**Elizabeth Park and Recreation District**

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**MEETING MINUTES**

January 14, 2025 - 7:00 pm

Meeting to be held at:

Park Office – Evans Park

34201 County Road 17, Elizabeth, CO 80107

I Call to Order / Roll Call / Pledge of Allegiance

Kelly led the pledge of allegiance and called the meeting to order at 7:01pm. Other Board Members present included Kurt Prinslow, Aleta Jeffress, and Doug Severinsen by phone. Staff members present included Mike Barney and Ryan Staley. Zac Craig, district resident, was also in attendance.

II Approval of Minutes –Regular Meeting on December 10, 2024

Kelly stated that he reviewed the minutes from December and had no edits. He then motioned to approve the minutes of the December 10th meeting. Aleta 2nd and all approved.

III Approval of Agenda

Kelly then made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. 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)

Kelly asked Zac if he had any communications for the Board. Zac shared a letter with the board members which expressed his desire to join the board by appointment or potentially run for a seat in the May election. The Board thanked Zac for his interest in serving and had some discussion on routes to become a board member for the district. Mike stated that he would connect with Zac to ensure he receives the self-nomination form.

V Continued Business

- PROST Master Plan Update and Identifying Questions for Resident Survey

Mike shared that the community workshop on December 11th was attended by 50-60 people and that the project team received some good input from those that were there. He said the low turnout was disappointing though not surprising and necessitates a strong survey process to ensure that the project team receives a sufficient amount of resident input. Mike shared the survey draft with the board and asked if there were additional questions that should be included. Mike said he knows the Board wants to ask specifically about the recreation center, though was not sure of how they may want to ask the question. After some discussion, Kelly expressed that the question should be asked as plainly and clearly as possible and avoid any ambiguity and suggested, “Do you support the development of a recreation center (with indoor pool) in the Elizabeth Community, and are you willing to vote to approve funding?”. Mike stated that he would work with the project team to have the question included in the survey. Aleta asked how the survey would be distributed to residents. Mike shared that the district, the town, and the school district would all use their networks to get the survey link out through email and newsletters and that it would also be available on the project website. He said paper copies of the survey will be made available for groups such as the senior lunch group and others as may be requested. He stated that the survey will be set up to detect multiple responses from the same email address / individual, and that the net will be cast far and wide. Aleta asked if she would be able to share the survey with her HOA and other networks and encourage participation and Mike affirmed that she could. Kurt asked when the project team would present to the Board again. Mike stated that they can schedule the consultant team to update the Board after the survey process is complete or as the draft of the master plan is coming together. The Board then had some discussion on potentially asking residents again to fund the construction of a recreation center as proposed within the Casey Jones Park master plan. Mike was directed to talk with Town of Elizabeth staff to gain an understanding of the annexation process and what it may entail should the District want to annex the area within the park where the rec center will be built into the town.

- EC West Park and Recreation Planning

Mike shared that he was working with Jim Yates of Craft Companies to identify the areas within the proposed EC West development where park and recreation amenities would be located. He shared a schematic map of the development with the Board that showed the 48-acre recreation area. Kurt commented that the area is marked as “Cressence Recreation District” on the map and asked Mike if he was sure that this was the area that was intended for EPR District to assist in designing / developing. He pointed out the additional area in green marked as “State Land Board Recreation District” and said he thought this was the area intended for EPR District to assist in designing / developing. Mike clarified that both areas are designated as recreation and that we will have the opportunity to assist in designing / developing both areas. He explained that the difference is that no permanent structures amenities can be developed on the state land board property and that it can only host trails, open space, and other uses that are not permanent. Kurt asked Mike to clarify the intent for these areas with Jim and ensure he was correct about which area(s) EPR District will be able to assist in designing / developing. Mike then summarized how the Board would proceed with EC West. He stated that as a part of the master plan, the project team would develop a concept plan / preliminary design for the recreation area(s) within EC West. The Board could then negotiate with Craft Companies on impact fees or other assessments to fund the recreation improvements over time.

- Bettis Land Purchase

The Board discussed the transfer of a .67-acre portion of land within Cimarron Park to Ken Bettis. The Board directed Mike to contact Mr. Bettis and inform him that the cost would be $7680 and that the District would share $3000 in costs to date that Mr. Bettis has paid for surveying, application fees, and other related expenses. The Board also stated that as per the sales agreement, the District would cover up to $700 in title related costs and up to $200 for closing costs. Mike indicated that he would relay this information to Mr. Bettis and report back.

VI New Business

- Review Cost and Procedural Differences between Mail-In Election and Polling Place Election

Mike shared that a mail-in election coordinated with the Elbert County clerk and recorder’s office would cost the District about $2.18 per registered voter. He stated that the District has about 15,000 registered voters which means a mail-in ballot election would cost about $32K. He explained that a polling place election is more cost-effective for the District and would cost about $.50 per vote cast plus about $5000 in expenses due to legal counsel for election judge training and staffing for conducting the election. He stated that polling-place elections can only be used for the election of Board members however, and that should the Board decide to ask voters to fund a recreation center in November, it would need to be a mail-in ballot election coordinated with the Elbert County Clerk and recorder’s office. He explained that all TABOR related issues must be presented to voters through a mail-in ballot election.

- Review Request for Elizabeth School District Employee Childcare Discount

Mike shared that he has received a couple inquiries from school district staff regarding a request for discounted childcare services and asked the Board if they wanted to provide some type of discount. He explained that a discount was provided to these staff when the school district managed these programs though we have not continued that practice since taking over the programs. Aleta asked what type of discount the District currently provides to our own staff for programs such as this. Mike stated that there is nothing official in the policy manual, though the practice has been that staff can register their children for programs at no cost and participate in adult programs, except team sports, at no cost. After some discussion, the Board directed that the practice should be to charge EPR District staff 50% of the cost for program registration rather than collect no fees at all. In regards to a discount for school district staff for childcare services, the Board expressed that they did want to support local teachers and were willing to provide a discount to this group. They directed Mike to assess the cost of care per child, and then to add a small premium to that amount. Mike said he would do the analysis and report back on the discount to be provided for school district staff registering for childcare services.

VII Legislative Matters

- Resolution Designating Location to Post Meeting Notice

Aleta made a motion to approve the Resolution Designating Location to Post Meeting Notices. Kurt 2nd and all approved.

VIII Report of Administrator and Staff

- Budget Report

Mike reviewed the budget report, explaining that there would still be some 2024 expenses that need to be posted, though these figures were close to complete. Kurt asked about 2025 property and liability insurance costs and whether enough was budgeted based on 2024 actuals exceeding projections. Mike stated that 2024 overtures were primarily due to adding the new pickleball courts and artificial turf field to the list of insured assets as well as childcare programming to our liability coverages. He said he based the 2025 budget numbers off of these additions and felt the budgeted allocation should be sufficient.

- Maintenance Report

Ryan provided the maintenance report to the Board. He shared that the crew had focused on the following tasks over the last month: prepared and burnt slash piles, cleaned and organized the shop, helped set up the pavilion for the holiday event, graded roads at Casey Jones Park, re-graveled the entry to the campground, serviced equipment, plowed snow as needed, repaired main water line break, and vacuumed leaves in Evans Park.

- Programs Report

Mike shared the programs report with the Board. He stated that we had 125 youth register for basketball, which is down about 40 youth from last year. He said this decrease was likely due to players moving to the Wrangler’s club program. He said that registration is now open for youth spring soccer and volleyball and that we are seeing a steady level of registrations to date. He said registration will be open through February. He shared that the Little Dudes soccer intro program is also being offered this spring and that he hoped the weather cooperates. In adult sports, 8-teams will start the volleyball season on January 24th and play will continue until March 7th. The flag football tournament has been re-scheduled for March 15th from this past fall when it had to be cancelled due to heavy snow. Registration is also open for a spring kickball league. In addition to drop-in pickleball at Frontier, the District will offer skills and drills sessions in February for intermediate players. Beginner classes will be offered on the outdoor courts this spring as weather allows. Lastly, chair yoga will begin on January 20th. Although registration is currently low, we are hopeful that enough people register so as to avoid cancelling the program.

- Childcare Programs Report

Mike shared the childcare program report. He stated that Singing Hills is running well and is under the supervision of Cheryl Hoffman who is doing a great job. The site is still seeking a Lead Teacher to join the team. He stated that Lisa Rustad is leading the program at Running Creek and that they continue to prepare for the licensing inspection. He said Tina’s departure has delayed things a bit but progress is being made and he is hopeful that the inspection will be scheduled within the next month. He said that the District will be offering a Spring Break camp at each location as well as Summer Day Camp programs at each site and that he is working with Lisa and Cheryl to open registrations for these programs as soon as possible. He stated that he will continue to complete the duties of the vacant Childcare Programs Coordinator position and evaluate what additional resources if any may be needed for administration of these programs. He said that Cheryl and Lisa are proving that they can manage much of the on-site administrative needs which is a big help. He said some fine program details and processes are still being ironed out, though everything is moving in the right direction and he will soon be able to present a financial report for the programs.

IX Other Matters

- Review Frontier High School Renovation Conceptual Designs

Mike shared some design concepts for the Frontier campus that have been developed by students and faculty from CU though a DOLA assistance program. The concepts showed potential options for recreation amenities / spaces on the campus including the gym, fitness studios, program rooms, locker rooms, and an outdoor pool. Mike stated that the main consideration for the Board is whether they have any interest in allocating resources to improve the spaces and managing them. He suggested that the most likely scenario would be a long-term lease / usage agreement between the District and the School District for them to improve and operate the spaces on the Frontier campus. The Board expressed that the concept did have their interest if the school district is able to open the facility for such use and that they would be happy to discuss the options more with the School District. Mike acknowledged that the Frontier campus will not meet all of their goals for a community recreation center, though it could certainly provide an opportunity to expand programming and increase service levels to residents until a recreation center is developed. Mike stated that he would reach back out to Superintendent Snowberger and summarize the Board’s feedback on the proposals and their interest in continuing to explore options.

- Review Soccer Field Use Request from Colorado Elevation

Mike shared a request from a soccer club in Highlands Ranch (Colorado Elevation) to host camps in Elizabeth during spring break week. He said he brought this to the board due to the group being from out of the county and wanted to assess potential impacts to EPR District and other in-county programming. He shared that he did reach out to the Wranglers and that they were not currently pursuing club level soccer programs. The board asked Mike his thoughts on whether club level programming would hurt the district’s soccer programs in terms of participation levels. Mike said that as with our other programs which compete with club level sports, we would likely lose some players to this group. The Board had some discussion on our internal rec leagues versus club level programming and collectively felt that there is a need and room for both as our community continues to grow. They also expressed a desire for parents to have an option to choose club level sports if it was a better match for their needs, and that while in-county organizations were preferred, out-of-county organizations may be the only option in some instances. The board decided that the District should allow Colorado Elevation to permit fields for their proposed spring break camps as they assess whether to introduce club level soccer within the Elizabeth community. Aleta asked if the District could provide club level youth sports on its own and Mike responded that they could, though traditionally, the focus within parks and rec agencies is on the recreational level only. He gave the Parker Hawks and the Arapahoe Youth League as examples in other communities and the Wranglers which offer club level football, basketball, and baseball here in Elizabeth.

X Adjournment

Kurt motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:35pm. Kelly 2nd and all approved.