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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**TOWN STEVENSVILLE INCREASES PARKS STAFFING
TO ENSURE SAFETY DURING COVID-19 REOPENING**

Stevensville, MT – The Town of Stevensville has been proud to serve the citizens with quality recreation programs, maintained parks and trails, and open space lands for outdoor enthusiasts. With a mission to ensure every Stevensville neighborhood is well-served with parks and open space, recreational facilities, and bicycle and pedestrian access to the great outdoors, the Town is adding a limited number of staff positions to aid in ensuring parks facilities are clean and safe as the community reopens from the COVID-19 closures that were established in mid-March.

In a memorandum to the Town Council, Mayor Brandon E. Dewey announced today the addition of two temporary part-time park attendants. These positions will be responsible for frequent sanitation of the Town's recreation facilities, keeping things like playgrounds and restrooms clean and safe for those who utilize those services. The decision comes as a response to Governor Steve Bullock's Statewide Reopening Plan, which calls for frequent sanitation and physical distancing in outdoor recreation facilities.

"Individuals and families deserve to feel safe while using our recreation areas." Said Mayor Dewey. "Ensuring that facilities are clean and maintained for our visitors and patrons is a critical service that we are obligated to provide for community health and welfare."

The Town has seen a steady increase in park usage with Spring weather settling in and more people seeking the outdoors since Governor Bullock lifted the recent Stay Home order. Further increases in use are expected in all 7 of Stevensville's parks as Montana moves through the phases of reopening and summer weather moves in. In Phase 2 of the Governor's Plan, the Town will begin opening the City Pool with limited capacity. Preparations for swim lesson signups are currently underway and will be made available when a date is known for the sunset of Phase 1 reopening guidelines.

In addition to the Park Attendants, the administration also announced that it will move forward with hiring a seasonal Parks & Recreation Director. This position will replace the pool manager and provide oversight of all recreation activities, including the Town's aquatics program. Funding for the position changes will come from a combination of existing budgeted funds and FEMA Public Assistance, designed to help public organizations implement protocols and safety measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Recruitment is underway for an array of parks & recreation positions including lifeguards and grounds keeping staff. More information is available at www.townofstevensville.com.

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