

**Park Board Meeting
July 8, 2024**

Pursuant to due call and order, the Board of Park Commissioners, Dickinson Park District, met for a Regular Meeting at 4:00 pm on Monday, July 8, 2024, 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, and Clerk Leah Hoenke.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – MOTIONED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmass; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to approve the agenda as provided. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF CANVASSED ELECTION RESULTS - MOTIONED BY: Nic Stevenson; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to approve the agenda as provided. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

PARK BOARD RECOGNITION – President Scott Karsky presented and thanked Jo Marie Kadrmass for her service on the Park Board the past 4 years saying she has done a fantastic job serving the Park Board.

ADJOURN CURRENT PARK BOARD – MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmass to adjourn the current Park Board. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

CALL TO ORDER NEW PARK BOARD – President Scott Karsky called to order the new Park Board.

ROLL CALL: Present were Commissioners Scott Karsky, Tim Daniel, Zach Keller, Nic Stevenson and Tyler Tucker.

DETERMINE TEMPORARY CHAIR – MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Nic Stevenson motioned for Scott Karsky to serve as temporary chair. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF ELECTED COMMISSIONERS – Park Board Clerk Leah Hoenke administered the Oath of Office to newly elected commissioners Zach Keller and Tyler Tucker.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT – MOTIONED BY: Nic Stevenson; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel for Scott Karsky to sit as President of the Park Board. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENT – MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Nic Stevenson for Tim Daniel to sit as Vice President of the Park Board. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS – President Scott Karsky stated that the President and Vice President will serve on the Budget Committee and asked for a motion on who will sit on the City Planning/Zoning Commission. MOTIONED BY: Nic Stevenson; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel for Zach Keller to represent the Park Board on the Planning/Zoning Commission. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA – MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Nic Stevenson to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented, which includes the Park Board meeting minutes from June 10; June Claims of \$674,172.42; Pledged Securities and DSU Membership Agreement. Roll call vote: Ayes-4 Nays-0; Abstain-1 (Tim Daniel). Commissioner Tim Daniel stated that he will abstain due to him being an employee of Dickinson State University. Motion carried.

BUILDINGS/GROUNDS

Director of Buildings/Grounds Report – Director Craig Pearson provided a written report and added that we received word that we were awarded the \$2,000 grant from the Forest Service for the community orchard. He said we will start with 20 trees and will build to 50 trees and shrubs. Commissioner Nic Stevenson commented that he recently heard from out-of-town visitors that the course looks great and looks very well on its upkeep. Director Pearson said that Superintendent Sam Davis will say that it is not up to his expectations and has struggled with time to complete processes mostly due to weather. He said strong winds have prevented weed spraying and due to spring rains, we are behind on fertilizing. Commissioner Tim Daniel asked about grants and if we have a long-term plan on where future trees will be planted in the parks and golf course. Director Pearson responded that we don't have a map of a long-term plan but for the last few years we have been planting where we have removed. At Friendship Park, 60 new trees were planted from the grant we previously received. He explained the process at the golf course of planting where trees have been removed. Executive Director Benjamin Rae said one of things we are working on is a comprehensive plan for tree planting. Director Pearson added that the next round of grants will be applied for Memorial Park. Discussion followed on trees.

RECREATION/FACILITIES

Director of Recreation/Facilities Report – Director Caleb Burgard provided a written report. Discussion followed on golf rounds. Director Burgard said the biggest indicator for rounds is the weather, as we had golf league cancellations and last year, we had the ND high school state tournament all contributing to lower rounds this past month. He said in the month of May, we had an 85% decrease in no shows and in June we had 75% decrease in no shows and said he's pleased with the decrease in no shows compared to last season. Director Burgard commented that the Miller Lite Softball Tournament is currently at 31, last year we had 45 teams. We are inquiring about other teams as to why they are not signing up. Mandan changed weekends for their tournament and that could be why our tournament has decreased. Director Burgard said they are inquiring as to why they changed the date and looking at what we can do to avoid this in the future.

Fitness Equipment RFB Review – Director of Recreation/Facilities Caleb Burgard reviewed and said we received two separate vendors for fitness equipment bids, all specs were met and included freight and installation. He said the staff are recommending the approval of the Matrix #1 bid for \$187,530 as well as asking for approval to explore financing options. He said there is a 3-year warranty and we lease for 5 years. MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to approve the fitness equipment bid from Matrix in the amount of \$187,530 along with the pursuit of financing. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

BUSINESS/FINANCE

June Financial – MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Tyler Tucker to approve the June financial as presented. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

2nd Quarter Financial Review – Executive Director Benjamin Rae presented the 2nd quarter financials. He showed the YTD fund balance at \$5,667,768 and said most funds are healthy. The General Fund over the last 3 years revenue has been increasing with slightly similar trend in expenses. General Fund balance is \$2,393,588. He reviewed the ice center revenue saying it is consistent with last year. He reminded the board that the original building is 33 years and the new addition is at 10 years. He showed Heart River Golf Course (HRGC) has done well over the last 3 years; we've been able to manage expenses as well. He expects that even with South Heart opening, we'll see good numbers ending the season. He then reviewed Patterson Lake and noted revenue looks good this year due to one lot sale but stated that we have not paid the sale to the Bureau of Reclamation so is a little deceiving. He explained that we re-allocated utilities which helps on the Patterson Lake side of things and that we are still dialing in to what the new normal standard is at the lake without the cabin lease revenue. Director Rae then reviewed the financial picture at Heart River Retreat and said the utilities were being coded to Patterson Lake and now that has been corrected. He said it is showing a little less on rentals this year. He moved on to the community center where we continue to be strong on revenue and expenses are pacing about the same. He said we are about \$20,000 in deficits less than last year. Total memberships have bounced back strongly but not as well as before covid where we hit a peak in Feb. 2020 with 7,505 members. Executive Director Rae reviewed the 2025 District assumptions. He said from 2022 to now we have turned over 60 percent of our staff. He showed the personnel priorities which are to fund benefits at the current level; fund pay increases and adopt a grade and step plan; bring

bring employees up to the market value for their position over a period of time; fund part-time employee increases; and fund new part-time and/or full-time positions as recommended by staff. He also stated that we will invest funds in employee wellness and professional development. At Heart River Golf Course, the assumptions are HRGC should cover all operating and maintenance expenses with revenue from the golf course with zero operational subsidy; capital projects will be funded as needed in line with other projects in the district; golf carts will be replaced on a 4-year rotation schedule. The Recreation assumptions are that program fees for adult programs and tournaments will cover all direct operational costs; program fees for youth will cover the majority of direct operational costs; events will cover majority of direct operational costs with associated sponsorship; program offerings will be adjusted based on community input, registration and facility/staffing ability to oversee quality programs; priority will be given to add programs for currently underserved groups such as teens and seniors; youth programming will balance district offerings with those offered by community user groups. For Mill Levy, the district will favor incremental changes on a regular basis as opposed to large infrequent changes. Director Rae then reviewed the 2025 Budget Considerations for the General Fund: Declining revenue for Patterson Lake due to lot sales; conservative HRGC revenue due to reopening of Pheasant Country Golf Course; anticipating 3% increase in benefits; significant increase to defined benefit retirement plan; 25% increase in property insurance due to valuation changes, no anticipated rate change; increase to part-time base pay rates already approved by the board (parks and golf maintenance); and anticipated increase to golf cart lease. He reviewed the budget considerations for the West River Community Center: Anticipating 3% increase in benefits; 25% increase in property insurance due to valuation changes; increase to part-time base pay rates already approved by the board, mostly lifeguards; significant increase in demand for training services; and 25% and increase in the cost of cleaning services. Director Rae reviewed the mill levy. He showed the effects of mill levy adjustment on homeowners and said of the 9 largest park districts, we have the lowest mill levy. We have generally kept the mill levy below the max allowable due to having the half cent sales tax revenue. He showed the mill levy comparisons from the last 3 years. Discussion was held on the budget and potential property tax initiative that will be on the November ballot; it will be tough on local entities if it passes. Commissioner Nic Stevenson commented that he doesn't see a way with today's inflation that we can go backwards. Other commissioners agreed. Director Rae said there will be a special meeting to talk about the preliminary budget and that this is just information for now.

2025 Fee Schedule Approval – Director of Recreation/Facilities Caleb Burgard reviewed the 2025 fee schedule. He pointed out the changes or revisions from the last meeting. For all concessions for user groups we are proposing a \$350 concession fee, compared to \$300. The North Complex fee recommendation is \$250/per field prep. Cart rental increases to \$12/9 hole and \$24/18 hole. Discussion followed on fees. MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve the 2025 fee schedule as presented. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

Resolution for Patterson Lake Lot Sales – Scott Karsky read out loud the President's Certificate for Patterson Lake Lot Sales that authorizes Executive Director Benjamin Rae the authority to execute any and all purchase agreements, deeds, affidavits, settlement statements, and without limitation of any kind or nature respecting the sale by the Park District of real property located at Patterson Lake. MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Nic Stevenson to approve the President's Certificate by Scott Karsky as presented. The certificate will be signed and dated this 8th day of July 2024. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

Hole #17 Bridge Bid Discussion – Executive Director Benjamin Rae said all engineering has been completed for the hole 17 bridge. For us to move forward we are too late to get it done in the fall season this year due to bid documents and the bridge has a 4-6 month timeline; we are looking at April of next year. He recommends that we don't do it during the season, possibly push back to next fall and he asked what the board's wishes are. President Karsky said we should know enough information by March. Director Rae said there is no value to bid out now and he recommended to do bid process in February with a fall timeline.

Executive Director Report – Executive Director Benjamin Rae noted the upcoming special meetings in July and August. Commissioner Tim Daniel asked Benjamin to review the Crooked Crane Trail Phase 2. Director Rae said he sat down with the City and BNSF and we are at an impasse. He understands both standpoints. Another option is to move the trail across the dike and if we leave elevations the same, we will not need a permit. He's not comfortable with it staying the same as it is too close to the golf course. He's looking at other options. Discussion followed on the trail design.

Adjournment – MOTIONED BY: Nic Stevenson; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to adjourn the meeting at 5:45 pm. All aye, motion carried.

PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Clerk

President