

**Park Board Meeting  
April 17, 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, April 17, 2023, at the West River Community Center.

ROLL CALL: Present were Commissioners Scott Karsky, Tim Daniel, Zach Keller, 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. Commissioner Jo Marie Kadrmas was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

MINUTES: MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve the March 13 meeting minutes. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Kadrmas). Motion carried.

CLAIMS: MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Nic Stevenson to approve the March Claims in the amount of \$553,406.34. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Kadrmas). Motion carried.

#### **BUILDINGS/GROUNDS**

Director of Buildings/Grounds Report – President Scott Karsky asked if the board members had any questions on Director Craig Pearson’s written report. Commissioner Nic Stevenson asked about water on the golf course. Director Pearson said it is surprisingly dry on the course considering the amount of moisture we had; he said most greens are clear and they look good. He said If things go well, we can open on April 28<sup>th</sup>. Director Pearson added that the ice is now back in the Cornerstone rink at the ice center. The staff is working on curling lines and hope to have it ready towards the end of this week. Commissioner Tim Daniel asked about the construction materials outside of WRIC. Executive Director Benjamin Rae said that is for the new locker room construction; there will be 3-4 week timeframe for mason block installation. Board President Scott Karsky commended Scott Mack and his crew on getting the fields ready for spring as well as for the new cart storage at Heart River Golf Course.

#### **RECREATION/FACILITIES**

Director of Recreation/Facilities Report – Commissioner Tim Daniel asked about an Assistant Golf Pro. Director Burgard said it is open until filled and has two applicants so far. They will help facilitate pro shop management and take over some youth lessons along with providing more customer service. Discussion followed on staffing at the golf course. Director Burgard added that the golf course cart shed spots are all filled, and the wait list is currently at 20. He said when Scott Mack built it, there was flexibility for additional spaces to be added in the future. Director Burgard also reported that the Spring Optimist Tournament is this weekend with 74 teams, down from 100 teams last year. He said that there is a junior high track meet that could be affecting the turnout. Commissioner Nic Stevenson asked about lifeguard shortage and asked if we’ve reached out to the swim team. Director Burgard said yes, we’ve shared all the information with the swim team and high schools and are advertising as much as possible. He said right now we are half staffed for lifeguards, 26 actively scheduled lifeguards right now but we’ll need at least 45 for summer season. On any given day you want 15-18 lifeguards to get through sunup to sundown. Discussion followed.

Dickinson Hockey Club Agreement – Director of Recreation/Facilities Caleb Burgard reviewed the updated agreement. He said he met with Dallas Kuntz to discuss the agreement, which is in effect from April 17, 2023 to March 31, 2024. He reviewed the changes. He said the hockey club has agreed to only schedule programming Monday-Friday from April-May, and Monday-Thursday in June-July. Usage fees were prorated for the month of April. He said previously the community room rental had no fee associated, we are now charging \$15/hour to cover our direct costs. He pointed out that the hockey club will pay the district \$134 per hour/per arena for any added practice/game/tournament, not scheduled 7 days in advance. Added if applicable, associated damages from vandalism will be at the expense of the hockey club. He also reported that the club will provide annual financial reports to the district that contain a minimum of total revenue/expenditures, and average cost per participant. Commissioner Zach Keller said he would like to see a detailed breakdown of hockey activities in that building. Executive Benjamin Rae said right now the hockey club pays \$100,000 in user fees, \$50,000 in public skate, \$20,000 in rental fees. We end up spending \$250,000 on supplies, labor, utilities. He said the hockey club pays a substantial portion but when you look at the total; we are spending \$100,000 more in expenses than we receive in revenue. He anticipates that we will see more possible increases in rates in the 2024 budget and the hockey club is going to add additional dubs to their members to help with our expenses. Director Rae said he is concerned on what we charge for rentals and manpower. He explained that we wanted 100% of expenses paid by the hockey club for summer ice. He said he tried to pull numbers and come up with the best possible price. Commissioner Nic Stevenson asked if it is our goal to lower or are we comfortable with the subsidized amount of \$100,000. Director Rae said no, this past year we’ve had a substantial amount of expenses in supply and maintenance, he would like to see us cut

that in half but that could take time to see the best ways to lower the subsidized amount. Commissioner Stevenson said it is important that we are transparent with the club and make sure they understand that we'll have to make changes to the fees to accommodate. Director Rae said the communication with the hockey club has been good. Commissioner Zach Keller added that it's important to look at other rentals as well. Director Rae agreed, saying we'll need to try to create a balance with community events. Legal Counsel Randy Sickler said in review of the agreement he would like to clarify some of the language; he said the liability insurance is not only for personal injury but for property damage. MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Nic Stevenson to approve the Dickinson Hockey Club Use Agreement contingent upon legal counsel's recommended changes. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Kadrmass). Motion carried.

Dickinson Hockey Concessions Agreement – Director Burgard reviewed the concessions agreement with the Dickinson Hockey Club. He said the agreement term is April 17, 2023, to March 31, 2024 with an annual fee of \$300. MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Nic Stevenson to approve the presented Hockey Concession Lease Agreement. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Kadrmass). Motion carried.

Dickinson Soccer Club Agreement – Director Burgard reviewed and said this is a new agreement with Dickinson Soccer Club, we haven't had an official agreement in place before. He said there is no cost associated to it. It states that Dickinson Soccer Club agrees to line and position all fields prior to season start, while also providing needed supplies. In return, the district will not charge a usage fee. He said we felt it was in our best interest to have something in writing with them. Director Burgard also said the soccer club does not anticipate moving away from our fields to the new Sanford Complex when those soccer fields are ready. President Scott Karsky asked if we receive proof of insurance. Director Burgard responded yes; we do require proof of insurance. MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to approve the Dickinson Soccer Club Use Agreement. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Kadrmass). Motion carried.

## BUSINESS/FINANCE

Pledge Securities – Provided for informational purposes only.

Approval of March Financial – Executive Director Benjamin Rae said there isn't anything sticking out but said one of the challenges is the Patterson Lake lot sale from last year, but otherwise everything is in good shape. MOTIONED BY: Nic Stevenson; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve the March financial. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Kadrmass). Motion carried.

Friendship Park – Tooz Pay Application #9 – MOTIONED BY: Nic Stevenson; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve the Friendship Park Pay Application #9 from Tooz Construction in the amount of \$20,685. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Kadrmass). Motion carried.

2024 Staff Requests Review – Executive Director Benjamin Rae said this is what he will be working on with the staff. He said he wanted to be transparent with the board on what is being asked by the staff. This is for information only and will be dependent on the 2024 budget. If funding is available, he will recommend a new park maintenance specialist full-time position along with part-time positions of aquatics coordinator, program/rec coordinator and golf course marshal. He explained that the leadership team reviewed and scored out the importance of what was requested. Director Rae said if we approve the new positions, it will be an increase of \$130,000 and that it is important to take care of existing staff as well. He asked if the board had any feedback. President Scott Karsky said it is a significant chunk of money. Commissioner Zach Keller asked about aquatics coordinator. Recreation/Facilities Director Caleb Burgard said it will be an aquatics coordinator to assist the aquatics supervisor. President Karsky asked what they are alleviating. Director Burgard said they could generate more revenue in private lessons and be more consistent on lifeguarding. He said in the past we had two full time aquatics coordinators, basically head lifeguards that were full-time temporary, and they alleviated a lot of time lifeguarding. He said it will help to keep the facility hours as is and not have closures due to lack of lifeguards. President Karsky asked if this person would affect the lack of lifeguards. Director Burgard said yes, we'll have a more consistent lifeguard on staff. President Karsky asked why we wouldn't just pay the lifeguards more. Executive Director Rae said it will also help the customer service side of pool, it's a lot to ask of our full-time supervisor, this position will be able to provide a better customer experience and he thinks it makes a difference in how the facility runs. Director Burgard added that it is like the facility coordinator on the dry side that alleviates hours of full-time staff. President Karsky asked about the program/rec coordinator position. Director Rae said this is combining some seasonal supervisors over certain programs and move to one supervisor that covers multiple programs. He feels adding a coordinator maximizes the ability to add more programs without adding full time staff. Director Rae said this is just informational at this time.

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Financial Review / Executive Director Report – Executive Director Benjamin Rae gave the first quarter financial report. He showed the year-to-date fund balance of \$2,657,993.79 that was brought in during the first quarter. For the general fund he showed that we are down \$26,000 in state aid but we anticipate it will be up for the year; it didn't come in during the first quarter. Other items that pushed revenue last year were a Patterson Lake lot sale last year that we haven't seen this year and a golf course donation that was received

last year. For expenses, we are up \$20,000 in full-time labor. More was paid in Pro Shop inventory during the first quarter. He then reviewed WRCC, showing overall we are where we were last year. Revenue is up \$35,000 from memberships in the first quarter, also have additional miscellaneous revenue of \$16,000. On the expense side there are two big items, \$42,000 lease payment for equipment that hit in March vs April last year. Snow removal has also hit us hard this year, spending \$15,000 on snow removal which is difficult to plan for year to year. Membership totals show a positive trend, a huge increase from the past two years. He then reviewed the 2024 Budget Committee Strategies. The committee will focus on an increase of Capital Betterment to 5 mills and/or increase city assistance funds; adjust General Fund mill levy as needed to maintain current level of service; review fees annually; review district maintenance, equipment, fleet, and project plans; and review all Park District debt. Director Rae then showed the organizational chart saying that we are fully staffed in full-time positions, stating that it's been a while since we have been fully staffed. He reviewed the completed projects of golf cart storage; condensing tower; WRCC main and pool heat exchangers and Heart River Retreat renovation, all completed in March. He also gave an update on current projects of Patterson Lake Crooked Crane Trail parking and Friendship Park, both due to complete in June; baseball field turf replacement and ice center locker room project set to complete in September. Director Rae also reported on playgrounds projects of Kostelecky Park equipment will be replaced this spring; Heroes Park, and Sanford Sports Complex and Simpson Park playgrounds are set to be completed in 2023. He also said the Game and Fish Subdivision which is part of the land transfer of Patterson Lake will be completed in June. He then reviewed other items that are being worked on are the Dickinson Parks and Recreation foundation, review district ordinances, standard operating procedures, and a 3-year project plan that includes the City's Quality of Life Committee. He said he is putting out a community needs assessment survey that will go out in May, saying that he will push hard to get as much public input as possible. Commissioner Tim Daniel asked if we qualify for any emergency funds from the state for snow removal costs. Director Rae said that we do not because we don't have a specific line item for snow removal, you must run a budget for snow removal for 3-year period and have exceeded that budget.

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

WRCC Facility Tour – The Park Board went on a facility tour of the West River Community Center.

Adjournment – MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Nic Stevenson to adjourn the meeting at 6:23 pm. Upon vote, all aye. Motion carried.

PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
President