

**Park Board Meeting
July 26, 2023**

Pursuant to due call and order, the Board of Park Commissioners, Dickinson Park District, met for a Special Meeting at 7:30 am, Wednesday, July 26, 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 and Clerk Leah Hoenke. Commissioner Nic Stevenson was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

BUSINESS/FINANCE

Safe Slide Proposal – Executive Director Benjamin Rae reviewed the Safe Slide Proposal. He said it is time sensitive and it is work that is needed this fall. He gave the background information of the project. In May of 2023, we contracted with Safe Slide to conduct a visual inspection and assessment of the conditions of the slides at the West River Community Center. Safe Slide was evaluating the chips to the fiberglass in the slide, oxidation of the slides, caulk in the joints, alignment of the panels/sections, condition of the gel coat, and any other visual cracking. All damage to the slides was found to be either aesthetic, minor, or moderate in nature. Safe Slide made recommendations for needed repairs on the slides as included in the attached quotes with the focus being on repairs to the older indoor slides. Recommended repairs range from \$75,000 to \$148,000. All work carries a 5-year warranty. If the board chooses not to act this week, it will push the work back to 2024. He said the staff recommends all repairs be made to the indoor slides and option A be selected for the outdoor slides. He believes that given that the outdoor slides are less than 10 years old, we can delay updating the gel coat for a couple years. He said the recommendation is approval of funding for slide renovation not to exceed \$110,000. Director Rae said the price is good for 90 days and could increase if we wait until spring. The smoothness of the ride will be improved, which is a nice secondary when you work on the seams. We are losing a lot of water with the seams as is. He said if you ask Safe Slide, they say you should get gel coated every 7 years and we are at 19 years. Commissioner Jo Marie Kadrmas said based on priority, what has been shifted down if we work on these slides. Director Rae said there isn't anything, this was already in the plans. He doesn't think doing this project will prohibit any other projects from being done. President Scott Karsky said this is money we have in facility improvements. Commissioner Zach Keller said he doesn't see why we wouldn't get on the schedule to get done this fall. Commissioner Tim Daniel agreed. MOTIONED BY: Tim Daniel; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to approve the Safe Slide Proposal for slide renovation not to exceed \$110,000. Roll call vote: Ayes-4; Nays-0; Absent-1 (Stevenson). Motion carried.

BOARD WORKSHOP

Review Preliminary Budget – Executive Director Benjamin Rae said there are 2 overriding principles – are we looking to manage growth and are we budgeting to manage inflationary costs. Both for the WRCC and General Fund we try to take a conservative approach. He feels good about where some are. Some areas where we will see growth in revenue is the ice center and memberships at WRCC. Programs do not have a significant impact on the budget. For the golf course we are being conservative but are still expecting strong revenues from the course. For Patterson Lake, lease payments are small and have declined with land sales with us being down to 4 properties. He showed where we are in the 2023 budget, to date amount and budget amount for 2024. The board has the next week to review before approving next week. He went on to review expenses showing highlighted in yellow are areas that were already in the budget, but we chose to separate out in its own line item. Landscaping and contracted labor are just a few. He gave an overview starting with personnel and the increase in costs for healthcare. We are budgeting for a 3-5 percent increase for full-time wages with 3 percent being the standard. At 3 percent we would be at the low end of what other park districts are doing. The vast majority are at 5 percent. He feels comfortable with the 3-5 percent. Our part-time wages on average are a 7-10 percent growth in those areas. Administrative costs, areas of increase are fuel and technology; cost of software and providing more digital services which is the standard. For programs overall, we are recovering most of our costs in fees, the amount of increase is due to supplies. Parks is due to the cost of supplies. Ice center has increased towards maintenance related and cost of supplies. Overall, the general fund budget is a 9 percent increase from 2023, partly covered by mill levy and increase in fees. President Scott Karsky commended on how they tackled the budget this year involving staff. He said that the increase is just keeping

up with inflation over the last few years. He asked about mill levy. Director Rae said if we go with staff recommendations which is to maintain capital, less than 1 mill is the total increase in mill levy. The impact on the average homeowner is 20-30 dollars per year, .8 percent increase in overall property taxes. Commissioner Kadrmas asked about what we get from the state. Director Rae said we get 13 percent from the city based on sales tax revenue; we estimate. He said the state portion comes in monthly based on sales tax revenue. We want to be conservative and don't want to base our operations on ebbs and flows. We budgeted for some growth but are still being conservative; if we see a dip, it will not impact on our operations. Our emergency fund is only about \$100,000 right now – if we see increases, he would like to add to the emergency fund. He would like to see the fund be closer to a million. Commissioner Tim Daniel asked if there are any indications from the city or county on their mill levies. Director Rae said the school district is going out to bond for a new school, but he doesn't know what the city or county is doing. We will meet again next Wednesday to approve the preliminary budget and will get a first look at the proposed fee schedule that would be approved at the regular August meeting.

Projects Discussion – Executive Director Benjamin Rae reviewed projects for 2024. This doesn't have to be approved as part of our budget, it's just for priority purposes. On the admin side, our electric sign on State Avenue, the technology is not supported any longer; we're looking to replace the sign, not the structure. Our copy machine is 8 years old and needs to be replaced. The parks side is baseball turf replacement, playground replacement plan, new parks fleet vehicle and want to replace our 1982 Ford truck. We would like a bobcat tool cat mower for sports complex, sports complex playground and adding electronic locks to park restrooms. He said restroom access was a high priority item based on the community survey. For Patterson Lake, we are working on a bridge connection for the Crooked Crane Trail that is being done through the state grant. Because of easement challenges, we want to at least get the bridge portion done to extend the trail. Other electrical upgrades to the campground to provide more 50-amp service to campsites but could drop off to a future and not be in 2024. For the ice center, Zamboni replacement, floor scrubber and benches. At the golf course, irrigation, range ball machine and spider mower to help on steep hillsides. Debt payments/future projects are infrastructure bond payments of \$110,000 per year and unencumbered future funds of 20% of mill levy for future facilities. For the WRCC Fund, he noted the slide repairs, railing for indoor slides, and lobby remodel. Director Rae said we have a more comprehensive list, but these are the things that are most important now. He reviewed the project financing showing capital betterment we are about \$40,000 over so we'll need to make some adjustments. In capital funds we have \$661,380 currently in fund with \$316,000 encumbered. He reviewed previous projects that the board has already acted on but haven't been completed. The Gress Complex irrigation for \$25,000; Heroes Park for \$61,000; garbage cans/benches for \$7,000; HRGC maintenance buildings for \$150,000; Crooked Crane Trail parking for \$8,000; WRIC storage for \$10,000; Memorial Park Tree Plan for \$10,000; WRCC maintenance road for \$20,000 and the skate park bowl for \$25,000. Commissioner Kadrmas asked about the skate park bowl. Director Rae said money was set aside for the bowl but hasn't been completed and we believe it will cost more than \$25,000 to complete that project. Commissioner Daniel asked if we have received comments from skate park participants. Director Rae said yes, but if you look at the survey it came in low priority. However, for those in the skate park community, not having a bowl is a huge setback. He said he believes we were throwing around \$50,000 to complete.

Executive Director Rae added that starting at the regular August meeting, there will be an approval of the agenda along with a consent agenda that will be taken care of in one motion like minutes and claims. He said he will hopefully have the survey results at the August meeting as well.

Adjournment – MOTIONED BY: Jo Marie Kadrmas; SECONDED BY: Zach Keller to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 am. Upon vote, all aye. Motion carried.

PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Clerk

President