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Oct - 2023

### **Monthly Insight into the Elizabeth Park & Rec District**

# ***EPR*** connections

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## ***Dog Park to be Relocated***



As the District prepares for the construction of a new artificial turf ballfield and pickleball courts in Casey Jones Park, staff are planning to relocate the dog park to a new area as shown in the Casey Jones Master Plan. The dog park will be moved to an area just east of the church property and west of the roadway through the park. The area contains many trees and will therefore offer shade as well as more space for dogs and their friends to play. Our plan is to expand the fencing over time and to include a separate area for small dogs that may require space away from the larger pups. Sponsorship opportunities are available to help purchase amenities for the new dog park for those interested in wanting to help support the project. Give us a call to learn more.

## **A Shout Out to the Board of Directors**

If you didn't know, the Elizabeth Park and Recreation District is a Special District led by an elected Board of Directors. The current board consists of President Kelly Moffatt, Vice-President Kurt Prinslow, Secretary Dondi Connelley, and Treasurer Doug Severinsen. Kelly and Dondi have served on the Board since 2016 when the current Executive Director was hired, while Doug and Kurt have served since 2018 and 2021 respectively. There is currently one vacant seat.

These four residents of the Elizabeth Community collectively supervise the Executive Director and are committed to seeing that the District continually strives to meet or exceed resident expectations and improve the local quality of life through parks, programs, and service. They also ensure that the District is fiscally responsible with tax payer dollars and that residents receive value from the District. They are responsible for reviewing and approving the annual budget for the District and for allocating funds for operations and capital improvements. Most importantly, they are responsible for developing a vision for what type of park and recreation system they believe the community desires.

Although the Board typically only meets 12-16 times per year for regular monthly meetings and study / planning sessions, each of these individuals spends many more hours each month reviewing District finances, operational reports, and planning documents, as well as talking with friends and neighbors about how to better serve the community. They truly try to understand what residents want from the District and ensure that these wants are explored and pursued as feasible. They value resident input and often place your expressed needs above their own ideas for system improvements.

As the Executive Director, I am extremely fortunate to work with these four community leaders, and I just wanted to make sure that you all know the individuals behind the curtain making everything work here at the District. Tell

## Casey Jones' Haunted Halloween Haven Saturday, October 28, 6pm-8pm



Bring the kiddos by Casey Jones Park and join us for an evening of Halloween fun. The pavilion is being transformed into a haunted maze and there will be plenty of tricks and treats for all. Hayrides through the Black Forest of the park will also be offered.  
**This is a free event!**

## EPR Annual Adult Flag Football Tournament

Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup> - Evans Park

Gather your team and get registered now for the opportunity to be crowned Elizabeth's Champs of the Gridiron for 2023. This double-elimination tournament never fails to provide lots of fun competition and excitement. It has also been accompanied by early season snow in recent years, so always an exciting day.

Format is no contact 5v5, all players eligible, and there are no rules regarding gender. Teams may roster up to 10 players and all players must be at least 16 years old. Flags are provided during play.

Cost is \$225/team, with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams receiving awards. Space is limited and registration will close when tournament is full.. Register at [www.elizabethpr.com](http://www.elizabethpr.com) or by calling us at 303.646.3599

## Youth Basketball

Do not miss out on the opportunity to register your child for our youth basketball program. Unlike our outdoor youth sports, which are able to accommodate all youth that register within the posted registration timeframe, basketball registration will end once an age division reaches its maximum enrollment. Maximum enrollments are set based on the number of practice days / times that we are able to secure within the schools. If you delay much longer, there may not be spots available for your child to play this coming season. It's unfortunate, though there are just not enough gyms in the community to accommodate all youth that want to play.

Teams begin practicing in early January, with the first games scheduled on January 13<sup>th</sup>. Teams practice 1-2 times per week and play games on Saturday through March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Age divisions include: 6-8, 8-10, 10-12 (youth bridging two divisions should register for most appropriate division based on size and skill level). Cost is \$90/player. Register at [www.elizabethpr.com](http://www.elizabethpr.com) or call the park office at 303.646.3599

## Is the Score really that Important?

### Valuing Children is More Important than Winning

How important is winning in a youth flag football game between 4-6 year olds? You may call me woke, though I will proudly share my opinion that it shouldn't matter. In most instances, it seems that it is the adults who are really the ones driving competition between children that are simply trying to learn and develop new skills at a time when the focus should be on inclusion and fun. More specifically, it is usually the coaches that place a personal desire to win over the rights of all players to get a turn to run the ball. After all, in 4-6 flag football, offensive players are either running the ball or watching someone else run the ball. These kids are not running pass routes and blocking is prohibited. At this age, shouldn't every player have an opportunity to carry the ball at least once and show mom and dad in the stands the skills they are learning in practice? If I'm a coach prioritizing winning, I'm simply going to have my best player carry the ball every play. The other kids really will not get much of a chance to do anything on offense, but at least I will win. I can sneak the more unskilled players in on a few defensive plays. Their parents will understand that their children are just not that good and we need to win, right? In highschool, perhaps, but certainly not at 5 years old. Competing and wanting to win, and putting forth the effort to achieve those goals are certainly values we want our children to learn, but let's at least wait until they know how to keep score. I encourage us all to place more value on helping these young children learn to play and develop a love of athletics over trying to pad our ego as a coach by getting a win. Program rules can go only so far to promote the right of every child to occasionally carry the ball. It requires compassion and empathy from a coach to recognize that every child on the team wants the chance to score a touchdown and be a hero, not just the best player. It truly is OK if we lose, let's just give all these kids a chance.