

Week 3 Article 3: (10/25/2024)

The Rationale Behind the PLPOA Gymnasium Project

In response to community inquiries regarding the proposed gymnasium project, it's essential to revisit the journey and rationale behind this initiative. The development of this project stems from a strategic plan established in 2018 by the Pagosa Lakes Property Owners Association (PLPOA), which continues to guide the association in making long-term capital improvements.

Background

In 2018, PLPOA facilitated the creation of a strategic plan that outlines objectives for the community's growth and improvement. The association uses this strategic plan to manage capital projects, which are funded through transfers from the operations budget to the capital improvement funds. The Strategic plan specifically states in its strategies to plan for improvement of community infrastructure for a gradual increase of adding amenities, lifestyle events, and prioritizing amenity improvements to address demographic changes. Another Plan strategy states to research and develop a plan to provide youth sports facilities, teams, leagues and programs in PLPOA. Also, to develop a Youth Sports Committee to provide volunteer support of youth sports programs and facilities. Increase recreation, social and civic programs for all ages placing more emphasis and budget on these programs that will improve community harmony. More focus on ages 11-18.

Understanding PLPOA's Finances:

Breakdown of 2024 dues:

- Community Standards: \$45
 - Property & Environment: \$78
 - Administration: \$71
 - Lifestyle & Communication: \$5
 - Recreation & Amenities: \$8
 - Utilities (minus the Rec Center): \$8
 - Delinquent Coverage: \$4
 - General Reserves: \$59
 - Trails Reserves: \$7
 - Capital Improvements: \$40
- Total 2024 Dues: \$325

- Annual assessments are allocated to operational expenses (community standards, property management, recreation, etc.) and several other funds:
 - General Reserves: Cover maintenance and repairs of current assets based on its useful life.
 - Trails Reserves: Dedicated to trail upkeep and maintenance.
 - Capital Improvements: Fund new major projects that increase property value and to expand and improve as the community grows. (new amenities, renovations).

Why a Gymnasium?

The proposal for a gymnasium stems directly from community feedback gathered in multiple surveys. First, the 2017 survey that helped form the strategic plan. This sentiment was reaffirmed by a 2023 survey, which captured broader demographic input and reflected evolving community desires.

In the 2023 survey, PLPOA included demographic information to ensure that projects catered to the entire community. This resulted in clear preferences for recreational amenities and capital improvement priorities across various groups.

Gym Usage Insights (2024 survey on July ballot)

This survey also gathered data on the community’s potential gym usage, segmented by household composition:

- Households that include children or grandchildren in the community: 55% were “Very Likely” or “Likely” to use the gym.
- Households that include children: 61% expressed high likelihood of gym usage.
- Households without children or grandchildren in the community: Only 22% indicated strong interest.

Overall, 30% of respondents across all categories showed a high likelihood of using the gym.

Household Category	Very Likely	Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Likely	Not at All Likely	Total
Kids/Grand kids	37%	19%	15%	16%	14%	100%
Only Kids	46%	15%	18%	13%	8%	100%

Neither Kids nor Grandkids	13%	9%	17%	20%	41%	100%
Combined	19%	11%	16%	19%	34%	100%

Why a Special Assessment?

Given the community’s strong interest in a gymnasium and the rising costs of construction, PLPOA is pursuing a special assessment to fund this project. Building the necessary capital through standard dues increases would take several years, during which inflation would likely raise costs further. A one-time special assessment ensures that funds are secured for this specific project, preventing delays and guaranteeing that the capital is used as intended.

Currently, PLPOA has set aside \$520,000 in the capital fund for athletic facilities, which will be deducted from the total project cost. Should the gymnasium not pass, these funds could be redirected as the board sees fit. However, it would be strongly encouraged by several committees involved that the funds stay where they are intended either for future gymnasium proposals or to go toward a multipurpose field, in conjunction with grants applicable given the outdoor nature of the field and the memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed with the county.

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): The relationship between Archuleta County, the PLPOA, and the development of a multi-purpose field versus a gymnasium involves details substantial enough to merit a dedicated article. In brief, in early 2023, the PLPOA approached the county to propose a MOU aimed at creating a public-use multi-purpose field on the Recreation Center campus. By designating recreational facilities as “public,” they become eligible for grants—such as GOCO grants—that are inaccessible to privately owned facilities.

Given the outdoor nature of the field, it qualified as a potential candidate for grant funding, whereas the indoor gymnasium did not. By spring 2024, however, the likelihood of reaching an agreement in time to proceed with field planning seemed slim, prompting a shift of focus to the gymnasium project. This adjustment allowed progress to continue while keeping the door open for future collaboration on the field.

The MOU was ultimately signed in late summer 2024, positioning the PLPOA to begin applying for grant funding in 2025, which could expand development resources beyond private ownership for the proposed field.

Gymnasium Operations: The gymnasium's operational costs would be covered by rentals and memberships, not ongoing special assessments.

Summary of Planned Projects and Completed Capital Improvements

The PLPOA has successfully implemented several capital projects in alignment with community preferences, including trail improvements, mailbox expansions, fire mitigation efforts, bathroom installations, and recreation center enhancements. What we have not addressed or completed are the projects at the top of the list for the younger families in PLPOA – Gymnasium or Athletic Field.

Key capital projects completed or planned for 2023-2024 include:

- Trails: New trail construction, resurfacing of existing trails.
- Mailboxes: Expansion and improvements at several locations.
- Fire Mitigation: Collaboration with the Sheriff's Department and grant-funded projects.
- Recreation: Installation of new equipment, parking lot construction.

Conclusion: Community-Driven Development

The decision to move forward with the vote of the gymnasium project is firmly rooted in PLPOA's commitment to addressing the needs and desires of the entire community. By incorporating broad demographic feedback and following the strategic plan, the association aims to enhance the quality of life for all residents while ensuring prudent financial management.

We've received several insightful and necessary questions, many of which are already on our agenda to address. Our priority is to provide you with accurate information, and this process takes time as each detail is interconnected. To ensure a thorough and informed discussion, our goal is to address all the topics raised during the first community outreach meeting scheduled for November 16th.