

**Park Board Meeting  
September 8, 2025**

Pursuant to due call and order, the Board of Park Commissioners, Dickinson Park District, met for a Regular Meeting at 3:30 pm on Monday, September 8, 2025, at the West River Community Center.

ROLL CALL: Present were Commissioners Scott Karsky, Tim Daniel, Nic Stevenson, Zach Keller, Tyler Tucker. Also, present were Executive Director/Clerk Benjamin Rae, Director of Buildings/Grounds Craig Pearson, Director of Recreation/Facilities Caleb Burgard, and Leah Hoenke, Administrative Manager.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Executive Director Benjamin Rae said that item 8b, Agreement to Operate Concession and Liquor Operation at DCBT Ballpark will be tabled until a future meeting. He also added an additional item 9e, Solar Bee Discussion. MOTIONED BY: Nic Stevenson; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve the agenda with adding item 9b, Solar Bee Discussion. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Tucker). Motion carried.

**TIMETABLE AGENDA: 4:15 PM – BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING**

Park Board President Scott Karsky opened the public hearing on the 2026 Preliminary Budget. Executive Director Benjamin Rae gave a presentation on the preliminary budget showing a total amount to be levied is \$2,921,300. President Scott Karsky asked if anyone was present to speak regarding the 2026 Preliminary Budget, he asked three times. There was no one present to speak for or against the preliminary budget for 2026. The final budget will be approved on Monday, October 6. Public hearing was adjourned at 4:29 pm.

CONSENT AGENDA – Consent agenda items were presented for approval as follows. Meeting minutes from August 4; revision to July 14 minutes; and Claims in the amount of \$1,063,252.89. Executive Director Rae said that the July 14 meeting minutes was a revision to the wording of the motion on the Veterans Memorial Playground. MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Nic Stevenson to approve the consent agenda items as presented. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Tucker). Motion carried.

**BUILDINGS/GROUNDS**

Director of Buildings/Grounds Report – Director Craig Pearson provided a written report for informational purposes. Discussion was held on the winterization of our seasonal buildings/grounds.

Tyler Tucker joined the meeting at 3:38 pm.

**RECREATION/FACILITIES**

Director of Recreation/Facilities Report – Director Caleb Burgard provided a written report for informational purposes. Commissioner Nic Stevenson asked about our leagues and if there would be court availability issues with Dickinson Public Schools. Director Burgard responded yes, we are expecting some issues which may hinder some of our winter league programming, specifically adult volleyball league.

Agreement to Operate Concession and Liquor Operations at DCB&T Ballpark - Tabled to a future meeting.

Racquetball Court Transition – Director of Recreation/Facilities Caleb Burgard reported on the racquetball court transition saying that we've talked in length on earmarking some dollars to the racquetball court space, court 1 had water damage, walls and roof have been repaired but floor still has damage and is now being used as a wallyball court. He said over the course of the past several years, we have seen our utilization of the racquetball courts drop drastically from roughly 15% to now 3% over a given period. We have also discontinued our racquetball tournaments and lessons due to low enrollment. It is not only a statewide decline, but also nationwide, as we have toured many facilities that have already converted racquetball courts to better accommodate specific facility needs. The West River Community Center's current facility needs is an expansion of our strength equipment to alleviate some traffic between our free weight space, and the selectorized strength equipment. With this information in mind, we have discussed several options for better utilization of the existing racquetball court and would like to recommend this transition. Director Burgard reviewed quotes from Matrix and Floor to Ceiling and stated that the staff is recommending accepting the Matrix fitness equipment proposal for \$29,488.42 in addition to Floor to Ceiling Carpet One quote of \$8,000. Discussion followed. MOTIONED BY: Nic Stevenson; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve the Matrix and Floor to Ceiling quotes, not to exceed a total of \$40,000. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

Outdoor Pool Summary – Director Caleb Burgard provided the outdoor pool summary, showing pool numbers back to 2021. He added for 2025, there were 4 of 11 days that we were at max capacity were due to limited lifeguards. Discussion followed. Executive Director Benjamin Rae added that looking at net revenue we were better staffed but net revenue was less because staffing numbers were much greater. He said he's talked to staff about how we can balance that.

**BUSINESS/FINANCE**

August Financial – Executive Director Benjamin Rae said financials are okay but there has been an increase to staffing which has raised our expense side. The General Fund and golf course continue to be very strong financially. Discussion followed on staffing. Director Rae said turnover is consistent due to the age of staff, but filling the shifts we need has been much better. MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller; SECONDED BY: Tim Daniel to approve the August financial. Roll call vote: Ayes-5; Nays-0; Absent-0. Motion carried.

NAHL Team Discussion – Executive Director Benjamin provided an executive summary of the possibility of having an NAHL team providing information on space needed, operational costs to be addressed, off ice season events and ice time issues. He did say it makes him hesitant with displacing the off-ice programming and worries about supporting due to current financial of the West River Ice Center. He said we are looking at ways to change the trajectory of off-ice events, start thinking about other spaces for these events and make the ice center truly an ice center. President Scott Karsky said he thinks we should let it play out and see where it takes us. Director Rae said he just needs a consensus if we should support this. President Karsky said if we can accommodate within the 2

sheets but pacing ourselves to make sure everything is right for the community. Commissioner Zach Keller said he thinks we should prioritize the existing programming. Director Rae said the biggest challenge is scheduling the games, which would be displacing five hours a week of high school game time. He said that Hockey Coordinator Dallas Kuntz told him that at some of the levels they are possibly adding teams as well. Director Rae stated that facility space is going to be a premium in the next several years. Commissioner Nic Stevenson stated that we could possibly be more efficient in subsidizing the dollars at the ice center. Commissioner Tim Daniel said he thinks we need to have a detailed, concrete plan on how we can accommodate this before final decisions can be made.

Master Plan Update – Executive Director Benjamin Rae said we are offering master plan open houses for community engagement. He listed the dates to be September 9, 24 and October 9. He said this is an opportunity for the public to come in person and is the last phase in the master plan process. Director Rae stated that he will provide an update after each of the events.

Executive Director Report – Executive Director Benjamin Rae provided a written report for informational purposes. Commissioner Nic Stevenson asked about the timetable for the WRCC renovation. Director Rae said we are working through preconstruction phase, permits and then there will be a pre-construction meeting where he can provide a better timeline.

Addition to Agenda: IXOM SolarBee Discussion – Executive Director Benjamin Rae provided an executive summary providing background information on IXOM SolarBee Units. He said it is unlikely the Park District could financially support this program independently at the price points presented. However, the blue green algae issue is the biggest concern of the community related to the lake. The fiscal impact would be a maximum initial cost of \$1,375,000 for 25 units at \$55,000 per unit for installation. A max annual cost of \$275,000 for 25 units at \$5,000 per unit for maintenance. All these costs would be subject to discussion with IXOM. Commissioner Zach Keller said he would like an actual number associated with the success rate, not just that it is highly successful. President Scott Karsky said it is interesting and would like to know more. Discussion followed. The consensus was that we would continue to look at this but will need to come up with a better plan to pay for it.

Adjournment – MOTIONED BY: Zach Keller: SECONDED BY: Tyler Tucker to adjourn the meeting at 4:29 pm. All aye, motion carried.

PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

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Clerk

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President