

Gregory Sherman Oleson

1424 Forest Hills Drive
Rapid City, SD 57701
605-348-5036

December 27, 2013

Mayor Sam Kooiker
RC City Council
300 Sixth Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

Dear Mayor and City Council:

Thank you for considering my application to serve on the advisory board for the Rapid City Parks and Recreation department. I genuinely appreciate the opportunity.

I will be as brief as possible. My interest in serving on the advisory board stems from my devotion to Rapid City, my passion for recreation and my firm belief that parks and recreation can play a role in economic development.

Devotion to Rapid City

I grew up in the Canyon Lake neighborhood of western Rapid City. For as long as I can remember, I enjoyed spending time outside. Whether it was Sioux Park, Canyon Lake Park, Rapid Creek, shagging golf balls at Meadowbrook golf course or catching crawdads near the baseball fields. Although I have spent some years away from the community pursuing higher education or employment, I always found myself back in Rapid City. It was, and still is, an idyllic place to grow up and a great place to raise a family. Rapid City provided a great deal of happiness for me and I would like the opportunity give back to the city by helping all of you make the community even better for future generations.

Passion for Recreation

The second reason for my interest in serving on the Parks and Recreation board comes from my passion for the outdoors and recreation. From the time I was six years old playing pee wee baseball and swimming at the local pool five days a week, I have loved recreation, particularly outdoor recreation. I spent so much time tubing down Rapid Creek I won the KKLS "Tracherous Tubing Trek" at age 13. Today, I play golf several times a week, hike and bike every trail within the city limits, play Frisbee golf and I am an active, albeit slow, hockey player in the city's adult league at Roosevelt Ice Arena. Because of what Rapid City has offered over the years, recreation has been a constant source of joy in my life. I would like to be a part of the

effort that ensures that the same opportunities continue to exist for the rest of the folks living in Rapid City.

Parks and Recreation's Role in Economic Development

My third and final reason for applying is my firm belief that parks and recreation plays a supporting role in the city's economic development efforts. As businesses and other organizations search the country for a place to launch a new business, relocate or simply expand, the amount of green space and the level of recreational opportunity is playing an increasingly important role in their decision to choose a community. Ensuring that Rapid City continues its already successful approach to creating attractive green space and recreational opportunities is important to our city's ability to compete for new businesses and grow as a community.

Education and Professional Experience

I believe my education and professional experience has prepared me for the demands of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. I hold both a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Black Hills State University and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of South Dakota.

Professionally, I began my career as a budget analyst for the State of South Dakota projecting annual costs for the Department of Social Services including Medicaid and nursing home expenditures. I suffered a momentary lapse in judgment since my interests suddenly turned to campaign politics. After overseeing fundraising and political operations in Rapid City, I became Executive Director of the South Dakota Democratic Party in Sioux Falls where I learned all sorts of valuable things about people—on both sides of the political divide. I also learned a lot about myself. All totaled, I worked nearly three election cycles. As the 1996 elections approached, an opportunity became available to work for one of the most respected companies in South Dakota. I joined Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative as the manager of member services. Today, I oversee member services, communications, marketing, economic development, corporate giving and government affairs operations. I also oversee approximately 22 employees.

That is about as brief as I can be. I look forward to answering any questions you may have about my ability to serve Rapid City effectively. Thank you again for the opportunity to apply. I genuinely appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

Greg Oleson