

**Park Board Meeting
April 11, 2022**

Pursuant to due call and order, the Board of Park Commissioners, Dickinson Park District, met for a Regular Meeting at 4:00 pm, Monday, April 11, 2022 at the West River Community Center.

ROLL CALL: Present were Commissioners Scott Kovash, Tim Daniel, Scott Karsky, Jo Marie Kadrmas, Zach Keller. Also present were Director of Recreation/Facilities Matt Mack, Director of Buildings/Grounds Craig Pearson, Executive Director James Kramer, Attorney Randy Sickler and Clerk Leah Hoenke.

MINUTES: MOTIONED BY: Scott Karsky; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to approve the March 14 meeting minutes. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

CLAIMS: MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas to approve the March Claims in the amount of \$910,498.15. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

SPECIAL APPEARANCE

4:05 pm – Sam Davis – 10 Year Anniversary. Scott Kovash provided Sam Davis with a 10 Years of Service Award.

BUILDING/GROUNDS

Big Sticks Baseball Club Lease (Attachment #1) – Executive Director James Kramer reviewed the revised lease that our attorney put together as well as the advertising plan and correspondence from legal counsel from the Expedition League. He said we used the same lease agreement that we had before, revised all references to the expedition league and just used the locally owned club. He said we didn't touch fees or specific policies; left exactly the way it was. Director Kramer said he and Attorney Randy Sickler talked about doing the agreement for a one year term because that was what was left on the old lease and then work on a new lease agreement. He also reviewed the advertising plan so we have an agreed upon area on where they can put signage. He pointed out on the last page of the advertising agreement, we as a Park District own advertising for the field, turf and scoreboard. Director Kramer said he's looking for a motion today but will ask for a final motion at the May meeting. He provided a letter from the expedition league's legal counsel. Attorney Sickler said when we gave them the notice of default, not once did they say they weren't in default, he doesn't believe there is anything of merit to the letter. He said the lease is now canceled.

Sports Complex MOU (Attachment #2) – Executive Director Kramer gave an update on progress with the DSU Sports Complex MOU. Next Wednesday they will present the bids to the University and set a plan moving forward. Fisher Industries is leveling the site and then will turn over to JE Dunn for the project. Director Kramer provided a draft of the land use agreement that will be through the University, School District and Park District. Working off agreements we have had in the past for the North Complex, etc. This agreement is nowhere near ready to be presented for approval but the point is to have the board review. He reviewed the document and said we will manage all maintenance excluding Bravera Stadium and concession operations. Commissioner Jo Marie Kadrmas asked about the land, does that include the North Complex. Director Kramer said the agreement is just the new site of the sports complex. He said we just started talking about the tennis courts project. The University has approved the Park District and Dickinson Public Schools to coordinate the tennis complex renovation at DSU. He said all parties will share resurfacing costs. He also said we did not receive the grant from the State of North Dakota because project is not contained on Park District property. He went on to say we have some things to work out on the tennis courts; we'll keep working on the agreement. Director Kramer also showed the aerial view of the sports complex and tennis courts. In the next budget season we will better identify where money will be coming from. He said any input from the board will be appreciated.

Director of Building/Grounds Report - Director Craig Pearson reported on parks saying that the parks crew has focused on getting ballparks ready with baseball and softball season up and running; spending time prepping fields. He said as of today, they will gear up to plow snow, looking like we will need to be ready for wet and heavy snow. He said they are in process of doing normal spring cleanup in parks. He reported on facilities. They are running short on staff but hopefully by next meeting will have a better idea of staffing. Currently the facilities crew has been busy keeping up with events at the ice center and normal maintenance at WRCC. They will also focus on snow removal as needed. Director Pearson moved on to the golf course. He said the greens are uncovered; greens were cut and mowed; fairways and tee boxes were cut to prepare for the DSU golf tournament the past few days. He said the greens came out of the winter well and look very healthy and explained that the process that we used when putting to bed for the winter seemed to work very well. He said the DSU tournament went very well and opened up to the public today. Director Pearson reported that the new pumps have been put back into the irrigation and the system has been

charged. We will shut down through the storm and hopefully will be able to hit the ground running when we get through this stretch of weather.

RECREATION/FACILITIES

Director of Recreation/Facilities Report – Director Matt Mack reported on WRCC memberships, saying we are at 6,151 at the end of March; numbers up from last year at this point. The annual memberships continue to grow. He said we had approximately 400 people at the Easter Egg Pool Hunt which was a really good turn-out for our first event. Alissa Karsky did a nice job of organizing. He also reported that we have a lot of school groups and overnights coming into the facility next month. Director Mack then reported on golf course operations. He said the hours for the golf course will be 9:00 am to 30 minutes after sunset to start the season. He said adult golf league deadline is April 19 and we have received a lot of returning and new teams as well. He said there were 112 Optimist teams this past weekend for the annual basketball tournament, saying that this is on par with where we were pre-pandemic. Last year we were at 67 teams. Director Mack said summer registration for youth programs opened last week. Adult softball registration is at 75-80 teams registered. He also gave a staffing update saying that he is feeling comfortable with staffing other than lifeguard and softball umpires. Most youth programs are covered and we feel comfortable with the majority of programming. Aquatics Specialist Andrew Grafton has lifeguard classes scheduled. Director Mack said we will continue to recruit lifeguards and that the lifeguard shortage is an issue across the state. He said on a busy day, we have both indoor and outdoor pools open, 8-11 guards on shift at a time. The really hot days are when we need the most lifeguards. He said we lower the capacity at the outdoor pool when we are short on guards. He said he's not overly concerned about the shortage right now but that lifeguards require more training and skills and it's not always easy to fill.

BUSINESS/FINANCE

Approval of Pledge Securities (Attachment #3) – MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Scott Karsky to approve the presented pledged securities. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

Approval of March Financial (Attachment #4) – Executive Director Kramer reviewed the fund balance report, pointing out revenue is just under \$2 million with expenses being higher as well; both up from previous years. He said WRCC is swinging in the right direction and for the Special Assessment funds coming in are people that are behind on paying their taxes. He also commented that for the Patterson Lake lot sales, we closed on all that we have outstanding purchase agreements with. Five homeowners do not have an interest in purchasing at this time. MOTIONED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve the March Financial. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

The District Addition (Attachment #5) – Executive Director Kramer reviewed a new development that the Board will need to decide if we want the land or cash in lieu. He said it is for The District Addition that is 21 acres for multi-family and commercial subdivision. He said it is located directly south of the apartment complex on north State Avenue and is coming in as a PUD, planned unit development through Venture Construction. Director Kramer pointed out that the developer would like to do a little pop up park in another area that they have. He said we will have to work with them and that the item will come back to the board after we determine what the cash in lieu will be.

Executive Director Position (Attachment #6) – Executive Director Kramer reviewed and said the board will need to accept his resignation and then will open the position. Position will be open for approximately one month. MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Scott Karsky to accept the resignation of James Kramer. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried. Director Kramer said ultimately it is the Board's call on starting salary. He provided a revised job description and job announcement for the Board's review.

Executive Director Report - Executive Director James Kramer said we received the state grant on the Patterson Lake parking lot project. They stayed true to outdoor recreation areas that are tied to trails and fishing areas. He also reported that there are three candidates for Park Board and that we will need to plan for the budget committee with the reorganization. President Scott Kovash said his thought was whoever is going to be president should be on the budget committee. Scott Kovash said he won't be here for the final budget approval. Commissioner Tim Daniel asked when the first meeting was after the election. Director Kramer said the first meeting will be the second Monday in July. Commissioner Jo Marie Kadrmas said she will be interested in the City Planning and Zoning Board. Commissioner Zach Keller commented that he thinks it makes sense to appoint the budget committee now and make the other committee assignments after the new board comes in. Director Kramer said we will change the budget committee to be Commissioners Tim Daniel and Scott Karsky. Scott Karsky will stay on the planning/zoning committee and then reorganize once the election takes place. Commissioner Kadrmas asked about the youth commission and if anything has moved forward on that. Director Kramer said nothing has really progressed unless there is a specific event taking

place. He said we haven't been involved outside of that. Director Kramer went on to talk about the South Heart golf course closing. He said we have been asked to help out with their high school team. Our staff met regarding leagues and tournaments as well. He said memberships and general usage is going to increase. He said we are being very diligent when it comes to booking new tournaments and are not adding any new special events. Director Kramer said that golf courses, Bully Pulpit and Killdeer are open to helping accommodate the high school teams as well. Director of Recreation/Facilities Matt Mack said for the adult leagues we have 20 new men's teams and 6 new women's teams sign up for league currently. He said we could probably do 24 max teams on Thursday nights and women's is set at 24 as well. He said it will be hard to accommodate new teams. Both Scott Kovash and Tim Daniel said they have received concerns from individuals that we will be booking tournaments on the weekends. Director Kramer said you can tell the general public that we are not booking new tournaments on the weekends. Commissioner Zach Keller commented that we should look at having a deposit for booking online to help with no shows. Director Kramer said we will continue those conversations and keep our tee sheet as solid as possible with grouping up people as needed and will come out with communication to all of the members to be proactive. Discussion continued. Director Kramer then reported on the playground for the sports complex. He said the plan is that we will do the playground and commit \$25,000 to tennis courts. He said he approached the Schneider's to see if they are willing to donate towards the playground as well. Director Kramer stated that throughout the Park District, we have eight positions open with five being at the specialist level. He said the base pay for specialists is at \$34,000 and we cannot be competitive at that base. He said we are trying to elevate the specialist pay, saying that with these open positions we have saved dollars since the beginning of the year. He said it will take about \$40,000 to get people caught up but then we need to budget for that in next year's budget. In a perfect world we'll have a recommendation at our May meeting. He commented that we need to act quickly to retain the employees that we have and that the last time we did something bigger like this was during the oil boom when there was an across the board raise put in place. President Scott Kovash said that the most difficult thing right now is help; the reality is that we need to fix it now. Commissioner Keller said there has been a lot of development throughout the Park District and if we don't have the proper staff we won't be able to properly maintain these nice facilities. When looking at allocating funds that should be our focus. President Kovash said in most cases it will be tax dollars we'll need to focus on. Discussion followed.

Legal Counsel Report - Attorney Sickler had nothing further to report.

Adjournment - MOTIONED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmass; SECONDED BY: Scott Karsky to adjourn the meeting at 5:20 pm. Upon vote, all aye. Motion carried.

PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Clerk

President