



WHAT TO CONSIDER IF YOU'RE CONSIDERING RUNNING FOR OFFICE

You—yes you—should think about serving

City Council elections are in November, and three seats, including the mayor's, will be on the ballot. The filing window is fast approaching (June 1-7). Before you file, Park City Election Official Michelle Kellogg and Councilwoman Becca Gerber offer the following helpful background.

TECHNICAL FILING REQUIREMENTS

PCMC: What should people know about the process before they decide to file?

Michelle Kellogg: We want potential candidates to understand the laws and protocols that govern municipal elections. Understanding these will save them a lot of unnecessary effort and confusion. Here are the basics:

- All candidates must file their candidacy in person with me at City Hall (445 Marsac Avenue). The filing window is from June 1 to 7, and the building is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- To be eligible, a candidate must be a U.S. citizen, a registered voter in the district, a Park City resident (as of November 7, 2016), and not have a felony conviction. (Before you file, check to make sure you live in Park City-proper.

The city boundaries run roughly from the McPolin Barn to Deer Valley to the hospital, but double-check with the [county clerk](#).)

- Election Day is November 7, 2017. A primary will be held August 15 if there is more than twice the number of candidates for each office. That means if five or more people run for Council and/or three or more people run for mayor, the city will schedule a primary election.
- Candidates cannot run for a council seat and mayor at the same time.
- [Campaign finance disclosure forms](#) are due seven days before the primary (if one is held) and seven days before Election Day.
- Financial disclosure forms will be available on the city's website.
- Candidates must disclose all monetary donations, no matter how small the amount. Set up your spreadsheet now to maintain good records!
- Anonymous donations are not allowed.
- Neither candidates nor their family members can be paid with campaign funds.





WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE JOB

PCMC: What first inspired you to run?

Becca Gerber: I was listening to a mayoral debate and realized they were discussing issues that were especially pertinent to me and my peers—such as the Park City’s disappearing middle class, affordable housing and keeping families in town—but there wasn’t anyone running in the election who was actually having a hard time finding housing, or who was really middle class (or lower). I felt I would offer a valuable perspective, and said to myself, “The worst thing that can happen is I lose.” That realization took away the fear: after that I just had fun with it.

PCMC: What did you do to prepare?

BC: I joined [Toastmasters](#) to practice public speaking and improve my ability to respond to questions on the fly. And I got involved! I volunteered for every event I could, including parades and nonprofit fund-raisers. I joined the [Recreation Advisory Board](#) and also briefly served as president of the [Historic Park City Alliance](#). I attended the [Chamber of Commerce](#), [Park City Lodging Association](#), and other trade organization meetings regularly. I also reached out to past and present government officials and town leaders, and I was a member of a [Leadership Park City](#). In other words, I did everything I could to learn about the issues facing our community in-depth and also raise my own profile.

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PCMC: What was your timeline?

BC: I spent about a year laying the groundwork then ramped up campaign operations (developing logos, putting together a website) from February through May. I announced in May, before the filing period, because I strategically wanted to be one of the first ones out of the gate. I spent the summer and fall knocking on doors, walking in parades, hosting town halls, and attending events.

PCMC: What would you do differently?

BC: I would spend more time knocking on doors.

PCMC: What does a typical week as a City Councilor look like?

BC: The schedule changes week-to-week. Each councilperson has

ten-to-twelve liaison roles, but these don’t meet all the time. You always have a few meetings each week, plus lots of face-to-face meetings with residents and city staff. We receive the City Council meeting packet on Monday nights, so I skim it that evening and then read it in-depth on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings—they are long but interesting! This gives me a chance to send follow-up emails or meet with staff and other stakeholders to unfold or clarify a particular issue. We also get lots of emails, but we take turns responding to citizen concerns or inquiries to help with the workload.



PCMC: What is one your favorite things about campaigning and being an elected official?

BC: It's a real privilege to be able to run and govern on issues rather than party affiliation or ideology. This allows Council to focus on solutions and explore any possibility that might work. It's a lot easier to have a conversation when people come at it from a place of passion as opposed to party loyalty or dogma.

PCMC: What would you tell someone who is considering running for Council but worries they might not be fully qualified or it might not be the right time in their life?

BC: Council members are not expected to be experts in everything. Staff provides the facts, information, and often several recommendations on how to work through issues. Council acts

as a filter between the community and staff in making decisions and has the ultimate decision-making authority.

And I strongly feel that if you feel passionately and have something to offer, you shouldn't wait. You don't know what life will bring, and 10-to-15 years from now your life might be in a completely different place. You'll also have a different perspective on issues, but maybe what the community needs is the perspective you hold now. Life is unpredictable so, in other words, don't wait to make a difference!

For more information on filing, contact Michelle Kellogg at michelle.kellogg@parkcity.org or 435.615.5007, or visit the city's [election page](#). And be sure to save the date of May 17, when The Park Record will be hosting a Running for Office workshop. Look for details in your inbox soon.

