

PARK BOARD MEETING
April 17, 2019

Pursuant to due call and order, the Board of Park Commissioners, Dickinson Park District, met for a workshop at 11:00 am, Wednesday, April 17, 2019 at the Stark County Veterans Pavilion.

ROLL CALL: Present were Commissioners Scott Kovash, Scott Karsky, Tim Daniel, KC Homiston and Brad Fong. Also present were Director of Recreation/Facilities Matt Mack, Director of Buildings/Grounds Craig Pearson, Executive Director James Kramer, Attorney Randall Sickler and Clerk Leah Hoenke.

Quarterly Report –

Executive Director James Kramer reviewed the financial side of things, giving a picture of where we are as of March 31 and entering into budget season in May. He reviewed the Fund Balances and said the long range focus was to consolidate and strengthen these funds financially. He showed the largest fund being the General Fund that has Patterson Lake and oil revenue included. We took a 12% increase for the tax levy; haven't received all of it in first quarter but that is why you will see an increase from last 2 years. He then showed the Community Center Fund balance showing a strong financial picture. We have an open full time salaried position and we carried over \$20,000 to help with new phone system that hasn't been paid yet. Director of Recreation/Facilities Matt Mack talked about membership totals and said they are higher than in a long time; looking back we haven't hit these higher numbers since the height of oil in 2015. Director James Kramer commented that when we originally opened the facility, the consultant projected 1750 members to open the doors and needing a \$250,000 subsidy. He said the original building was 78,000 square feet and we are now at 138,000 square feet. Director Kramer then reviewed the recommended budget strategies for the 2020 budget. He said it was identified to review private user group agreements and fees; continue to explore consolidating funds and simplifying line items; work to increase capital betterment to 5 mills by 2022; plan for projects and funding in 3 year increments and continue to request City assistance funds and review all Park District debt with ESG being the high priority to pay off early and plan for next special assessment projects which will be a bond. He said we will keep up our infrastructure every 6 to 8 years, usually pay off one and add another to keep up with our infrastructure. Director Kramer then showed our organizational chart and stated that changing the structure has been a tremendous asset to how we operate. He said the goal is as we get into 2020 to have budget match the organizational chart; budgeting for all full-time positions and full benefiting them. Currently we are down to 3 positions where we need to get to full salary and full benefit plan. Once we get past 2020 it will be time to reevaluate the structure and look at maintenance, facility and golf course positions. He said the only full time changes upcoming are two retirement positions and the Director of Business/Finance. Currently, we are at 28 full time, fully benefited positions with one position open. Commissioner KC Homiston asked about when we decide to raise taxes, what is the real trigger that drives the raising of taxes. Director Kramer said the easiest part is salaries, the years we've had problems is when our mill value is going the opposite way, then we will have trouble with payroll.

Director of Recreation/Facilities Matt Mack went over the Vision 2020/Future First updates. He said we talked to user groups, league participants and the community to help us move forward. We started with user group meetings, 10 meetings with main clubs/organizations we work with. We asked them to answer questions and opened up to discussions. He said the main points of emphasis were participant numbers, growth and how that is affecting these organizations; discussed our facilities and if they are working for them; asked them if there were any enhancements or requests, biggest challenges moving forward, open discussion. He said as far as the user group meetings, it was positive but they provided constructive feedback and brought up possible future sports complexes to help accommodate them. Director Mack said the second portion was focus group meetings on adult leagues where they invited people who take part in leagues and have vocalized ideas in the past. We talked about league management, schedules, rules, etc. and talked about likes and dislikes, what we could change; facilities, what we could improve on; and registration efficiency. He said he felt it was very constructive and we were given good ideas from people who are utilizing our leagues. Director Mack said the final piece is a public input survey; he compiled information he received from these groups to put together this survey. When someone takes the survey, it is a general feel of how we are doing and gets specific into strengths and weaknesses along with solutions. He said it will be an electronic format and will roughly be 10 minutes of someone's time. He said it will be sent out to all our users; through the media, newsletter and members—planning to hit as many people as possible who use our programs and facilities. President Scott Kovash said we will be able to rely on this to help with future planning and taxes. Director Kramer said Matt Mack has put in a ton of time and ultimately will be a written document to help us with planning in the future. He said this will spur conversation and open up to Board engagement. Director Mack also said the process gave us confidence that we are doing things right as well.

Director Kramer went on to present the formation of a Foundation. He said Park Districts are going to foundations to help with 501c3 donations and be eligible for some grants that we are not currently eligible for. He said this will put us in a position to take in major donations and have a separate entity that is working hard to raise funds for things we want. He said right now the City is our clearing house but if we have this in place we could do on our own. He said the foundation is made up of the Board President and area residents; people generally interested in parks and recreation. Attorney Randy Sickler reviewed the process it takes to form the foundation; he said articles are created and then entity is filed with Secretary of State, and bylaws is the document that gives you direction on meetings, roadmap for the organization to conduct business. He said the area that need to be filled in is how you want the foundation board to be made up. He said after the articles are filed with Secretary of State, you get a certificate of incorporation, create a board which is a separate entity from Park Board, file 501c3 status, adopt bylaws and then open to start receiving donations. He said we looked at other Park Districts to help mold these bylaws. President Scott Kovash asked who governs the foundation board. Attorney Sickler said it would be a whole new set of board members, the Park Board could appoint members but the boards are two separate governing bodies. Attorney Sickler said the 501c3 is a good incentive for donors. Commissioner Homiston asked who ultimately holds the control on how the money is used. Attorney Sickler said the foundation group raises the money but the money flows through the Park District and they dole out where the money is spent. Director Kramer said in all the ones he has researched, the foundation is the vehicle for funding, the Park District decides what they raise money for and the foundation raises the money. Attorney Sickler also said you will identify in bylaws who has final say on where the money is spent. Discussion followed.

Director Kramer then reviewed the ordinances, general guidelines that identify basic things in the Park District on century code, scope, state laws, opposing fines, identifies our Board meetings, prohibited acts, etc. of which we still have some work to do. He said every facility will have its own facility rules that aren't included in the ordinances. The ordinances are on a broader scope and doesn't get into the fine details of rules. He said we will get this cleaned up and presented at a meeting, then will go through a public hearing and formal approval process.

Director Kramer reviewed the land sale study. He said Attorney Randy Sickler has had his staff do a study on how we can move forward with two land areas that we have request of land sale. One of them is Fisher Park, Dave Kitzan wants to purchase or trade areas outside of Fisher Park and the other is Larry and John Kostelecky who would like to get the land back that is across from Century Apartments. Attorney Sickler said it is not a simple process, Kostelecky Park does not have the proper statutory language and with Fisher Park the statutory language is proper for its purpose. He said if the Park District is using it as a park, doesn't have to have park equipment, but if you don't want to sell you don't have to sell it. He said if you do want to sell, there is a vacation process you have to go through. There are no deeds to these properties but instead was dedicated land. Director Kramer said both of these lands are wanted for development. Both landowners know that there is a cost to the land sale. Commissioner Homiston commented on the Kostelecky land; sell some of the lots and still have some green space left. Director Kramer said all of the lots have room for trail to continue along 21st except for a few landowners who have fences up to the street. Discussion followed on possibly trading for the sidewalk to be put in. Attorney Sickler is wondering if the Board favors us getting rid of this park, if there is interest, he will spend time on making sure we can actually move forward; he asked what direction the Board wants him to go. Commissioner Homiston commented that if we want to decrease the amount of land we mow and if we aren't doing anything with it we may as well get rid of it. Director Kramer said this Kostelecky piece of property is one we could be rid of, we don't have any plans to develop ourselves. He said the Fisher Park land is not as easy. There was a consensus from the Board that Attorney Sickler should move forward and research the vacation process and possible sale of Kostelecky land.

Director Kramer gave a 2019 Legislative Update. He said there is a handful of bills that are still being worked on; a lot of bills were related to how we run our elections, special assessments, concealed weapon law, general obligation bonds. He explained that general obligation bonds are the cheapest form, this allows you as a Park Board to issue general obligation bonds without a vote of the people. He said with the public bidding bills, this increases the threshold for bidding from \$25,000 to \$50,000. He said there were 54 bills in total we were watching.

Projects Review –

Director Kramer reviewed the Capital Betterment and Quality of Life project with the City. He said for the City Assistance Program, the City has allocated funds for 2019 and we met with them and they approved cutting us a check for past funds that we haven't used yet. In 2019 the projects are infrastructure updates and playground at Optimist Park. For 2020, we will continue to add to future project list. Director of Buildings/Grounds Craig Pearson gave a review

on our capital and maintenance plan. He said they are putting in a new play structure at Optimist park project that will be done by end of May and then each year look at a different park to replace structures. He said his staff is working on Leisure Park next to community center; working with City groups to put in some new structures. Director Kramer said there has been different groups who have approached us, the fire, police and ambulance departments for a first responder's park for smaller age groups to go in next to the larger play structure already in place at Leisure Park. He said they are raising money and allocating funds to this project which could take place by next spring. Director Kramer also said the Kiwanis Club is looking for a park as well and has access to Kiwanis grants. Director Pearson then talked about the skate park, there are erosion and drainage issues need to be taken care of this summer. He reported that roughly 14 of our parks are irrigated and are looking at irrigating other parks. He said he now sits on the Urban Forestry Committee and working with City Forester and designating some areas for tree plantings that we can grow and maintain and use in our parks/facilities and that the City can also use—hoping to get that started this summer. He reported projects at Eagles Park include resurfacing the tennis and basketball courts along with eliminating some of the horseshoe pits and other structures that don't get used. He said they will focus on less structures, but nicer. At Rocky Butte Park, they are putting auto locks on all of the restrooms to prevent vandalism. They will auto lock at a certain time each night. If it works, we will continue in other park restrooms. Director Pearson talked about the dog park being heavily used and we will add an irrigation system to help with growing grass. He said at our sports complexes, the main focus will be to improve quality of maintenance by having more specific employees focusing on them. He said we've hired a cleaning company to take over the cleaning of the community center and they are in the process of changing out lights to LED which will recoup costs in about two years. He also said at WRCC, we will resurface the tennis courts at the same time as Eagles Park and the leisure and lap pools have some serious issues we need to address; the stairs going up to water slides have rusted out and are potentially unsafe. There are mold issues and moisture damage as well. He said they have a walkthrough with architect to form a plan to move forward. He said they are also looking at replacing the kids spray feature in leisure pool. He then reported on the West River Ice Center, doing locker rooms one and two along with bathrooms and working with Dickinson Hockey Club on main rink, replacing Zamboni doors, working with them to change out glass panels to plexiglass and replace netting, and possibly increase glass size to eliminate netting. Director Pearson reviewed project at Heart River Golf Course, the brick building is done for storage and housing of new equipment. He said they will try to get drainage on 14 and 16 completed as soon as we can, along with fairway 5; still have a ways to go but are seeing good progress. He said they will focus on tee boxes and some native areas that will not affect how the game is played. He said for bridge on 17, he's working with builders who originally put the bridge in, but has to be completed after course is closed in the fall. He then reported on Patterson Lake, looking at cattail eradication in certain areas, quality of beach area, bring in new sand and keep beach maintained. He said the horseshoe pits that aren't being used, they will take out and maintain higher quality ones by Lions park. Director Pearson then talked about future projects, they have a wish list that includes a splash park and new dog park on north side of Dickinson, and new irrigation system at Astoria field. He reported that for this year we are planning on having a kayak launching site on Heart River for renting purposes and possibly at Patterson Lake. He said they are looking at possibly adding curling at the ice center in the newer rink; will try out with renting equipment and see if it is successful before we purchase any supplies. President Scott Kovash asked if we have the maintenance staff to do all the stuff we want to do. Director Pearson said for the most part he does but also managing the staff we have better is key, rather than have people focusing on bigger areas, condense to have those people only accountable for certain areas. He said the key is in training and making sure the staff is accountable. Discussion followed on staff to maintain the golf course 7 days a week. Director Pearson explained how he thinks it can be done. Director Kramer commended Craig Pearson on being detailed and organized and a lot of what he wants to implement will take some time, but we are going in the right direction and we'll start to see some improvements.

Patterson Lake Conveyance – Director Kramer reviewed the MOA for Patterson Lake received from Bureau of Reclamation. He said we will meet with the Bureau next week to give them our recommendations and he said we need to keep a partnership with Stutsman County to make sure we are staying on the same path. We'll need to identify a map of property, identify how land is conveyed, legal descriptions and titles and also need a clarification on lot sales after two years. Right now there is a misunderstanding if the homeowner can purchase their lot after 2 years. He said the Bureau clearly identifies federal time is reimbursable but doesn't mention our department. Attorney Randy Sickler said the federal law that talks about selling cabin lands that has to be used for recreational residences, but we need clarification for the land owners. Director Kramer pointed out on page 2, estimated cost is \$34,000 that needs to be prepaid; these are the types of things we will get clarified. He said with us having to front money we will need at some time to make a motion on how to allocate these funds. He said there will be a Patterson Lake permit or lease for ones that are not purchasing their lot, we'll have stipulation on how long the lease term will be. Discussion followed on bank financing and how to put them in the best position to be financed.

New/Old Business – Director Kramer said we will have a joint meeting with the City. He also said there will be a park tour possibly the Friday of May roundtable. He added that we have another request by veterans group to add a storage on to the Veterans Pavilion building, 12x16 area to add on the exterior. He said it was on original design but was cut due to costs.

Adjournment – MOTIONED BY: Brad Fong; SECONDED BY: KC Homiston to adjourn the meeting at 1:15 pm. Upon vote, all aye. Motion carried.

PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Clerk

President