

**Park Board Meeting
March 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, March 13, 2023, at the West River Community Center.

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

MINUTES: MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas to approve the February 13 and February 21 meeting minutes. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

CLAIMS: MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to approve the February Claims in the amount of \$442,860.44. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

SPECIAL APPEARANCE – Director of Recreation/Facilities Caleb Burgard introduced Colter Hickok as the new Aquatics Supervisor. The board welcomed him.

BUILDINGS/GROUNDS

Director of Buildings/Grounds Report – Director Craig Pearson reviewed his report and added that the ice is out for Charbonneau rink and the staff will be busy with spring shows. He said Scott Mack finished up the new cart shed this week and the new pickleball lines will be put on tomorrow for the indoor courts at WRCC.

RECREATION/FACILITIES

Director of Recreation/Facilities Report – Director Caleb Burgard reviewed his report and added that we are starting the off-season shows at the ice center starting with the car show, make a wish event and a concert. He said there are a lot of events coming up. He said that DPR is having its own job fair on March 31. Discussion followed on marketing efforts to bring in more applicants. President Scott Karsky commented on memberships numbers, saying it is good to see the membership numbers increasing at WRCC.

Part-Time Employee Longevity Program – Director Caleb Burgard reviewed the Part Time Employee Longevity Program to recognize and show appreciation to part time employees that are committed to DPR and contribute to the overall success of the facilities and programs. He said we have 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 years of service award with the 5 years being added this year. Currently there are 18 employees that would qualify for the 5-year award. Commissioner Jo Marie Kadrmas said she initially worked with former Director Mack on this, she thinks it's great and says it is very important to give to the employees. Director Burgard said for 5 years the employee receives a \$50 Visa gift card along with certificate of appreciation, option of 5% discount for membership at HRGC and WRCC that extends to their immediate family or a 5-punch card that can be used at WRCC, HRGC and WRIC annually. For 10 years, \$100 Visa gift card plus 10% discount or 10 punch card; 15 years is \$150 Visa gift card + 15% discount or 15 punch card and 20 years is \$200 visa gift card plus 20% discount or 20 punch card. Commissioner Zach Keller said he is in favor of adding the 5-year award. Discussion followed. MOTIONED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve part time employee longevity program as presented. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

Dickinson Diamonds Agreement – Director of Recreation/Facilities Caleb Burgard reviewed the use agreement with Dickinson Diamonds. He said we took a closer look at what our costs are and what it takes to maintain the fields and said we will increase their usage fee to a flat rate of \$20 per field prep for the season. Discussion followed on utilities and how long it takes for staff to maintain. Director Burgard mentioned that 2016 was the last time the fees were adjusted. He said we will not be using the Sanford field for any programming. The Dickinson Diamonds will have their own separate agreement for the usage of that facility. MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas to approve the Dickinson Diamonds Fast Pitch Softball Club Use Agreement. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

Dickinson Diamonds Concessions Agreement – Director of Recreation/Facilities Caleb Burgard reviewed the Dickinson Diamonds Concessions Agreement and recommended an annual fee of \$300 which is an increase of \$50.00. MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to approve the Dickinson Diamonds Fast Pitch Softball Club Concession Lease Agreement. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

Dickinson Baseball Club Agreement – Director of Recreation/Facilities Caleb Burgard reviewed the use agreement for Dickinson Baseball Club. He said field prep fees have been increased to \$30/prep at Coke Field and \$10/prep for main field. He said there will be a \$100 seed/tobacco fee added to the rental if seeds/tobacco are found in or in front of either dugout area. This fee will also be charged for not cleaning up either dugout or if excessive cleaning is needed to either dugout area. MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas to approve the Dickinson Baseball Club Use Agreement. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

Mustang Baseball Club Agreement – Director Burgard reviewed the Mustang Baseball Club Agreement saying there will be a \$20 field prep fee which is the same as the Dickinson Diamonds. MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas to approve the Mustang Baseball Club Agreement. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Naves-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

Mustang Baseball Club Concessions Agreement – Director Burgard reviewed the Mustang Concessions Agreement and said the annual fee will be \$300. MOTIONED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to approve the Mustang Baseball Club Concessions Agreement. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Naves-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

BUSINESS/FINANCE

Pledge Securities – Provided for informational purposes only.

Approval of February Financial – Executive Director Benjamin Rae reviewed the February Balance Sheet and said we received \$300,000 from the City. He said it's hard to tell the trend with the financials, but they are looking good, also saying that is a little misleading in certain areas due to staffing. President Scott Karsky asked for a walk through of WRCC as well as HRGC. MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to approve the February Financial. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Naves-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

Friendship Park – Tooz Pay Application #8 – MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas to approve the pay application #8 from Tooz Construction in the amount of \$39,450.00. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Naves-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

Dickinson Parks & Recreation Logo Presentation – Executive Director Benjamin Rae gave a presentation on the new logo. He said this is something that has been in the works for a long time, even before I was here. He said the staff felt it was time to update the DPR logo and brand; it's been 22 years since the logo has been addressed. He said when discussing branding, we asked how do we want to imagine ourselves as a district? Several things came up. If you think about recreation, it crosses multiple lines, it brings everyone together along with health and wellness are what we represent. Recreation is a big part of our lives. He said we see ourselves as the pulse of the community, we represent connection and where the community comes together. When people see this logo that is what we want them to see. We want our logo to stand out in the community. The color represents blue, green, red, and orange for purpose, success, nature, health, strength, leadership, optimism, and energy with the icon as a whole meaning inclusivity and diversity. Director Rae said we want to touch all aspects of life, age, ability, interest and find ways to have something for people to do in all aspects of life. He said we will start with a soft rollout of the logo, mostly digital formats and in office items. We will also form a Branding Committee to help with the transition. He said that the roll out of the logo is also leading up to the 20-year anniversary of the West River Community Center one year from now. Commissioner Jo Marie Kadrmas asked who created the logo. Director Rae said it was created in-house by Kara Visger, Marketing Supervisor who has done an amazing job creating this. Commissioner Zach Keller said he likes it and likes the story behind it. He asked what the full cost of the roll-out is. Director Rae said we will take care of replacing the old logo bit by bit, there aren't any specific dollars allocated towards it. Things will be replaced organically as needed over time. President Scott Karsky said it is very professional and he likes the pulse concept. Director Rae commented that we are lucky to have the right people in the office to do these types of things. MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve the new logo and branding. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Naves-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

Part-Time Wage Adjustments – Executive Director Benjamin Rae reviewed the part time wages and said he does not like to request budget adjustments after approval of the final budget. However, sometimes it is necessary in the best interest of providing continued service to the community. He explained that the part-time pay within the district was last adjusted in 2019 and since that time, inflation has sharply impacted wages for many businesses alongside ongoing worker shortages. DPR has not been immune to these pressures and is struggling to fill many key positions. While raising wages is not a guarantee for filling positions, we believe that it is important to remain competitive in the market. Part-time staffing provides the base for all recreational programming. He said worker shortages have impacted the district in several ways. First, part-time employee shortages have put undue pressure on full-time staff. Second, shortages lead to poor customer experiences and third, shortages lead to facility closures. He said we have experienced all these challenges recently. The proposed wage adjustments will address the following areas specifically: Set a minimum \$10/hour wage for part-time positions; create a new coordinator position at the community center to address building supervision in the evenings and on weekends; address needed supervision at the ice center; address current employee shortages in parks and golf maintenance and lifeguarding; and move base pay more in line with market rates. Director Rae said that since the budget had already been approved, he was hopeful we could stretch this out until the 2024 budget but current shortages in the areas listed make me believe that if we don't act now, we will have a significant drop in the level of service at the golf course and in parks maintenance and we will certainly have pool closures. He explained that any shortfall in the 2023 budget would be addressed with reserve funds and the half cent sales tax. Two-thirds of the increase would occur at the WRCC. He said he believes that this should be considered a primary use for the approved sales tax funds. He said the fee structure will be

addressed for the 2024 fiscal year to account for increased costs. Fee adjustments will be considered before increases to the mill levy, but some level of increase to the mill levy will be needed to fund the increases in the future. He said the staff recommendation is for approval of proposed part-time base pay rates with administrative discretion to spend necessary funds for such changes to be addressed with 2023 budget amendment. Discussion followed. MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve the proposed part-time base pay rates as presented. Zach Keller also requested that we review in 6 months to see how successful it was and if any further action is needed. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

Baseball Turf Financing Proposals – Executive Benjamin Rae reported that the request for municipal lease bids were sent to all local banks. Responses were received from four banks. As anticipated, interest rates were significantly higher than the last time the district sought financing. He reviewed the bid options. Option 1: Based on the proposals, financing the turf replacement would cost the district approximately \$45,000 in interest in addition to the \$375,000 principal over 5 years. This would preserve existing fund balances for future projects and allow those funds to be invested. Option 2: Utilizing current funds to pay off the project up front would eliminate interest payments but would also eliminate interest earnings. Current CD rates at our bank are 4.31% for 12 months so minimally less than the 4.4% interest for the lease. Director Rae said he also expects that interest rates will continue to rise, and he doesn't foresee using money from the Park Land Development Fund in the foreseeable future which is in line with our Strategic Plan. Director Rae recommended that we pay for the project from existing district funds. Discussion followed. MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas to do nothing with any of the financing proposals and use the money from the Park Land Development Fund. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried. Director Rae said we will invest the remaining amount in a shorter-term CD if there are changes in the market.

Adjustment to Administrative Calendar – President Scott Karsky said this is due to the Easter holiday, we had discussed not having a meeting on Easter Monday. MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve moving the April Park Board meeting to April 17 at 4:00 pm. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

Executive Director Report – Executive Director Benjamin Rae reviewed his written report and added that the condensing tower for the ice center will be installed next week. He said we will trade services with ND Energy for the crane. He said we should expect a two-week replacement period with summer ice set to begin April 17. Commissioner Jo Marie Kadrmas asked what kind of trade do we have with ND Energy. Director Rae said we will be trading golf rounds that they can use for their employees.

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

Adjournment – MOTIONED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to adjourn the meeting at 5:11 pm. Upon vote, all aye. Motion carried.

PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Clerk

President