



Wednesday, August 12th, 2026
Grafton Park Board Room
715 West 5th Street
Grafton, ND 58237
5:15 p.m.

Minutes:

- I. Call to Order by Kristi Olson at 5:15 PM
- II. Board Members Present:
 - A. Board Members Present: Kristi Olson, Scott Hills, Cory Burns, Jon Jelinek, Darrin Wollitz
 - B. Staff Present: William Dahl, Matt Oppegard, Gabbi Holand
 - C. Media Present: Todd Morgan
 - D. Public Present: Jon Markusen
- III. Kristi asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. Bill moved the Pool section of the Director's Report up after approvals. Kristi added wasp issue at Schumacher Park to the Parks section under the Director's Report.
- IV. Kristi asked for approval of the minutes from the July Park Board Meeting held on 07/08/2026 & the Budget Meeting held on 08/04/2026. Jon J. made a motion to approve the minutes from the July Park Board Meeting and the Budget Meeting. Seconded by Darrin, the motion passed all approved.
- V. Kristi asked for a motion for the authorization of expenditures as listed. Cory made a motion to approve the expenditures as listed. Seconded by Scott, the motion passed all approved to pay bills.
- VI. Matt will have the bank statement report ready for the next Park Board Meeting.
- VII. Reports:
 - A. Director
 1. Pool:
 - i. Jon Markusen presented the next step of the pool project which is the design phase. He explained that there will be Electrical, Structural, and Mechanical engineering done during this phase. KLJ will continue to work with Foss Architecture and has an Aquatic Consultant contract for Associated Pool Builders. Jon M. explained that the total estimated cost of this phase is \$360,000, but this contract is for the 1st piece of the next phase. This contract includes \$167,050 for KLJ for their engineering work, \$5,000 for Associated Pool Builders consulting, and \$1,600 for Braun Intertec for more soil samples. Jon M. stressed that time needs to be taken for the design phase to make sure everything is designed the way Grafton Parks would like. Any changes made after the design phase is completed will prompt a change order that will add extra fees to the pool project. Kristi explained the need to get community input at a forum. Bill asked Jon M. if that was a good idea with the fear of getting too many ideas that the budget cannot afford. Jon M. explained the pros and cons of getting public feedback noting that people can feel left out either way. Have the forum and end up cutting their idea due to the budget constraints, they can feel that we are not listening or taking their idea seriously. Same as not having a public forum, people feel

like we are not listening to the public's wants. Cory made a motion to approve the contracts presented by Jon Markusen with KLJ Engineering and consulting from Associated Pool Builders for a total of \$173,650. Darrin seconded the motion, motion passed all approved.

- ii. Bill informed the Park Board that Unity Medical Center has committed to donating \$1.8 million to the pool project. Matt explained that \$300,000 of the \$1.8 million was collected up front. Bill asked the Park Board members to thank the Unity Medical Center board of directors if they see them around town. Their commitment to the health and future of Grafton and the surrounding area is greatly appreciated. The pool project would not be possible without their generous support.
- iii. Scott wanted to make a motion to rescind the approval from the July Park Board meeting allocating \$50,000 a year for 5-years to be a founding member of the Red River Rural Communities Foundation (RRRCF). Bill asked Scott to wait to make the motion to rescind until after the RRRCF stakeholders' informational meeting. Bill explained that the Public Stakeholder Forum will be a structured presentation from the North Dakota Community Foundation (NDCF) and the Red River Rural Communities Foundation (RRRCF) with a question-and-answer session to follow. Bill asked the Board Members to attend the meeting, listen to both sides, and ask all the questions they have to the experts that will be present so they can fully explain their services so the Park Board can make an informed decision. Kristi read parts of minutes from previous meetings and asked why the NDCF contract that was sent to Kristi Wilfahrt after that meeting was never presented to the Park Board and signed. Bill explained that there was an email from Amy Stromsodt with NDCF that explained that we needed to wait until there was a donor that wanted to make an endowed contribution of \$25,000 or more before the contract could be signed and the endowment account opened. We had not received that size of an endowed commitment yet. Bill explained at the meeting that Amy presented the NDCF information, Dave Hills with the Grafton Blue Line Club, our Park Board members, and the Grafton Parks & Recreation Foundation Board members it was discussed after Amy left that if we cannot move the endowed funds out of the NDCF then do we want to look at the option of creating our own with "boots on the ground" to help grow those funds. Bill explained that Dave Hills has been apart of the meetings throughout the process to develop and explore what a separate foundation created to accept endowed and non-endowed gifts would look like. Scott explained that he is in favor of a foundation set up to receive endowed gifts with a person hired to continue to raise funds, but worries that we will be giving up too much control and not receive the representation that we originally thought we would get if we partnered with the Red River Regional Council (RRRC). Bill explained that Kristi W. sent out the by-laws for the Red River Rural Communities Foundation (RRRCF) that directs the foundation as to how much support is given to each of the founding organizations and the scope of each of their fundraising needs. The RRRCF by-laws and supporting documents that were shared by email are not finalized and if we need anything added we can still do so before they go out to be reviewed by a lawyer. Bill went on to explain that all the questions that the Park Board is presenting would be excellent questions to bring to Monday's stakeholders meeting. Kristi O. explained a donor contacted her that wants his money back if the Park Board moves forward with being a founding member of the RRRCF. Bill explained that donor will be invited to this stakeholder meeting so this individual can get the same information as everyone else and will also have the opportunity to ask questions. Bill asked

Scott if he would table the discussion to rescind the motion to be a founding member of the RRRCF until after Monday's stakeholders meeting. Scott explained that he will table it if the rest of the board agrees to attend the stakeholder meeting. The Park Board agreed to attend the meeting and table the motion to rescind the approval of being a founding member of the RRRCF until after the stakeholder forum on Monday, August 17th at 6:30pm. Darrin has been asked why the Park Board is funding the RRRCF with a \$250,000 donation. Bill explained that is misinformation and shows the importance of attending all meetings. The RRRCF founding member commitment is \$50,000 a year for 5-years with the idea that future commitments would be reduced to the point of not being needed since the funds held within the RRRCF would have the same administration fee set up that the NDCF has and charges for their different types of funds they hold, but with the RRRCF those fees would go to off-set the costs of capital campaign fundraiser position and all other expenses needed to run their office. The 5-year, \$50,000 annual commitment is earmarked to be paid from the pool fund from the Grafton Park Board's building fund, which was discussed at the July Park Board meeting when the motion to allocate those funds was approved. All donations and commitments made to the pool project along with the sales tax collections go to the Grafton Parks & Recreation Foundation and are held in their Pool Project Fund. Pool project donation checks written to Grafton Parks & Recreation are deposited into the Park Board account then transferred to the Grafton Parks & Recreation Foundation's account for the pool project fund. The Grafton Parks & Recreation Foundation's funds are held at 1st United Bank separate from the funds held by the Grafton Park Board at Choice Bank. The reason this was set up this way was due to public perception. We had past false accusations of using previous youth sports fundraising for Park Board general fund items not related to what was being fundraised. Once the GPR Foundation was organized we took that opportunity to make sure there were zero ties between the fundraised funds held with the GPR Foundation and the Grafton Park Board's funds. Darrin explained that he would like more reports of funds raised for the pool project. Bill explained that Matt can get those numbers for anyone that would like to see them, but there are confidentiality issues with showing too much information. Darrin explained that fund totals would be fine with him. Darrin expressed distrust with Kristi Wilfahrt. Bill explained that she has raised \$2.7 million in donations and pledge commitments with more commitments on the fence that will be going to the pool project. If it was just Parks Staff working on fundraising, we would only have \$50,000. There will always be a need for a paid fundraising consultant to help fund future capital projects. Bill explained that the Centennial Center arena floor has exceeded its life expectancy and could need replacing soon. The total estimated cost of replacing the arena floor is \$1 million. In 5 years, that cost could increase to \$1.5 million. Kristi O. explained that the Grand Forks, East Grand Forks Foundation has a director that is tasked to fundraising. Bill explained that they hire people to fundraise for that foundation and are paid through fees collected on the funds that they hold in their accounts. Kristi O. was going to do more research on how they operate. Kristi O. asked why we couldn't just have the Grafton Parks & Recreation Foundation get set-up to accept and hold endowments. Matt explained that their by-laws and founding documentation would need a complete overhaul to meet the federal guidelines to accept and hold endowed funds. Bill explained that at the last stakeholder meeting he asked the NDCF if they would help us raise the funds needed. Amy with NDCF explained that it is up to each entity to hire a capital

fund development consultant to grow the funds that are kept with them. NDCF collects a 1% administrative fee from the total of the endowed funds held with them and the Park Board must fund a capital campaign consultant with their own funds. At Monday's stakeholder meeting maybe NDCF will come up with a way they can help offset the costs of hiring a year-round capital fundraising position since they will get the benefit of more funds being held by them which will increase the amount they would collect from the administrative fees. Bill explained that the only way to get the answers needed is to ask them at Monday's meeting where the experts will be present to give answers.

2. Parks

- i. Bill reported that Lori Osowski donated the grain bin to the Corn Maze. The grain bin will be used as a shelter for the corn pit.
- ii. Bill asked the Park Board to drive past Monarch Alley downtown on Hill Ave. The turf has been installed, and the fence is being installed today. A water hydrant has also been installed so the planter that is planned to be installed will be able to be watered. Bill explained that this will be a nice addition to the downtown area. Bill asked the Park Board to thank the Grafton Beautification Committee members if they see any of them around town.
- iii. Kristi O. explained that there is a wasp issue at Schumacher Park under the merry-go-round. Bill explained that the park staff was unaware of the issue until Kristi called Bill last night about it. If the wasps are in the sand under the merry-go-round that it will take a professional pest service to get them removed. The sand may have to be removed and replaced with new sand if insecticide is used. Bill will have the area fenced off and contact Ecolab to see what they can do to eradicate the wasps.
- iv. Bill asked Jon J. to thank his mother for the Buster & Helen Schumacher Memorial Bench. Bill explained that the park bench looks very nice and is a great addition to the park.

3. Campground:

- i. Bill reported that Cabin 10 has been delivered and windows will be installed in the next week or 2.
- ii. Bill informed the Park Board that Todd caught PDQ Port-a-Pots dumping waste from their port-a-pot route in the campground. Later that day Bill noticed the sewer backing up to the Cabin 10 connection. Bill thanked Corry for having the city crew work on the issue to quickly resolve it before the busy weekend. The sewer was clogged at a point that stopped the flow from the entire campground, the rental house, and parks office building. Bill asked the Park Board to stop any Port-a-Pot company from dumping in our campground if they happen to see them when driving through Leistikow Park. We do not have a contract or agreements with any of them. They are not allowed to dump in our campground. Bill invoiced PDQ \$300 for the cost of unclogging the sewer.

4. Arenas:

- i. Bill reported that new Co-Ray-Vac tubes will be picked up when the Grafton Blue Line Club picks up the new gates in the Minneapolis area. The tubes are estimated to cost about \$2,300. Volunteers will replace the Co-Ray-Vac tubing.
- ii. Russ Geddes is checking of the price of new light fixtures for the Centennial Center. Early estimates are around \$8,000 for new fixtures over the ice surface. Bill explained how much brighter it is in the new rink compared to the Centennial Center.

- iii. The Grafton Blue Line Club has notified Bill and Matt that they will cover the costs to run the Chad Demers Athletic Center for the first year or two to see how it goes. Matt explained that due to this development the contracts with North Stars Youth Hockey and Grafton Schools will not change this year. The Blue Line Club will collect payments for usage of the new facility.

5. Athletic Fields:

- i. Bill reported that the south Complex field scoreboard is still scheduled to be installed later this fall. The scoreboard will be ready before next season's games.

6. Elmwood:

- i. Bill will be applying for the Grafton Community Foundation Annual Grant for the Elmwood Board to add a shelter to the cement patio that they had installed earlier this summer.

B. Recreation Manager

- i. Gabbi extended a thank you to all the Corn Maze sponsors. The admission prices are staying the same thanks to their support (\$8 adult & \$5 child, Free for Kids 4 & under). Gabbi explained that we are adding a large soccer target activity to the corn maze thanks to the support from our sponsors. Every weekend there will be foster pets at the corn maze where guests can meet and adopt a foster animal.
- ii. Registrations are open and online for Figure Skating, Learn-to-Skate Hockey, and Gymnastics.
- iii. Ticket sales for Sip & Swim pool project fundraising event have not been going well. Only 2 were sold at the Parks Office. If you want a ticket, stop into the office or see Kristi Olson or Kristen Pastorek who are selling tickets as well. Each ticket is being sold for \$20 and includes 1 drink ticket to use at the event. Last Chance Bar & Grill is lined up to sell alcohol at the pool for the event. Sip & Swim will be Wednesday, October 19th at 6pm-8pm.

C. Business Manager:

- i. The final reading of the Grafton Park Board 2027 Budget will take place on Tuesday, September 9th at 5:15pm at the Grafton Parks Office Board Room (715 West 5th Street).

X. Old Business:

XI. New Business:

XII. Public Comments:

XIII. Adjournment: Kristi asked for adjournment. Jon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Darrin seconded the motion, motion passed all approved. Meeting adjourned at 5:59 pm.