

# Park Board Meeting

October 19, 2026

Pursuant to due call and order, the Board of Park Commissioners, Dickinson Park District, met for a project workshop at 3:30 pm on Monday, October 19, 2026, at the West River Community Center.

ROLL CALL: Commissioners Tim Daniel, Zach Keller, Nic Stevenson, Tyler Tucker, Zach Jahner were present. Also, present were Executive Director/Clerk Benjamin Rae, Deputy Director Caleb Burgard, Director of Parks/Golf Maintenance, Finance/HR Manager Patty Riely and Administrative Manager Leah Hoenke.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: MOTION: Nic Stevenson; SECOND: Zach Keller to approve the agenda as presented. The vote was carried by unanimous voice vote.

## PROJECT WORKSHOP

2026 Project Status Report – Executive Director Benjamin Rae put together a PowerPoint presentation for the 2027 planning workshop. Presentation is meant for planning purposes, and no board action was taken. A major focus of the workshop was reviewing community and user-group needs. Staff highlighted community priorities including expanded trail connectivity, quality parks and playgrounds, a splash pad, outdoor winter recreation amenities, bike infrastructure, and golf improvements. User groups identified additional facility needs such as a third sheet of ice for hockey, indoor baseball and softball training space, additional soccer fields and indoor practice areas, more basketball, volleyball, and pickleball courts, football field space, swim meet seating, and golf practice opportunities. Staff presented prioritized project lists for parks, trails, Patterson Lake, and athletic facilities, with high-priority projects including a splash pad, Friendship Park improvements, Hewson Park soccer fields, outdoor ice upgrades, River Trail Phase 1, Crooked Crane Trail Phase 2, WRCC splash pad improvements, and a junior/executive golf course.

The presentation also reviewed progress on 2026 capital projects. Numerous projects were completed or substantially completed across parks, the West River Community Center (WRCC), the West River Ice Center, Heart River Golf Course, administration, and fleet operations. Completed projects included playground and pool improvements, golf cart paths, camera and network upgrades, equipment purchases, HVAC and mechanical upgrades, drainage improvements, and many facility maintenance projects. A handful of projects remain in progress, such as shop expansion, HVAC controller upgrades, facility painting, and portions of WRCC and WRIC flooring and carpeting projects.

Project Planning Initiatives – Several long-term planning initiatives were outlined. At the WRCC, the recommendation is to continue addressing deferred maintenance while developing a comprehensive facility plan for future expansion and improvements. At Heart River Golf Course, phased improvements include clubhouse renovation, bridge replacement, cart path expansion, practice facility enhancements, and future irrigation investments. Patterson Lake initiatives focus on completing the Crooked Crane Trail system, adding campground amenities, considering a soccer complex, expanding the beachfront, and preserving natural open space. Additional initiatives include developing future parks, strengthening partnerships with the City and County, improving outdoor ice facilities, and maintaining existing athletic venues.

5-Year CIP's – A five-year capital improvement program totaling approximately \$1.62 million in proposed 2027 projects and nearly \$1.8 million in 2028 projects. For 2027, major requests include \$556,295 for WRCC improvements, \$296,337 for parks and Patterson Lake projects, \$267,550 for Heart River Golf Course, \$231,600 for equipment and fleet, \$137,000 for administrative projects, and \$131,185 for West River Ice Center improvements. The recommended funding strategy relies on a combination of Capital Betterment funds, General Fund transfers, grants, WRCC improvement sales tax revenue, and other dedicated funding sources. Staff emphasized maintaining reserve levels, including a \$1.4 million General Fund reserve and a \$500,000 WRCC Improvement Fund reserve, while protecting future project commitments and matching-fund obligations.

City Sales Tax Discussion – The workshop concluded with a discussion of sales tax funding. Executive Director Benjamin Rae reviewed the proposed requests to the City of Dickinson for WRCC operations and maintenance, park development, and golf course improvements from 2027 through 2031. The presentation also introduced a potential future 1% citywide sales tax proposal that would split revenues equally between city infrastructure projects and quality-of-life investments, including potential indoor court and convention space development. Director Rae requested board input regarding questions, concerns, and priorities that should guide future planning discussions. Discussion followed on supporting the measure and that Executive Director Rae is having positive conversations with the city leaders.

Adjournment – MOTION: Zach Keller; SECOND: Zach Jahner to adjourn the meeting at 5:39 pm. All aye, motion carried.

PREPARED BY:           APPROVED BY:

CLERK