

PARK CITY MUNICIPAL COMMUNITY NEWS INTERVIEW



THE POWER OF ONE

BECCA GERBER HAS FAITH IN THE POWER OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO EFFECT CHANGE

Park City Municipal Corporation: *What inspired you to run for City Council?*

Becca Gerber: I'm a big believer in the power of one person to make a difference. As a longtime resident of Park City (I was born and raised here and moved back after college at the University of Utah), I have a good sense of the issues facing our community.

PCMC: *How do you think you connected with voters?*

BG: Having grown up here, I had support from several constituencies. Many of my parents' friends, as well as my friends' parents, supported me (it probably didn't hurt that I was a goody two-shoes when I was younger!) I also taught skiing and swimming, and some of my former students who now attend Park City High reached out to their peers. Folks my age (and income bracket) said they wanted someone who could represent their point of view. I was also a member of the Recreation Advisory Board (RAB) and Historic Park City Alliance, and have good relationships with the members.

PCMC: *What do you do for your day job?*

BG: I'm the marketing director for Aloha Ski & Snowboard. I love working for a local employer, and I have a front-row view of the challenges and opportunities for our small businesses.

PCMC: *How do you juggle the commitments of a full-time job and your Council duties?*

BG: There's never a good time to do most things, at least the big things, so now is as good a time as any. And if I worked part-time I would have a different perspective. I'm glad I'm bringing this point of view: this is real-life Park City for a lot of us. I consider myself lucky to have one full-time job: most people have two just to get by. When I worked at the resorts, I had five jobs: nanny, tutor, ski instructor, house/dog-sitter, and coffee shop. But I stay because I love the place, and I want to make it easier for others to as well.

PCMC: *How was RAB different from your current role?*

BG: The RAB board is one of the many cool opportunities for people to express what's important to them and their micro-community. Unlike Council, RAB is an advisory board, so my current position has a much broader scope.

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The range and weight of decisions are certainly more impactful.

PCMC: *Is this scary at some level?*

BG:: YOOf course! It’s terrifying, but someone’s got to do it. And we should be scared of it: it’s a lot of money, and we are making decisions that will have a big impact in our community, so this isn’t something we should take lightly.

PCMC: *What do you see as the biggest issues facing our community?*

BG: Housing (rentals and purchases) is my number one-issue. My peers, coworkers, and I are all being squeezed: I’ve had to move three times in the past few years, and the rents just keep going up. Many of us live paycheck-to-paycheck, so not only can we not save for a down-payment, but we are also one illness or setback away from being out on the street.

Some see the housing goal as benefitting only part of the population, but they need to realize it changes the character of the entire community. We need to shift perspective: it’s not only about inviting more people in (although we need more housing for our workforce), it’s also about not pushing people out. We’ve always been a very welcoming town, so we should make sure a broad cross-section of people can survive and thrive here.

PCMC: *During the campaign, did people treat you differently because of your age or gender?*

BG: I think so. While many people were very supportive, I also fielded questions that I don’t think were posed to other candidates, such as “Do you think you will be able to speak up?” But this comes with the territory, so I just tried to shrug it off. You make a bigger impression through deeds than through words, so that’s where I put my focus. And confidence just comes down to attitude. I grew up swimming and every time I stepped onto the starting block, I would hold my head high, smile at everyone around me, and try to exude calm, even if I was shaking on the inside.

One of my swim coaches would always say, “Get comfortable being uncomfortable.” I carry that with me and think about it almost daily.

PCMC: *Do you consider yourself a role model?*

BG: I don’t know if I would use those words, but I know that sometimes it just takes one person getting involved to inspire others to do the same. I want more

people like me—and others who may feel underrepresented—to join the conversation. City Council meetings are a great example: unless dogs are on the agenda, the same folks tend to show up. I loved the grass-roots enthusiasm that was expressed for the energy goal, and this spurred Council to act boldly. I would love to see the same groundswell of support for housing: people don’t even realize what’s possible.

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