

**PARK CITY MUNICIPAL COMMUNITY NEWS INTERVIEW**

**LENDING AN EAR**

**NANN WOREL THINKS CITIZEN INPUT IS CRITICAL TO KEEPING PARK CITY A COMMUNITY FIRST**



**Park City Municipal Corporation:** You are a fixture of the Park City community, but not everyone knows your story. Tell us about yourself and your history.

**Nann Worel:** I'm a native of Seattle. After completing a master's in hospital administration at UCLA, I was recruited for a year-long service project in Birmingham, Alabama, to serve as the liaison between the local health department and the University of Alabama Hospital system. I ended up meeting my husband there so one year turned into 26. I went on to serve as a vice president of a major hospital there before I changed careers and became a full-time mom to raise our son.

**PCMC:** That must have been an adjustment.

**NW:** Yes, but I see both jobs being on the same caregiving spectrum. I also learned firsthand how much stay-at-home moms enrich the lives of not only their own children, but all the children in a class. Soccer moms, room moms, and PTA moms and dads play such important roles in childhood development.

The roles also require similar skillsets: team-building, diplomacy, negotiation, project management, and especially time-management. The working world is great experience for child-rearing, and vice-versa.

**PCMC:** As the saying goes, "You can have it all, just not all at once."

**NW:** Yes, that's a good way of looking at it.

**PCMC:** How did you end up in Park City?

**NW:** Somewhat by accident. My husband and I are both from the northwest, and we both missed the mountains. We had actually purchased a lot in Steamboat Springs, and were planning to build a house there. On a lark, I accompanied my husband on a work trip to Park City, and we both fell in love with the place. So we sold our lot in Colorado and decided to buy here. We moved here full-time in 2007.

**PCMC:** There's certainly something special about Park City, and it can be a great place to live and raise a family. As executive director of the People's Health Clinic, you help improve the quality of life for some of our underserved residents. How did you become involved with the organization?

**NW:** I had helped start a volunteer clinic in Mobile, Alabama, and after we moved to Park City, I started volunteering at the People's Health Clinic, becoming more involved over time. In 2008 they had a change of leadership, so I stepped in as interim executive director, and have been in the role ever since.

I'm so proud of what the organization has become. Sixteen years ago, we started in a mobile van with two exam rooms, and in 2009 we moved into our permanent home at the Summit County Health Department in Quinn's Junction. The clinic's expanded scope and enduring success are really a testimony to the community's coming together to care for each other. What started as a grassroots, all-volunteer organization is now a critical part of the community safety net. We have a small paid core staff, but we still rely on over 150 volunteers to serve our clientele. And I'm happy to say that we are currently taking new patients.

*"LET'S FIGURE THIS OUT TOGETHER; NO ONE PERSON HAS ALL THE ANSWERS."*



**PCMC:** Has client load diminished since the passage of the Affordable Care Act?

**NW:** I wish that were so—there's nothing I would like more than to be out of a job because everyone has access to healthcare. Many of our patients either don't qualify for Medicaid or don't earn enough to qualify for a subsidy under the ACA (there's an exemption if your premium would be more than eight percent of your income). There are also hardship exemptions.

**PCMC:** What's the state-level solution?

**NW:** Medicaid expansion. We were very disappointed when Healthy Utah, the governor's plan, didn't pass last year, and there are no pending bills to address the issue. Our promotora (our client advocate) does help those who are eligible apply for Medicaid or CHIP, and the clinic partners with the Utah Health Policy Project and insurance navigators to help clients complete the paperwork. But there is still a huge coverage gap.

**PCMC:** The clinic plays such a vital role in the nonprofit realm. How can the city government help address these issues?

**NW:** I think the city's poverty taskforce is a great start: it's a wonderful first step to identifying the issues and determining a strategy. I hear every day from my patients that they traditionally haven't felt that they have a voice or have access to local government.

**PCMC:** What are your clients' most pressing concerns?

**NW:** Many of them reside in sub-standard living conditions, so providing affordable housing is crucial. Transportation is also a huge concern: my clients often say to me, "I can't afford a car, so the city's public transit system is my lifeline." Childcare is also a major issue, which is why I am thrilled that PC Tots is about to open their doors. I'm just excited that the city is reaching out to populations that traditionally have not been at the table for making decisions, and I'm committed to doing everything I can to facilitate those discussions.

**PCMC:** You've mentioned two issues that PCMC has identified as critical priorities: housing and transportation. What about the third priority: energy efficiency and reduction? How does it fit into the equation?

**NW:** In my role I focus a lot on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and my patients (who are also the city's workforce) are at the base of the pyramid, hanging by their fingernails. We need to take care of their essential needs—health care, housing, transportation—before we can move forward. But the good news is that improving our community's health, housing, and transportation needs will directly reduce energy consumption. It makes sense to address all three issues holistically and collectively, but we should also recognize where people are. Energy reduction should be integrated into the entire conversation.



**PCMC:** You've lived in Park City long enough to know that two current buzzwords in the community are "change" and "growth," and I'm sure you hear all about the residents' concerns as a public servant. What's your take on how our community can change and evolve for the better?

**NW:** When I was campaigning, I had the opportunity to knock on lots of doors and talk to lots of folks. When people say, "I want to keep Park City Park

City," what they really mean is, they want to keep it like it was when they got here—whenever that was. But the city has grown and evolved. We pride ourselves on having world-class ski resorts, which will always attract not only full-time residents but lots and lots of visitors. So I think the challenge is maintaining the balance between residents and visitors—making sure that we remain a community first and a resort second.

**PCMC:** How can we remain a community first?

**NW:** The city to make a concerted effort to engage the residents. Government needs to be more accessible. As things are being planned, as ideas are being vetted, citizen input is critical. I would like to have fireside chats in different neighborhoods, just to listen and figure out what is really of concern to residents.



**PCMC:** You served on the Planning Commission for five years before being elected to Council. What did that experience teach you?

**NW:** The Planning Commission enforces the land management code, so I certainly have an understanding of the code and how it ties into the general plan. I also was part of the general plan update, which was a long process, but one that really helped put on paper what is important to the city. It also identified areas of the land management code that needed updating. The Planning Department is doing an excellent job implementing those changes. Serving on the Planning Commission also reinforced how much I value public input.

**PCMC:** You are a month into your new position. What are your first impressions?

**NW:** I've been having a great time. In December, I started the orientation process, which includes sitting down with each department and learning what they do. I'm about 80 percent through this process, and every time I sit down with a department, I am so impressed with their scope of responsibilities, as well as the passion and commitment of the staff. It's been so heartwarming.

**PCMC:** Anything in particular that stands out?

**NW:** Each department does something that has made me say, "I didn't know they did that!" I had a great time at the library: they made a bracelet for me on the 3D printer, which was very cool. It was especially fun for me because I was on the Planning Commission when the plans for the library renovation were presented. The design team kept using the phrase "21st-Century Library," but I didn't really understand how it would be different from the traditional library I grew up with. When I went into the renovated building, I was amazed by the physical facility itself. But when I sat down with (Library Director) Adriane (Juarez) and her staff, I realized just what a special resource it is for our town. There's something there for everybody, and I love that they have taken the librarians out from behind the desk.

**PCMC:** Other than settling in to your new role, are there any other initiatives you would like to accomplish in your first six months or year?

**NW:** Community engagement is a real interest of mine. Sometimes you get the most honest feedback in unstructured and informal settings. During my campaign I would go to Library Field on Saturday mornings and just chat with whoever came by. These casual conversations gave me real insights into what people were concerned with and what was important to them. I plan to spend more time in informal settings (the recycling center is a great place to run into just about anyone). I just want to listen a lot during my first six months, and I want people to know that I'm open and available to meet. I want to hear their issues, but I also want to hear their solutions. When someone brings an issue to my attention, I always ask, "How would you fix that?" Let's figure this out together—no one person has all the answers.

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