**Elizabeth Park and Recreation District**

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**MEETING MINUTES**

October 15, 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

Kelly called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and led the pledge pf allegiance. Members present included Kurt Prinslow, Aleta Jeffress, and Doug Severinsen (phoned into the meeting). Other meeting attendees included Mike Barney, Executive Director, and residents Bill Mock, Alyssa Craig, and Zac Craig. Jena Biondolilo and Smmo Ozawa with SCJ Alliance were also present to discuss the PROST Master Plan project.

II Approval of Minutes – Special Meeting on September 17, 2024, and Regular Meeting on September 17, 2024

 Kelly asked if there were any edits / corrections needed to the minutes from the September special meeting and regular meeting and pointed out one spelling error that needed to be corrected. There being no other corrections or edits, Kurt made a motion to approve the minutes from the Special Meeting on September 17, 2024, and the minutes from the Regular Meeting on September 17, 2024. Doug 2nd and all approved.

III Approval of Agenda

Mike noted that Ken Bettis was not present for the meeting and suggested that the Board consider moving the executive session to later on the agenda after the completion of all other business so that meeting attendees would not have to temporarily leave the building for a part of the meeting. Kelly agreed this was appropriate and made a motion to approve the agenda with the planned executive session being moved toward the end of the meeting. 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 invited public attendees to address the Board. Alyssa Craig introduced herself and her husband Zac Craig, expressing that they will soon be parents and are interested in learning more about the District and getting involved in community matters. She shared that she is a softball instructor and works with local athletes. She also commented that additional resources are needed to support youth athletic activities and the growing population. Kelly thanked the Craigs’ for attending the meeting. Bill Mock then shared that the Town was continuing to pursue the proposed senior center on the recently acquired property near Big R and that an architect was to be hired in January. Kelly asked when the Town plans to build the facility and Bill was unsure of the projected timeline for construction. Kelly then thanked Bill for attending the meeting and providing updates on senior matters within the community.

V Continued Business

 - Review Draft MOU between District and Elizabeth Stampede

 Whereas the consultants from SCJ Alliance were not yet present at the meeting to discuss the PROST Master Plan project, Kelly suggested the Board move to reviewing the draft MOU with the Elizabeth Stampede. The Board then reviewed the document and directed Mike to make some edits. The Board expressed a desire to include a clause about arena maintenance being the responsibility of the Stampede, and to include the frequency at which the arena should be groomed. There was some discussion about what the frequency of grooming has been in the past, the level of arena usage, and the impacts of programming, and it was then proposed that the MOU should state that the arena should be groomed by the Stampede at least once per month between the months of March through November. Mike stated that he would check in with Kevin Whitacre, Stampede President, for his thoughts on this addition and the frequency of grooming that may be needed. Kurt commented that the listed date / timeframe for the Community Rodeo needed to be corrected as it is no longer held in May. He also stated that the fiber telecommunications assets listed in section VII should also be listed in section III(B). Aleta noted that the bleachers need to be added to the listing of Stampede assets under section VII – Liability and Insurance. She also asked Mike to confirm that the 2025 Fees and Charges Schedule is in place to support section V of the MOU. Mike confirmed that this was the case. There being no more proposed edits, the Board directed Mike to incorporate the changes and send a revised draft to Kevin for review. The Board stated that they would like to formally execute the MOU before the end of the year.

 - Master Plan Project Update – Provided by SCJ Alliance (Project Consultant)

Jena Biondolilo and Smmo Ozawa had joined the meeting during the MOU discussion, so the Board now moved to the master plan project update. Jena began by sharing project boundaries and a timeline with the Board as well as some project goals. She then asked the Board for any issues they specifically want addressed through the master plan. Aleta expressed that she wants to ensure the plan outlines potential trail corridors and addresses community connectivity. She shared an example of existing trail corridors within Wild Pointe that align with property lines though create uncertainty from trail users unsure of the actual trail’s path. She shared that it can be unclear where the trail is and what is private property. Jena and Smmo then discussed the planned public outreach efforts and how input and feedback would be collected from residents and other stakeholders. Efforts will include attendance at community events, comment cards, an interactive project website, meetings with specific stakeholder groups, and surveys. Bill Mock requested that paper surveys be made available as some seniors in the community are not active online or may not have the technical ability to participate electronically. It was noted that paper surveys will be made available. Zac Craig asked Jena whether the master plan will include site plans and construction drawings. Jena explained that the master plan will be a tool for implementation that will guide development in the future, though will not include construction / engineering details. She stated that the District will need to pursue the development of construction drawings and engineering as it decides to pursue individual elements within the master plan. Kurt shared that the plan will include the conceptual design of up to 9 potential park sites to be identified by the project partners. Kurt then asked Bill if he knew who owned the property designated as a school site within Sun Country. Zac looked up the parcel on the County website and commented that it is owned by the school district. Kurt commented that this was an example of a property for which a conceptual site plan could be developed based on the school district’s intentions for the property.

Jena shared that the project website is now active though it is still being built out. Smmo shared that the Main St. group has already begun leaving some comments / feedback on the mapping feature with suggestions for route finding within town. They commented that the website will be a central source for project information. Kurt asked if the website would also serve to dispel misinformation about the project. Jena confirmed that the project team will have the ability to respond directly to all comments and address misinformation or clarify any confusion about the project.

Smmo then summarized some information from the County comprehensive plan and asked the Board if they have seen efforts from the County to plan / pursue park and recreation related projects. Kurt said the County has not been active in pursuing any park or recreation improvements though he recalled a focus group the County had put together to explore the development of a County wide parks and open space master plan. He asked Mike about the effort. Mike shared that the group did meet once, though never gained any traction. He said it was disbanded once the County learned it was not granted funding for the plan development and he has not been a part of any discussions since that time. Kurt said there was a real need for the County to at least develop park and recreation standards / guidelines for developers so as to ensure community needs are actually being met, rather than a large number of small tot lots being built. Aleta commented that there are many plans out there such as the Town Comp Plan, the County Comp plan, Main Street Plan, the Casey Jones Park Master Plan, and others, and suggested that it may be helpful for residents to be able to view all community plans in one location. She asked if the project website could be a source for this. Smmo commented that the project website can certainly help with allowing residents to view all these plans in one location.

Jena shared that identifying and reaching out to important stakeholders is a vital aspect of the plan and that there would be a significant focus on community engagement. She stated that the project will also be intentional about including teens and youth and getting them involved in the planning efforts. Kurt asked if they had spoken with the Elbert County Wranglers yet. Smmo shared that they will be meeting with them on October 22nd. She then shared scheduled meetings with other identified stakeholder groups and upcoming events they plan to have a presence at. Bill Mock shared his efforts to try and get community seniors to become more physically active and shared some frustration with a lack of success. He stated that a better trail system could help facilitate improved physical health amongst seniors.

Smmo then asked the Board where they believe the current gaps in the park and recreation system to be. Kurt commented that the largest gap may be the lack of park space and resources in the northern part of the district, which is growing rapidly. He also noted that there may be some needs in the southern part of the District toward Elbert, and that there may be opportunities to collaborate with their parks and recreation committee. Aleta stated that she wants to ensure we maintain a balance of a natural feel within our parks. Kelly asked what the Main St. Committee had to say about the project at their meeting with the consultants. Smmo shared that their feedback was really focused on potential connectors to Main Street, trails, and wayfinding.

The Board then scheduled the next update to occur at their regular meeting on January 14, 2025.

 - Review 2025 Draft Budget

Mike presented the current draft of the proposed 2025 budget and noted that he had made some updates from last month as year-end costs become better known and 2025 projections are understood. Aleta asked about the decrease in total revenue from the 2024 budget and Mike explained that that the financing for the pickleball and artificial turf field was shown as $1.5M in revenue in 2024, which accounts for the decrease in 2025. Mike also shared an updated proposed capital improvement project list with the Board. He explained that it was comprised of all projects previously identified by the Board as well as staff recommendations and requests and that the Board would need to ultimately decide which projects will be budgeted for completion in 2025. Projects / purchases listed included: new rubber playground surfacing at Evans Park, paving of the roadway and parking lot for the new pickleball courts / artificial turf field, replacing a pump alarm on the well, current lease-purchase premium obligations for the pickleball courts / artificial turf field and the Casey Jones Park land purchase, a bus to support childcare programming, new 0-turn mower, new leaf vac system, park security camera system upgrades, a signage system for Casey Jones Park, re-grading / improving the walking trail near the pond in Evans Park, and a net system for portions of the artificial turf field to help prevent balls from entering onto roadways. Mike stated that the current total proposed capital expenditure is $670,876, though numbers will be adjusted over the next month as the District receives and reviews estimates from contractors. He asked the Board to give the list some attention over the next month and said that he would like for them to decide what will be included on the capital project / purchase list for 2025 at the November meeting.

 - Planting of Trees Near Artificial Turf Field

Mike shared that he has assessed whether ponderosa pine trees can be used as an alternative to a net system to help limit balls from going onto roadways near the artificial turf field, and found that overhead power lines prevent us from plating trees where needed. He said shorter trees of a different variety could possibly be planted, but they most likely would not be effective in keeping balls from roadways. He shared that he has solicited a quote for a net system to be placed between the outfield fence and the roadway. He stated that the net system quoted is 20 feet high and 60 feet long and the cost is $6000. He noted that installation would likely cost an additional $5000. There was then some discussion about extending a net system past the foul post down the third base line to help protect vehicles pulling into and leaving the park as well. Mike stated that he would assess what might work best on site and would have an updated project cost for the netting at the November Board Meeting.

VI New Business

 - Discuss Pedestrian Pathway between Casey Jones Park and Evans Park

Mike stated that based on growing participation in park programs and large numbers of people attending youth sport activities on Saturdays throughout much of the year, he believes the Board should consider pursuing a pedestrian walkway across County Road 17 between Evans and Casey Jones Parks. He stated that the Evans lot alone can no longer support all the needs for parking on Saturdays and that parking areas within Casey Jones Park should be used for overflow parking needs. He explained that he believes a designated walkway, as shown in the Casey Jones Master Plan is needed sooner rather than later to make the crossing of County Road 17 as safe as possible. Kelly asked if the crossing would be signaled, and Mike stated that he envisioned a blinking light that could be activated by button such as the crossings in town on Highway 86. Mike said the crossing itself is only a part of the solution however, as some engineering is needed to determine how best to then get pedestrians from the road into Evans Park. He explained that the parking lot and closest sidewalk sits about 10 -15 feet below the road, so a ramp / decline of some sort will be needed. Kelly asked how many parking spots there are in Evans Park, and Mike reported that there are 151 spaces with an additional 5 handicap designated spaces in total. The Board expressed a desire to further study the issue and directed Mike to begin to explore options and costs. Mike said he would first reach out to Elbert County to determine if a pedestrian crossing can be considered at this location and what that process looks like.

VII Legislative Matters

 - Appoint New Board Treasurer

Mike explained that he and Kelly, upon Doug’s suggestion, had spoken about naming another Board Member as Treasurer due to Doug now residing out of state. He explained that there may be occasions when the Treasurer is needed to physically sign / execute District documents and that with Doug being out of state, it could create a delay / problem. All Board members expressed agreement that it was appropriate to identify a new Treasurer that resides locally. Kelly reviewed Board assignments, noting himself as President, Kurt as Vice-President, and Dondi as Secretary. Kurt suggested that Aleta be named as Treasurer to replace Doug since she is currently unassigned a specific chair. Kelly then made a motion to name Aleta Jeffress as the new District Board Treasurer. Kurt 2nd the motion and all Board Members present approved. Mike stated that he would need Aleta to meet and sign some documents with Community Banks of Colorado and would schedule that with her soon.

VIII Report of Administrator and Staff

 - Budget Report

Mike reviewed the budget reports with the Board. He shared that both the GF and EF are tracking to be very close to budget and that there are no significant concerns at this time. He explained that he is monitoring the remaining 2024 budget closely and hoping to fully remain within budgeted expenses, though a budget amendment may be needed for one or both funds in December if actual expenses are to exceed budget allocations. He shared that he anticipates the District to end the year with about $550K in its accounts.

 - Maintenance Report - No maintenance report was provided.

 - Programs Report

Mike shared the Programs Report with the Board. He stated that the fall youth sports season ended last Saturday and that it appeared to go well. The report showed that direct costs for the season were $9,136 and that program revenues totaled $17, 810 for a cost-recovery of 195%. He shared that the target for youth programs is 150% cost recovery, so there does not appear to be a need to consider any price increases for fall youth sports programs at this time. He said the District is proud to keep costs low and offer families an 8-week program for $65. He noted that basketball registration is now open and that the season will start on January 11th and run through March 1st. He stated that the use of the gym at Frontier this year will allow for more youth to participate than last year, as youth were turned away last year, particularly in the 10-12 age group. In adult sports, Mike reported that the adult flag football tournament has 7 teams registered and the event will be held on November 9th. He also shared that the District hosted a glowball pickleball tournament recently with 40 participants and that the event raised over $1200 to help fund the purchase of additional site amenities. In special events, the District will be hosting its annual Halloween event at the Casey Jones Pavilion on October 26th from 6-8pm. The event will include a haunted maze through the pavilion for youth and haunted hayrides through the woods of the park. Local Girl and Boy Scout troops are generously helping with the event.

 - Childcare Programs Report

Mike then presented the Childcare Programs Report to the Board. He noted that the District is waiting for final approval of its Singing Hills Childcare License and has now submitted its application for Running Creek Elementary. The District will be assuming ownership / management of the Running Creek programs in January at the start of the 2nd semester. He shared that the District is currently recruiting staff for its Running Creek programs and has received several applications for the site supervisor position. He shared that there are 13 youth registered for the fall break camp at Singing Hills occurring this week and that the camp will net about $500 in revenue. Mike also shared that the District was applying to accept CCAP funding for families receiving financial assistance for childcare, and was also applying to become a part of the Colorado Shines Program, which ranks facilities based on program quality and provides opportunities to apply for grant funding.

IX Other Matters - No other matters were discussed.

X Executive Session pursuant to Sections 24-6-402(a), C.R.S concerning the sale of .67-acres of Cimarron Park to Ken Bettis, of 34366 Cimarron Trail, for boundary adjustment

 Kelly then informed meeting attendees that the Board was going to enter an executive session which would be closed to the public and made a motion to enter Executive Session pursuant to Sections 24-6-402(a), C.R.S concerning the sale of .67-acres of Cimarron Park to Ken Bettis of 34366 Cimarron Trail, for a boundary adjustment. Aleta 2nd the motion and all approved at 9:08pm.

 Aleta made a motion to end the Executive Session pursuant to Sections 24-6-402(a), C.R.S concerning the sale of .67-acres of Cimarron Park to Ken Bettis of 34366 Cimarron Trail, for a boundary adjustment. Kurt 2nd the motion and all approved at 9:17pm.

XI Adjournment

 Aleta then motioned to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:18pm. Kurt 2nd and all approved.