



Wednesday, December 18th, 2024
Facility Committee Meeting
Centennial Center Lobby
722 West 15th Street
Grafton, ND 58237
12:00 p.m.

Minutes:

- I. Call to Order by Cory Burns at 12:10pm
 - A. Board Members Present: Cory Burns, Kristi Olson, Scott Hills, Jon Jelinek, Darrin Wollitz
 - B. Staff Present: Bill Dahl, Matt Oppgaard
 - C. Foundation Board Members Present: Mike Shereck, Amy Geiger
 - D. Public Present: Nick Ziegelmann (City of Grafton), Darren Albrecht (Grafton Public Schools), Vonda Collette (Beautification Committee), Molly Zahradka (North Valley Tech School)
- II. Facility:
 - i. After introductions from all that were present at the meeting, Kristi Wilfahrt presented her findings from the Quasi-Feasibility Study that she compiled over the past 4 months. Kristi interviewed 48 community leaders that either would be pivotal partnerships or would have funding capacities to help move the project forward. Kristi asked questions from 6 different categories to gauge the public perceptions of Grafton Parks & Recreation, the Park Board, the outdoor pool, support for the pool project, feasibility of the project, possible leaders/doners, and their willingness to give/participate. Kristi quickly found out that the public perception was to investigate building a year-round indoor pool with a focus on fitness if the outdoor pool was going to cost \$7-8 million. Support for an outdoor pool was 20% while the support for an indoor facility was 80%. There is a strong feeling of nostalgia for the outdoor pool. Kristi mentioned that the public perception of Grafton Parks is that there is strong leadership, accomplish a lot with little resources, and have made great accomplishments over the last 10-15 years. Kristi also noted that public perception of the Park Board, Director, and staff is very positive. The public does feel that Grafton Parks is understaffed and question if they would have the knowledge and/or ability to run a Fitness Center. Kristi also noted that the public believes that there are no deferred maintenance plans for any of the park buildings. Kristi mentioned that an endowment fund would need to be started to handle any deferred maintenance of a new facility. Kristi explained that there is a 40% tax credit available to those who donate to an endowment fund. According to discussions with a couple Financial Advisors in the area, there is a lot of excess cash in the area, but no plan on what to do with it other than leave it for the next generation. Kristi also noted that there is a feeling of donor fatigue from a few of those interviewed. Kristi also discussed the disjointed relationship between youth hockey and Grafton Parks. There are many variables that contribute to this, from the relationship between Grafton and Park River along with the overall hockey perception of Grafton Parks.
 - ii. There are 3 options that should be considered when building the pool project. Option 1 is to build an indoor facility with extra amenities with a projected cost to be determined. Option 2 is a new outdoor pool with an estimated cost of \$7-8 million. Option 3 is to fix the current outdoor pool with an estimated cost of \$5 million. Kristi W. mentioned that the overwhelming majority of those interviewed want to see the indoor facility. She brought it up to Bill and was happy that Grafton Parks was open to exploring the indoor facility as an option. Bill explained that we needed to do our due diligence to the community by exploring what the community wants. Kristi W. explained that this project is not being driven by Grafton Parks, it is being driven by the community. Kristi W., Bill,

and Matt met with John Staley, a consultant with extensive experience assisting the efficient and successful administration of community-based organizations. Kristi worked with John during the Choice Fitness facility project when John was the Executive Director of the Grand Forks Park District. John suggested reaching out to Donna Jarmusz from IBIS Enterprises. Donna has experience with Health Fitness Facility projects in Grand Forks, ND and Minot, ND. Vonda, Molley, and Kristi O. spoke to how impressed they were with Donna's expertise in building business plans for public facilities. Bill explained that IBIS has 30 years of experience in building business plans for public facilities. IBIS has the resources to build a business plan for a facility that Grafton can afford. Kristi W. explained that the indoor facility will be a heavy lift. Vonda noted that no one entity or person will be able to accomplish this goal. It will need to be a community effort. Kristi has had discussions with Unity Medical Center and Life Skills & Transition Center. Both entities are interested in being a partner. Kristi explained that Dawn Mandt may have a Planning Grant available through the Red River Regional Council. Kristi W. feels it is imperative that we develop a plan for the legislative approach. The state has history funding building projects like this one. The latest example is the Children's Museum in Grand Forks. Kristi explained that it will take 3.5 years to fundraise for an indoor facility and will take \$250,000 in the first year to develop the project.

- iii. Kristi explained the challenges and benefits unique to Grafton. Also mentioned that timing has some challenges and benefits as well. Sports Acceleration is underserved in the Grafton area and would be a great benefit to the community to have a facility that would be able to fill that void. Vonda explained the need for an indoor fitness facility similar to the one in Perham, MN. Vonda was one of those that toured the facility on a weekday in November. The 70,000 sq. ft. facility was packed with all different kinds of activities going on at once. Amy G. explained that she used to work at the pool in the late 90's as a lifeguard and at that time she was expected to perform the backwash. The pool was scary at that time and she's shocked that it is still able to function after all these years. Amy is afraid that we waited too long to do something. Darrin W. explained that this facility is needed now. Many of the family activities have been disappearing in the community and the movie theater is not getting much support. To have a place for families to spend time together is very important. Kristi explained that the IBIS study is imperative to the legislative approach. Bill and Kristi met with Economic Development to ask to cover the IBIS fee of \$75,000. They were interested in helping. Kristi W. is confident that she will be able to fundraise \$25,000 for this study. Kristi W. asked for everyone's input. Darren A. explained that the Grafton High School expansion project would not have been possible without all the people that worked on the study prior to seeking funding for the project. Vonda explained that it is important to have a study done by a neutral party with the right skillset that IBIS has to produce an accurate report. IBIS Enterprises study will let us know the size and type of facility the community can afford. Bill asked if anyone would like to make a motion to use \$25,000 of the Pool Fund to go towards the \$75,000 fee to hire IBIS Enterprises to develop a business plan to determine the feasibility of developing a indoor facility as a community partnership project in the Grafton, ND area. Kristi O. made a motion to approve the recommendation to the Grafton Park Board to allocate \$25,000 of the Pool Fund to go towards the \$75,000 fee to hire IBIS Enterprises to develop a business plan to determine the feasibility of developing a health and wellness center in Grafton, ND pending the ability to secure \$50,000 from other sources. Jon seconded the motion, motion passed all approved.

III. New Business:

IV. No Public Comments:

V. Adjournment: Motion by Jon, second by Kristi, motion passed all approved. Meeting adjourned at 1:18pm.