Ridge Park** that opened in 2011.

When asked what she planned to do now that the Parks Authority no longer exists, Crew responded, *"On to our next parks-related challenge. Remember that if our Metro District and Parker Water, in some form or fashion, agree to merge our respective water and wastewater services, then I foresee collaborating with the City of Castle Pines to further consolidate parks funding and governance. Good stewardship of the community's parks, simplifying the org chart, and eliminating excessive government bureaucracy are among our core objectives on this board," she said. "The City is already on course to manage at least four new parks and a huge new inventory of trails and open space east of I-25."*

*"Look, we have a fiduciary responsibility to our constituents," chimed in **Director Christopher Lewis**. "Though open to other points of view, it seems almost inevitable that we will eventually consider tasking a single entity with the maintenance responsibility for all community parks. Should that entity be the Metro District or the City? I don't know. However, structurally, the idea of two different local governments managing parks for essentially the same constituency strikes me as highly inefficient," he said.*

*"I am proud of Director Crew and the recent accomplishments of this Metro District," said **President David McEntire**. "As our city continues to grow and as we experience the inevitable growing pains, let's celebrate the community service contributions of our residents. In that spirit, I want to publicly acknowledge and thank all Parks Authority members — especially long-time residents David Necker, Joan Millspaugh, and Tom Weldon — for their altruism and generosity of spirit in working to improve community parks and the quality of life for all Castle Pines residents."*