

Park Enforcement Protocols and Unauthorized Signage Removal

- **Submitted By:** Council member Sonia Sheffield
 - **Summary/Background:** Jerome Town Code Section 10-1-11(C) states that it is unlawful to remain in a town park during hours of closure "as established by the Town Council." Currently, the Town Council has not legislated or enacted any official operational hours or nightly curfews for municipal parks. However, legacy signage remains posted in certain areas stating that town parks are closed from 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM, leading to inconsistent enforcement, public confusion, and potential town liability. This item proposes to direct the Public Works Department to remove the legally unauthorized curfew signs, reaffirming that Jerome parks remain open 24/7 for peaceful public recreation. Crucially, this policy shift does not diminish the Jerome Police Department's ability to manage public safety or remove individuals who should not be there. Instead, it clarifies that law enforcement should actively enforce existing, behavioral-based Town Code provisions rather than a non-existent curfew. These include:
 - **Town Code Section 10-1-11(E) (Camping Ban):** Maintaining the town-wide, zero-tolerance ban on unauthorized camping, tents, and lodging on public property at any hour of the day or night.
 - **Town Code Section 10-1-25 (Alcohol Restrictions):** Enforcing strict bans and misdemeanor violations regarding alcohol possession and consumption in the Upper Park between 10:00 PM and 8:00 AM, and at all times in Middle and Lower parks
 - **Town Noise Ordinances:** Intervening when individuals disrupt the peace or generate unlawful noise levels.
- This action ensures that local residents can enjoy public spaces peacefully without arbitrary time limits, while giving our police department the precise legal tools needed to swiftly address illegal encampments and late-night troublemakers.
- **Fiscal Impact:** Minimal; restricted solely to minor Public Works staff time required to remove existing physical signage
 - **Recommended Motion:** *"I move to direct the Public Works Department to remove all unauthorized park closure signs, and to direct the Town Manager and Police Chief to align night-shift park enforcement protocols with existing Town Code behavioral restrictions, specifically Section 10-1-11-E regarding camping and Section 10-1-25 regarding alcohol."*