

**Park Board Meeting
February 13, 2023**

Pursuant to due call and order, the Board of Park Commissioners, Dickinson Park District, met for a Regular Meeting at 4:00 pm, Monday, February 13, 2023, at the West River Community Center.

ROLL CALL: Present were Commissioners Scott Karsky, Tim Daniel, Zach Keller, Jo Marie Kadrmass, Nic Stevenson. Also present were Executive Director Benjamin Rae, Director of Buildings/Grounds Craig Pearson, Director of Recreation/Facilities Caleb Burgard, Legal Counsel Randy Sickler and Clerk Leah Hoenke.

MINUTES: MOTIONED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmass; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to approve the meeting minutes from January 9. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

CLAIMS: MOTIONED BY: Nic Stevenson; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve the January Claims in the amount of \$492,238.64. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

SPECIAL APPEARANCE – WRCC ½ Cent Sales Tax – Linda Carlson – Deputy City Administrator, Linda Carlson was present to review the half cent sales tax. She reviewed the Sales Tax ordinance #1233 which is a law, she said the items 1, 2, 3 is what the fund is to be used for. 1. Construction of a public building; 2. Operation, maintenance, and repair expenses of the public building; 3. Property tax reduction and infrastructure (streets, water, sewer). She then showed a half percent sales tax monthly breakdown and a sales tax comparison for the past six years 2016-2022. After which, Linda Carlson reviewed the WRCC maintenance budget saying that the city budgets a maintenance reserve for the West River Community Center. She said in 2020 the Park District requested and the full amount of \$380,564.35 came out of the fund to help with expenses. In 2023 there is a budget reserve of \$437,337.00. Park Board President Scott Karsky asked about the dollars, shouldn't that be the Park Board that sets that budget. She said the Park Board submits a letter at the beginning of the year requesting the funds needed for that year. Linda Carlson reviewed the project budget and disbursements. She then showed the bond payments, the Debt Service Schedule. She said we were paying \$1.8 million dollars for the bond with interest, she refinanced and lowered the payment to \$1.4 million but did not extend the maturity date. October 1, 2025 is the last payment for the bond that will come from pledges. Linda explained that the pledges are billed for their annual pledge each January which goes into a trust fund that the disbursement comes out of. Commissioner Nic Stevenson asked if after the bond is paid in 2025, we will have no liability for this building. Linda said yes, the bond will be paid off. Linda Carlson also showed a draft of her worksheet of the half cent sales tax fund which shows her projections for next six years. She said the predictions are hers, that is not what has been asked for. Discussion followed on property tax relief. Commissioner Stevenson asked if rather than property tax relief, is there a rainy-day fund or do we use the forecasted dollars and then there will be less property tax relief. Linda explained that the sales tax is supposed to be dedicated to the community center, there is still money that we are looking at from other areas for the community. She said she will be working with Benjamin on dollars that are needed. Commissioner Jo Marie Kadrmass asked about the library operations offset. Linda said the library falls under the cultural category of a community building. Executive Director Benjamin Rae said they are trying to be more proactive in the funding requests and work with legal counsel on the scope of what the sales tax can be used for. Linda said that will help with better predictions and then the dollars are there and are part of the budget and you won't have to come back and ask for amendments. The Board thanked Linda Carlson for her presentation.

Director of Recreation/Facilities Caleb Burgard introduced Hannah Pepich as our new Program Supervisor starting on February 2. The Park Board welcomed Hannah to the team.

BUILDINGS/GROUNDS

Director of Buildings/Grounds Report – Director Craig Pearson reviewed his report and said they will no longer be flooding the outdoor ice rinks with the warmer weather. He also said the same for grooming the cross-country ski trails. He commented that we filled the new maintenance specialist position, Matthew Lynch accepted the position, he'll start this Thursday. He updated the board on the cart shed, they are completely done with exterior and will start putting up walls and garage doors, then electrical. Director Pearson also reported that the staff is doing a remodel of Heart River Retreat, giving it a new face lift with paint, new carpet, etc.

RECREATION/FACILITIES

Director of Recreation/Facilities Report – Director Caleb Burgard reviewed his report and added that the Pat Fadden Classic racquetball tournament was cancelled due to low participants. He said racquetball in general is declining. Court 1 has been out for a long time, he said we'll look at an alternate use of that court. He reported that Personal Trainer TJ Dempsey, has taken a full-time position with the university and won't be training any longer. We recently hired Ashley Barry as a new personal trainer who will take over his clients. Director Burgard reported 60 teams for the THS/DHS Youth Basketball Tournament and the Blue Hawk Adult Basketball Tournament deadline is tomorrow. He said the Beat the Winter Blues event is this Saturday and we'll be offering a 10% discount on annual and 3-month memberships if paid in full.

2023 – 2025 Strategic Plan – Director of Recreation/Facilities Caleb Burgard reviewed the new Strategic Plan

for 2023-2025, compiled with involvement of all full-time employees. Discussion followed on pickleball and tennis courts. Executive Director Benjamin Rae talked about the Mandan facility that was funded by Mandan Tennis Club has committed to the entire project on an 8-year commitment. He said the day he went to visit they had zero tennis players playing and had 20 pickleball players. Their tennis club president said they are making most of their money from pickleball. Discussion followed on funds. Director Rae said he'll be working with legal counsel to explore what is allowable to utilize the half cent funds.

BUSINESS/FINANCE

Approval of Pledge Securities – Provided for informational purposes only.

Approval of January Financial – Executive Director Benjamin Rae said he appreciates the staff's efforts to control expenses, utilities, etc. Overall, the financial is looking good to start the year. MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to approve January financial. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

Fund Investment – Executive Director Benjamin Rae said interest rates have become much more favorable. Over the past several months, the interest on our operating accounts has risen from .25% to 1.75%. CD rates likewise rise with our banking institution to 4.31% for a 12-month CD. He said investing some of the District funds on a 12-month CD would increase our investment by 2.56% and when the CD matures, we will invest proportionately back into that fund. Director Rae said that it will give us more flexibility in case of emergency. Commissioner Jo Marie Kadrmass asked about a penalty for early withdrawal. Director Rae said we are going to leave enough in operating expenses, that even if we saw a reduction in 20% we would still be able to have enough funds available. He said a one-year CD would be maturing about the time next year that we are reporting on the financial. Director Rae said the staff recommends that the District invest in the following funds: \$100,000 from the Emergency Fund; \$300,000 from the Park Land Development Fund; \$100,000 from the Patterson Lake Fund; \$500,000 from the General Fund making a total investment of \$1,000,000. He said the staff considers this a safe amount to invest while maintaining General and other fund balances at a level that could be utilized in an emergency. MOTIONED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmass; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve investing the amount of \$1,000,000 as presented. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

Friendship Park Pay Application – Tooz #7 – MOTIONED BY: Nic Stevenson; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve the pay application #7 from Tooz Construction in the amount of \$63,120.00. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

2022 Year End – Executive Director Benjamin Rae gave a presentation on the 2022 year-end compared to last three years. The total fund balance total is \$2,881,651.43, he reviewed each fund. He showed the general fund for last three years with fund to start the year being \$1,156,618.53 compared to \$916,831.29 in 2021 and \$525,981.23 in 2020. Director Rae reviewed adult and youth programs showing the adult programs with a net income and youth programs show a negative balance which is consistent with past 3 years. For the West River Ice Center, he reported that the balance shows a larger loss last year due to the compressor and increase in utilities. He said he is optimistic for the future showing a good start this year. He reviewed the Hear River Golf Course showing a net income was \$42,603.14 in 2022. Director Rae then reviewed Patterson Lake, he said it is reflective of lot sales and expenses due to the parking lot with net loss of \$94,952.33. He said approximately \$40,000 is reimbursable expenses that will come in 2023. He showed Heart River Retreat and Veterans Pavilion, both showing a net income of \$3,788.21 for the retreat and \$11,589.58 for the pavilion. He went on to review the West River Community Center. In 2022, we were about the same deficit as 2021. He said the financial in January is starting out positive. Director Rae reviewed the 2023 budget. He said the city will be giving us the \$437,337 that we will be able to have direct access to. He said he's working with Director Craig Pearson to identify projects for the next three years so we can request those funds in advance. Discussion followed on funds from the City.

Budget Amendments – Executive Director Benjamin Rae reviewed the budget amendments. He recommended approval of the following amendments: General Fund budget amount of \$3,487,200 amended to \$309,402.30; Capital Betterment Fund budget amount of \$453,587 amended to -\$52,698.01; Current Projects Fund budget amount of \$0 amended to \$1,138,885.32; Parks & Facilities Replacement Fund budget amount of \$0 amended to \$522,305.08; Park Land Development Fund budget amount of \$0 amended to \$954,613.97; West River Community Center Fund budget amount of \$2,340,950 amended to \$53,411.14. MOTIONED BY: Nic Stevenson; SECONDED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmass to approve budget amendments as presented. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

Fund Transfers – Executive Director Rae reviewed the suggested transfers: \$344,819.70 to be transferred from the Parks & Facilities Replacement Fund to the West River Community Center Fund; \$30,700.07 to be transferred from the Future Projects Fund to the Current Projects Fund (Heroes Park). MOTIONED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmass; SECONDED BY: Nic Stevenson to approve the transfers as presented. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

Full-Time Administrative Staff – Executive Director Rae reviewed the information. He is asking to move the

front desk part-time position to a full-time position. He said it is important for the stability of the office and will help in separation of duties in our finance department. He said the fiscal impact is \$20,000 that is currently allocated to this position and will require an additional \$20,000 in salary, \$10,000 in retirement and taxes, \$21,000 in health insurance for a total of \$51,000 additional dollars. He said the position could be funded with current dollars in the 2023 budget but would require additional funds for 2024 budget. MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Nic Stevenson to approve the Administrative Specialist full-time position. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

Game and Fish Minor Subdivision Survey & Plat – Executive Director Benjamin Rae said as part of the agreement transferring ownership of Patterson Lake to the District, the agreement indicated that the parcel containing the Game and Fish was to be subdivided into 3 plots. Game and Fish would take ownership of their property, the Bureau of Reclamation would take ownership of the access to the dam, and the District would retain ownership of the parking lot. He said the fiscal impact is \$17,000 which would be fully refundable upon the next lot sale. The Game and Fish has committed to 50% of the cost if we complete prior to July 1, 2023 which we would then reimburse them upon the first lot sale. He said if we don't have any lot sales, we'll continue to hold that expense until there is a lot sale. He said the recommendation is to move forward with the survey and platting to complete our commitment to the conveyance agreement. MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Nic Stevenson to approve the survey and platting of the Game and Fish property. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

Heroes Park Design Review – Executive Director Rae showed the design of Heroes Park. He worked with the hospital to get an addition \$20,000 in donation for this park. He showed the site plan. He said we may adjust the size of the pavilion to accommodate the budget. He stated that it will be a toddler park themed for police, fire, and healthcare workers. Director Rae said that the District's contribution is \$50,000 and that this is just for informational purposes. He expects completion to take place this fall.

Executive Director Report – Executive Director Benjamin Rae said we are moving forward with our parks and recreation foundation, and he is working closely with legal counsel. He's also been asked by the city to be the chair of the trails committee for the city's comprehensive plan and will also be on the quality-of-life committee for the city. He said there will be a need for a special meeting for the baseball turf replacement bids on Tuesday, Feb. 21st at 7:30 am. President Scott Karsky added that in the future he would like to see upgrades at Turtle Park, possibly move the trees to show the dike.

Legal Counsel Report – Legal Counsel Randy Sickler had nothing to report.

Adjournment – MOTIONED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to adjourn the meeting at 5:26 pm. Upon vote, all aye. Motion carried.

PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Clerk

President