**Elizabeth Park and Recreation District**

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**MEETING MINUTES**

November 19, 2024 - 7:00 pm

Meeting to be held at:

Park Office Building – Evans Park

34201 County Road 17, Elizabeth, CO 80107

I Call to Order / Roll Call / Pledge of Allegiance

Kelly called the meeting to order at 7:02pm and led the pledge of allegiance. Other Board Members present included Kurt Prinslow, Aleta Jeffress, and Doug Severinsen by phone. Mike Barney and Ryan Staley were present from staff. Bill Mock and Zac Craig were present from the public.

II Approval of Minutes –Regular Meeting on October 15, 2024

Kelly made a motion to approve the minutes from October 15, 2024. Aleta 2nd the motion and all approved.

III Approval of Agenda

Kelly asked if there were any items that needed to be added to the meeting agenda. Kurt requested that he would like to address the EC West development and outstanding consent overlap agreement under continued business. Kelly then motioned to approve the agenda with the addition of the EC West matter under continued business. Kurt 2nd and all approved.

IV Communications to the Board

- Citizen Comment (citizens may address the Board on any topic for up to 2-minutes – additional time may be granted at the discretion of the Board President)

V Continued Business

- Master Plan Project Update

Mike reviewed the latest project update with the Board. He stated that the project team which includes he and Kurt as well as Town and School District reps along with the consultant team continue to meet bi-weekly and conduct community outreach efforts. He shared that the team has met with or soon will be meeting with a variety of stakeholders including the Elbert County Wranglers, Elizabeth Stampede, Town Trustees, Library District, Independence and Spring Valley neighborhood associations, and County Commissioners. He stated that the meeting with the Commissioners is being held off until the new Commissioners take office. Ryan shared that he had recently spoke with the consultants as well regarding park maintenance operations, capacities, and system needs. Mike stated that the consultants will meet with the District Board again on January 14th to gather additional input and feedback. Kurt asked whether there has been outreach to the many homeowner associations and how that was going. Mike responded that the HOA groups for which we had contact information were contacted to be made aware of the project and that he spoke with Jo Kelly from Bonnie Ridge HOA who expressed that she had received communication from the project consultants. Mike said that he believes the communication was primarily asking the HOAs’ to share project info with residents, invite them to the community workshop, and make them aware of the project website. Kurt expressed that there needs to be a focused effort to obtain an inventory of HOA resources and properties that could potentially be considered for park and recreation or trail improvements as a part of the master plan. He informed Mike that he would not be at the project update meeting on Wednesday and that Mike should bring this up. Mike agreed this was a critical component of the project and said he would discuss this need with the project team and discuss how an inventory can be developed.

Mike then shared that a community workshop is scheduled for December 11th at 5pm at Elizabeth High School and that this will be an attempt to gather input from residents. He explained that there will be surveying activities, as well as interactive stations where the project team will solicit input and feedback from attendees on the ideal park system for the community. He added that there will be childcare provided to allow parents to participate, and that food will also be served. He said project team efforts over the next few weeks will be dedicated to promoting the workshop and encouraging attendance.

- Review 2025 Capital Outlay Budget

Mike then presented the current proposed list of capital projects / purchases for 2025. He stated that he would like the Board to review the list a final time and determine what they want to include in the budget for the upcoming year. He expressed that the total amount of the allocation needs to be identified so that he can finalize the budget for the December budget hearing. He then listed each item on the list and discussed its priority level.

The first two items described were new rubber safety surfacing for the Evans Park playground at $35,000 and paving of the new roadway to serve the pickleball courts and artificial turf field in Casey Jones Park at $160K. Mike stated that both these items would be significant park system improvements though were not critical needs. Ryan commented that the playground safety surfacing project would make the Evans Park playground fully accessible, and that would be a very significant improvement for certain members of our community with accessibility challenges.

The next item was an alarm system for the well pump which Mike encouraged the Board to fund so as to prevent future pump failure should well levels drop. He said we have been fortunate that well levels have remained steady since the previous alarm system stopped operating, though the investment in the well pump alarm would provide protection should the level ever drop unexpectedly.

Mike then shared the next two items on the list which were the interest and premium payments for the District’s lease-purchase agreements. The first being for the purchase of the 91-acres adjacent to Casey Jones Park in 2020 which requires an annual payment of $115,102 through 2035. He noted that the balance can be paid-off early anytime after January of 2027 should the Board desire that option. The second lease-purchase liability was for funding part of the pickleball / artificial turf field project within Casey Jones Park and was initiated in 2024. This requires an annual payment of $202,174 through 2033. He stated that this total allocation for debt of $317,276 must be funded in the 2025 budget.

Mike then moved to the next item, a proposed pedestrian crosswalk between Evans and Casey Jones Parks. He stated that the estimate for design and engineering is $15,000 and that the actual cost of constructing the crossing and park accesses was yet to be determined but could range between $150K to $300K depending upon the complexity of the design that is needed. He shared that the design could be challenging due to the existing grades and need to meet ADA standards. He stated that he has received one proposal for the design / engineering to date and is expecting a second proposal soon. He said he has not listed any dollars for the construction costs in the proposed capital budget but did include the design /engineering costs and asked how the Board may want to proceed with this project. He offered that the funds for the paving of the Casey Jones entrance could be reallocated for this project and the paving could be pursued in the future, or the Board could decide to add $150K to the current budget and complete both projects in 2025, though the total cost for the crosswalk could be higher than $150,000 . Kurt commented that Mike should be sure to include owners representation costs with Capital AE to manage the project.

The next listed items were a new Zero-turn mower that Mike said is needed to replace a mower near the end of its life and a new leaf vac system to replace the current one. He said that both these items were high priority for maintenance operations.

The next item described was a security camera system for Evans Park and the Casey Jones Pavilion at a cost of $5,000. There was some board discussion with Ryan regarding which assets would get cameras on them within this proposal and the Board expressed a desire to ensure the pickleball courts and artificial turf field were included. Aleta commented that we should also consider including a camera near the proposed pedestrian crossing if it gets built.

Mike shared that the next item on the list is new signage for Casey Jones Park. He stated that Kurt requested this for 2024 though we did not get it done and the intent is to have signs at all entrances of the park with directional indicators to major park features. He stated that the allocation is $6,500 for the project. Kelly directed Mike to include some rules signs to be placed in the spectator area near the artificial turf field and that the signs should include language prohibiting the spitting of sunflower seeds.

The next item on the list that Mike shared was renovation of the walking trail near the pond in Evans Park. He explained that the trail has been deteriorating over the last several years and though they have made attempts to minimize erosion and destabilization and limit the loss of surfacing material, it has not made a significant difference. He expressed that the input of a professional trail consultant is needed to identify the best options and costs for making the trail sustainable. Kurt asked if the trail was a part of the disc-golf course and Mike explained that while some portions of the trail may be used by disc-golfers, the trail is primarily used by individuals and families desiring to walk a natural path through the woods. He stated that the disc-golfers most often utilize the single track paths that are generally off the main trail and connect the course from tee to basket. Kelly asked if it would really require $50,000 to repair the trail and inquired how the estimate was developed. Mike stated that he was not sure what the cost might be, though he shared that he has reached out to a trail consulting firm and has received a proposal for about $4500 to assess the trail system, identify the scope of work needed to address erosion and ensure it is sustainable, and develop a maintenance plan to guide staff in its trail maintenance activities. Ryan commented that the $50,000 general estimate was provided from a local landscaping firm he spoke with about the project. He said those costs were based on re-grading the trail, new soft surfacing, and for boulders that would be used for retaining walls where needed.

The final item presented was a net system for the artificial turf field at a proposed cost of $24,000. Mike stated that he increased the estimate from the last meeting based on input received to extend netting down the right field line. Kelly questioned how frequently balls are being hit onto County Road 17 and expressed that he attended most high school games this past season and did not believe it to be a pressing issue. He stated that he felt it is more important to consider netting around the back stop and first base side dugout areas to provide some protection for cars in the parking lot. Mike said that he would assess what can be done with netting in these areas to protect cars in the parking lot and provide the Board with some options and costs.

Kurt then asked about the replacement of cracked / uneven concrete in Evans Park just west of the pickleball courts and questioned whether this too should be included within the 2025 capital outlay budget. Mike stated that he had missed this project when putting together the list and that it should have been rolled forward from this current year as it was budgeted but not completed. Ryan confirmed that the trees had been removed, though portions of the sidewalks still needed to be replaced. The Board directed Mike to add $30K to the capital allocation to complete this project in 2025. Kurt suggested also pouring concrete in the green strip between the concrete pad and the sidewalks, where the trees had been located, though Ryan explained that the water line runs through that section and we would not want to bury it under concrete. He suggested that the green strip be xeriscaped with some drought resistant plants and small boulders which the Board supported.

Mike then thanked the Board for reviewing the list and explained that the real need for this evening is to approve the total capital allocation and not necessarily each individual project. He shared that the Board can prioritize and select which projects to pursue throughout the year, monitor actual expenses, and make any needed adjustments to the plan as they desire within the allocated dollars. He said they may also encounter unexpected needs during the year which may take priority over these previously identified projects / purchases and that they have a lot of flexibility in if or how the capital dollars will be expended. Kurt asked if the budget could afford the listed $637,875 plus an additional $30K for the concrete replacement, and Mike said that based on current 2025 projections, yes, the District could fund all of this and even a little more if desired while still maintaining the Board’s desired cash reserve. He pointed out that with an actual capital expenditure of $670K in 2025 as the Board desires, the District would have about $600K in cash at the end of 2025, which is within the desired reserve limits. Aleta suggested that the Board approve the $670K allocation for capital expenditures for 2025 and make decisions about which projects get completed as costs become better understood and the year progresses. Kelly asked Mike if a motion and vote was needed, and Mike stated that this would occur at the December 10 budget hearing when the Board will finalize and vote to adopt the 2025 budget.

- Review Updated 2025 Proposed Budget

Mike shared the current draft of the proposed 2025 budget and said there had been some edits since the October meeting as year-end costs become better understood. Kurt asked for clarification on how the property taxes are calculated and Mike shared that the assessed valuation received from the County Assessor is multiplied by the 2.466 mill levy (.002466). Mike commented that GF payroll of $303,649 would be lowered for the December budget hearing as he had moved Tina’s wages to the EF, and the capital outlay figure would be raised to $670K to account for the concrete replacement in Evans Park. He also noted that workers compensation and property & liability insurance has increased from around $33K in 2024 to $43K in 2025. He stated that this is due to increased premiums plus the addition of new park assets including the pickleball courts and the artificial turf field as well as childcare programming. Mike then discussed the EF budget, noting that program revenues will see a significant increase due to childcare programming being offered at two sites in 2025, generating an additional $170K. He noted that EF expenses will also increase due to childcare programming, though there will be a net positive revenue gain of about $75K over 2024. Mike also noted that the EF helps support the GF as shown through the $200K transfer listed in the budget. Mike encouraged the Board members to reach out to him should they have any questions upon further budget review, and shared that he will present the finalized budget at the December Meeting for any last minute changes and approval.

- EC West Development and Outstanding Overlap Consent Agreement

Kurt expressed that he was concerned about the lack of progress on executing the district overlap consent agreement. He stated that Craft companies had illegally secured approval for the proposed metro district and that this matter needs to be resolved. Mike stated that he requested to meet with Jim Yates two weeks ago, and that Jim had not gotten back to him as requested. He said he will reach out again and try to get a discussion scheduled and asked Kurt if he wanted to be included in the meeting. Kurt suggested it may be best to have him attend a Board Meeting or work session and discuss the issue before the entire Board, potentially including legal counsel to assist in negotiations. Mike stated that he would contact Jim to express the Board’s sense of urgency in discussing this matter and report back to them.

VI New Business

- Discuss Pedestrian Pathway between Casey Jones Park and Evans Park

Mike stated that he did not receive the second design / engineering proposal for the proposed pedestrian crosswalk as expected and requested to move this agenda item to the December meeting.

VII Legislative Matters

- Resolution Calling for the 2025 Regular District Election and Appointing a Designated Election Official

The Board reviewed the resolution, and Mike explained how the elections process would proceed. He stated that self-nomination forms would be available after January 1 and that he as the designated election official can accept self-nomination forms until close of business on February 28th. He said there will be 2 seats for two-year terms and 2 seats for four- year terms open and that any resident wanting to submit a form will need to identify which term, 2-year or 4-year, they want to run for. Aleta asked how it is decided which current Board Member a candidate will run against. Mike stated that he was not sure how that works exactly, though he said that he will ask legal to provide clarification. He noted however that neither Kelly nor Dondi can actually submit a self-nomination form due to term limits. He stated that either or both of them could be appointed to the Board after the election by current Board Members however, if there are vacant seats. He explained that if the District receives 4 or less self-nomination forms, the election could potentially be cancelled provided that the self-nominations align with the availability of 2 or 4 year terms. He gave an example that if the District receives 2 self-nomination forms for two year terms and 2 self-nomination forms for four year terms, then the election could be cancelled and all candidates would be considered elected. He said that if more self-nomination forms are received than seats available, the election will need to be held. Kurt then motioned to approve the resolution calling for 2025 regular district election and appointing a designated election official. Aleta 2nd and all approved.

VIII Report of Administrator and Staff

- Budget Report

Mike reviewed the budget report with the Board. He stated that a budget amendment would need to be approved by the Board for the GF to allocate additional funds due to the pickleball and artificial turf field projects exceeding projected costs. He shared that this will be on the December Meeting agenda. He reported that otherwise, the GF is projecting as expected for the year. He then shared the cash balance report, showing that on November 4th, the District had just under $826K in its accounts. He stated that he projects an additional $87K in revenues through the end of the year, and an additional $362K in expenses, leaving a year end balance of $551K.

- Maintenance Report

Ryan reviewed the maintenance report. He shared that the crew did a lot of snow removal following the last snow storm, cleaned up leaves, repaired a broken sprinkler mainline, winterized the irrigation systems, built a dumpster enclosure at Evans Park, rebuilt some picnic tables in the campground, cleaned the maintenance garage, raked pine needles in campground, and installed a new bulletin board station near the pickleball courts. Mike commented that he and the office in general regularly receive compliments from residents about the condition of Evans Park and wants to recognize the effort and commitment that Ryan, Mike Burns, Cameron Burrow, and Daniel Emig consistently put forth. He shared that the clearing of park sidewalks after the storm was a great example and provided residents with an opportunity to get out and walk their dogs without having to deal with feet of snow. Ryan shared that the team will focus on equipment maintenance, continued leaf clean-up, some fence repair, and rebuilding additional picnic tables over the next month.

- Programs Report

Mike shared the programs report prepared by Rebecca. Basketball registration remains open until December 1st. Current enrollment is about 60 less than last year, so we are hoping for additional registrations over the next two weeks. It was reported that the Wranglers are coordinating 6 basketball teams to play in the Arapahoe Youth League travelling program, and this could represent the 60 youth that we are currently down. Kelly asked where the Wranglers are practicing, and Mike shared that they were using the gym at Frontier. The report stated that drop-in pickleball is currently being offered at Frontier on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8-11am and that participants pay $5 at the door. We are averaging about 12 people per session. Registration is now open for adult co-ed volleyball which is played at the middle school and the season will start January 24th. Mike then shared that the District’s Christmas event will be held on December 14th from 1-3pm and will feature visits / pictures with Santa, refreshments, caroling, crafts for youth, and horse drawn carriage / sleigh rides. He invited the Board Members to stop by if they are free that day.

- Childcare Programs Report

Mike then reviewed the childcare programs report prepared by Tina. The District has finally received its state licensure for Singing Hills Elementary and has submitted its application for Running Creek Elementary. Fall break camp at Singing Hills had 13 youth registered out of the 15 sports available. Mike shared that he and Tina along with Karena Dohman, Director of Early Childhood with the school district, interviewed candidates for the site director position at Running Creek and selected Lisa Rustad. This part-time position will work under Tina’s supervision and lead the childcare team at Running Creek. Mike stated that he met with the County’s CCAP coordinator last week to discuss the program and that he concluded that the District should enroll as a provider and work with families to receive payments from CCAP so as to avoid losing revenues from providing financial assistance to families in need directly. Mike shared that Tina is beginning to already prepare for 2025 summer day camp operations as the goal is to open registrations in January to ensure residents can consider our programs to meet their family’s needs for childcare during the summer. He said that marketing for programs will be expanded and that Tina plans to reach into south Parker for the program at Singing Hills. He shared that the enrollment goal for each of the 2 sites will be 40 participants per week. Mike then shared that Tina is facilitating the District’s enrollment in the Colorado SHINES program, which provides a quality ranking for our childcare programs and enables us to become eligible for grant opportunities as well as higher reimbursement levels from CCAP. Aleta stated that she heard the arts programming at Running Creek Elementary had been reduced and that parents were upset, and asked if there may be an opportunity for the District to provide some enrichment type programming to help fill any gaps that may have been created. Mike said this may indeed be an opportunity, and that Tina was already actively thinking about enrichment type programming for pre-school students as no services are currently offered on Fridays. He said that he will talk with her about possibly offering enrichment programs for elementary students as well and assess what may be possible.

IX Other Matters

No other matters were discussed.

X Adjournment

Aleta made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45pm. Kurt 2nd and all approved.