

Erin Nelson

From: Ann Kramer <makramer1210@gmail.com>
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To: Office
Subject: Fire Mesa Kitchen comments

To Members of Town Council

I have been listening with great interest lately to discussions regarding the use of Fire Mesa Kitchen. These discussions seem to circle back around to the purpose of the kitchen. And then back to the kitchen serving “the community.” But who is the community? Individuals only? Private citizens only? Town residents only? San Juan County residents only? Are small businesses part of the community? And how does a kitchen serve a community? By sitting empty and unused most of the time?

Could it be that the cost of renting the kitchen is just too much for most individuals? Groups can bear the current cost more easily perhaps but I have rarely seen the kitchen used by individuals. Town potlucks come up in the discussions but no one cooks there for a potluck because it’s too expensive for that. And mostly the space is too small to set a town potluck up in there anyway.

I realize that there are costs involved in operating a kitchen, but I am curious about what those costs actually are. What is the cost of utilities? What is the cost of supplies? What are the administrative costs? What are the cleaning costs? Whatever the costs, it seems like there is no way to really recoup those costs if no one is using the kitchen more than once or twice a month.

Perhaps a different pricing structure would encourage more use and the greater “community” could benefit more from such a great town resource.

Other community kitchens seem to have figured out pricing structures that work for individuals and groups, albeit businesses or non profits. Not every situation calls for the same pricing structure. Several different options have come up in discussions. The Council should choose one that can accommodate different users, individuals as well as small businesses. After all it is a “commercial” kitchen. It seems like such a policy could be tweaked from time to time to clean up any rough edges. It’s just hard to see that beautiful space not being used to fully benefit everyone who lives and works in Bluff.

Ann Kramer