**Elizabeth Park and Recreation District**

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**MEETING MINUTES**

September 17, 2024 - 7:00 pm

Meeting to be held at:

Casey Jones Pavilion – Casey Jones Park

4189 State Highway 86, Elizabeth, CO 80107

I Call to Order / Roll Call / Pledge of Allegiance

Kurt called the meeting to order at 7:08pm and led the pledge of allegiance. Other Board Members present included Dondi Connelley, Doug Severinsen, and Aleta Jeffress. Mike Barney and Ryan Staley were present from staff. Bill Mock, resident, was also present.

II Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting on August 20, 2024

Kurt asked if there were any edits to the meeting minutes from August 20th. There being none, Doug motioned to approve the minutes from August 20th. Kurt 2nd and all approved.

III Approval of Agenda

Kurt asked if he could add two items under “Other Matters” to the agenda before approval. The first item was regarding the campground host and the recent comments shared by a camper that Mike had forwarded to the Board. The second item was an update on the EC West development. Doug asked if we could also add the planting of trees near the artificial turf field under “Other Matters”. Dondi then made a motion to approve the meeting agenda with the addition of the three items requested under “Other Matters”. Doug 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)

Kurt asked Bill if he had anything to share with the Board. Bill shared that the Town of Elizabeth just approved the purchase of land for their proposed senior center facility and that they are moving forward with the project. He also shared that the lunch program continues at the American Legion and is being well-attended on Wednesdays.

V Continued Business

- Master Plan Project Update

Mike shared that the master plan project team, consisting of himself and Kurt from the District, Zach and Alexandra from the Town planning Department, and Franziska Johnson from the School District will be meeting with the project consultants tomorrow at Town Hall to kick things off. He shared the meeting agenda with the Board and then asked if they had any specific goals / objectives that they wanted to be mentioned as a part of the project kick-off meeting. Kurt stated that he wanted to ensure the plan provides a structure for the District to work with developers and seek contributions / commitments that align with the plan and assist in meeting plan goals and objectives. He explained that new developments should be addressed and that park and recreation amenities within the developments should be collaboratively planned between the District and the developer. He also stated that he wants to receive a plan that shows trail connectivity opportunities between existing and new developments and major park and recreation / public spaces.

Mike stated that he wants to ensure the planning effort includes specific outreach to residents to determine the community’s desire for the recreation center proposed within the Casey Jones Park master plan, as well as their willingness to fund it. He stated that he and Kurt will provided project updates to the Board as things progress.

VI New Business

- Review Proposed 2025 Fee Schedule

Mike reviewed the proposed 2025 fees and Charges Schedule with the Board. Aleta asked that we add a deposit for parties that permit the artificial turf field as the amenity is susceptible to damage and is different from natural turf fields. Other Board Members agreed and Mike said that he would add a required deposit. Aleta also asked about the listed $288 permit fee for the weekend day permit fee for the rodeo arena, suggesting it be a more round number at $300 per day. Mike stated that this made sense and that he thought the $288 figure may have been typing error and should have been $280. The Board was in agreement to adjust the fee to $300.

Mike invited the Board to send him any other thoughts / concerns that may arise under further review over the next couple weeks.

- Review 2025 Draft Budget

Mike presented the first draft of the 2025 District budget. He began by explaining that there may be some adjustments needed based upon legislative changes and potential applicable limits on revenue increases, though he was still unclear of all the direct budget implications. He shared that he is registered for a webinar being hosted by the Special District Association (SDA) on the 24th on the topic, and that he will know more about what limits, if any, will impact the 2025 budget. He then went line item by line item through the general fund and the enterprise fund budgets, showing that the GF budget projects $1,445,539 in revenues and $736,665 in operational expenses. The GF budget also projected a 2025 capital improvement expenditure of $642,376. The EF budget projected $692,895 in revenues and expenditures of $612,425. Mike commented that the EF budget reflects the full financial benefits and impacts of the District taking over management of the childcare programs at Singing Hills and Running Creek Elementary Schools which accounts for the jump in fund revenues and expenditures. Mike expressed that the maintenance budget needed to be increased for 2025 due to new park amenities which require maintenance resources, and to assist with custodial operations in the schools related to our summer day camp programming space. He explained that while program staff do handle daily custodial needs of the program, a deeper clean of the program space is needed at least once a week at each location to sanitize everything and help minimize the spread of germs.

Mike then reviewed the proposed funding for capital outlay. He stated that the current two lease purchase loans, one for the purchase of property around Casey Jones Park, the second for the pickleball / artificial turf field project, require an annual payment of $317,726 in 2025. He said other capital expenditures currently being proposed by staff include $35K to replace pea gravel with poured in place rubber at the Evans Park playground, $175K for paving of the new park entry accessing the pickleball and artificial turf field amenities, $6100 for an alarm system / auto shut off to be installed on the pump well, $40,000 to support the current master planning efforts, $7500 for signage in Casey Jones Park, $45K for an activity bus to support childcare programs, and $16.5K for a new zero-turn mower. He then shared that he has changed his thinking on the activity bus purchase and suggested that it may be wiser to continue to contract transportation services with the school district or to purchase an actual bus, as an activity bus will not meet the childcare program’s expanding transportation needs. Dondi commented that the school district recently purchased busses, and that they may have an older bus they are willing to sell. Mike said he would look into that option and agreed that a used bus could likely meet our needs for summer field trips. Mike then explained that the listed capital outlay expenditures are just suggestions from staff at this point, and that the Board may certainly identify other needs and priorities and will ultimately approve the final list at the November Board meeting. He stated that the final budget approval will occur at the December meeting, though the budget will be on the agenda in October and November and will be updated at each meeting as final year expenses become better understood and the Board provides more input.

VII Legislative Matters

VIII Report of Administrator and Staff

- Budget Report

Mike reviewed the August budget and financial reports. He said that while the budgets are tight, things are largely tracking as expected. He pointed out that the District has spent over $2M on capital projects alone this year including the lease purchase proceeds for the pickleball and artificial turf field project. He stated that while most spending is done for the year, there could still be emergencies or unexpected situations impacting the year-end financials. Kurt asked about the concrete replacement in Evans Park that was included in the current year’s capital outlay budget and whether it would get done this year. Mike said they may be able to do it later in the year as year-end financials become more clear, though it likely will get pushed to next year. Mike pointed out that current projections of year-end expenditures are aligning very closely with the amended budget projections, and depending on how things go over the next two months, a budget amendment may be needed for either the GF and EF or both funds to allocate additional 2024 funding. He said he prefers to remain within budget if possible and avoid the amendments, though this would likely require pushing some needs and desires to 2025.

- Maintenance Report

Ryan reviewed the maintenance report and shared completion of the following tasks over the last month: removed thatch from sports fields, introduced use of wetting agent on fields at Casey Jones Park to assess its impact on watering efficiency, sprayed weeds, cleaned snack shacks, repaired urinal at Evans Park, built trash enclosure and porta-pottie enclosure, repaired shower assembly in campground restrooms, installed backstop pads on new turf field, shut down the splashpad for the year, began fall aeration of athletic fields, and removed old dumpster enclosure in campground. Projects for next month include: continued aeration of athletic fields, winterize splashpad, service and prep snow clearing equipment, clean shop / garage, and clean drains / gutters/ sediment traps around new turf field.

- Programs Report

Mike shared the programs report submitted by Rebecca. The District is ½ way through the fall youth sports season and things are going well. The 9-12 flag football league had to be re-structured as a skills development program due to a lack of volunteer coaches. Mike stated that he has been running sessions on Tuesdays and that an assistant coach has been coordinating scrimmages on Saturdays. Youth basketball registration will open up next week with the season starting January 11th. Having the Frontier gym available for practices will be a great help this season. In adult sports, registration is open for the flag football tournament on Nov 9th and we expect between 8-10 teams. We also have two pickleball tournaments scheduled for this fall and an upcoming skills clinic. We also plan to introduce some adult drop-in basketball at Frontier.

- Childcare Programs Report

Mike shared the childcare programs report submitted by Tina. Before and after school programs at Singing Hills are going well with an average of 20 registrations for before school per week and 50 registrations for after school per week. We are currently waiting for the approval of one final background report before receiving our childcare operator license for Singing Hills from the state. The District has applied for CCAP eligibility and will be approved to receive CCAP reimbursements for services to qualifying families once state license is granted. The application for childcare licensure at Running Creek Elementary has been submitted, and the inspection is scheduled for early November. The District will assume management of the Running Creek programs in January as the second semester begins. We will be offering a fall break camp at Singing Hills for families that may need childcare for that week and can accommodate up to 15 students. Lastly, Tina is applying for the District to participate in the state’s SHINES program, which provides ratings for the quality of facilities and care and enables eligibility for state childcare grants to support programming.

IX Other Matters

- Campground Complaint and Expectations of Host

Kurt stated that after reading the recent complaint from a camper that Mike had shared with the Board, he wanted to review the campground host job description and ensure it includes the tasks we need the host to be completing. Mike shared the job description and reviewed the listed duties and responsibilities. After some general discussion, it was decided that Mike should schedule a meeting with the campground host to review the expectations and convey the importance of the host actively fostering positive relations with campers. It was directed that he should meet with the host at least once per year to conduct a formal performance review. The Board also asked Mike to ensure there were some mechanisms of accountability built into the ongoing evaluation of the camp hosts performance.

- EC West Update

Kurt asked Mike if he has heard back from Jim Yates regarding the draft of terms for the district overlap consent. Mike said that he has not but that he will reach out again and request the draft language for the agreement. Kurt then summarized the matter for Aleta to bring her up to speed, and explained that EC West needed to receive approval from the District Board before the county approved their development plans and this did not occur. The approval was needed due to them proposing to provide park and recreation services as a part of their service plan in an area already included within the Elizabeth Park and Recreation District. He shared that our legal counsel has advised that this was an illegal approval by the county and that the District Board’s consent is still needed by the developer, providing the District a negotiation tool in the planning of park and recreational amenities to be included within the development plans. Mike stated that he would keep the Board informed of any progress or response he receives from Jim.

- Planting of Trees Near Artificial Turf Field

Doug suggested that the District assess the possibility of planting some trees between the artificial turf ballfield and County Road 17. He stated that the trees may be aesthetically preferable to a net system and would be a deterrent to balls making it to the roadway. Mike expressed that he did have a tree contractor offer to move some ponderosa pines to the newly developed area of the park, though his concern was that we do not have access to water, as the relocated trees will require regular watering for at least the first year or so. He shared that there will certainly be additional maintenance costs as staff will need to transport and hand water any newly planted trees in that area of the park, though they could manage it. Mike also shared that the power lines along County Road 17 may prohibit the planting of trees as Doug was envisioning them being located. Ryan expressed that we need to ensure that we plant the right tree in the right place and be aware of the potential impacts that roots may have on park features such as the turf field. Mike stated that he would assess if trees can be planted in this area as an alternative to a net system and report back to the Board.

X Adjournment

Dondi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:07pm. Aleta 2nd and all approved.