**Elizabeth Park and Recreation District**

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**MEETING MINUTES**

August 20, 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 Moffatt called the meeting to order at 7:04pm and then led the pledge of allegiance. Members present included Kurt Prinslow, Dondi Connelley, and Doug Severinsen. Board candidate Aleta Jeffress was also present. Staff members Mike Barney and Ryan Staley were in attendance. Other attendees included Casey Westbrook with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Kevin Whitacre with the Elizabeth Stampede, Bill Mott, and two other individuals associated with the Stampede.

II Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting on July 16, 2024

Kelly asked if there were any edits needed to the July meeting minutes. There being none, he motioned to approve the minutes from the July 16 meeting as submitted. Doug 2nd and all approved.

III Approval of Agenda

Kelly then motioned to approve the agenda and Kurt 2nd. 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 acknowledged Casey Westbrook with Colorado Parks and Wildlife and invited him to address the Board. Casey stated he was present to review the deer management program with the Board and request continued participation by the District. Casey shared that the local count remains near 50 though there was an uptick in fawns this past season with counts showing more than one fawn per doe. He stated this was the highest percentage since they began the program 10 years ago. He reported that the goal was 7 , though only 3 deer were culled last year and that there were many more killed by vehicles, with the total count staying pretty consistent. He commented that maintaining a healthy population was a value for the community though having too many deer does cause problems, so the goal was to find and maintain the balance. He stated that despite increasing park usage by people, which limits program activity within the parks, the District remains a valued partner in the program and he would like to include the parks again this coming season. Kelly asked about the total population of deer for the area and if there were too many at this time as he was aware of a lot of accidents with vehicles. Casey stated that the population is at the high end of the target range though there was a record number of hunting permits issued this year which should help keep numbers within the range. He also shared that there will be mandatory testing for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) this year which will help assess the health of the deer population. Kelly asked about the prevalence of CWD and Casey reported that it was near 8% last year though that number may be skewed as the disease is more prevalent in bucks and bucks are the most frequently harvested deer. He estimated that total infection rates are probably closer to 5% of the population. Kelly then commented that he has not received any concerns or complaints from residents, feels the program is very beneficial for the community, and would like to see the District continue its participation. All Board members expressed that they concurred. Casey thanked the Board for their continued support.

- Kevin Whitacre, Elizabeth Stampede to discuss event permit fees with Board

Kelly then invited Kevin Whitacre to address the Board. Kevin began by handing a check for the 2024 event permit fees to Mike. He then asked if there is a time limit that he should adhere to for his comments. Kelly responded that the Board can limit comments to 2-minutes, though he was happy to provide Kevin more time as long as the discussion did not exceed 30 minutes, at which point there may be a need to schedule another day / time for continued future discussion. Kevin thanked the Board for the time and began by stating he wanted to discuss how best to maintain a strong collaborative relationship with the District. He stated that the Stampede had a 60% change over of Board Members this past year and that the group had a big learning curve to overcome. He shared that this has resulted in a lot of questions from his Board Members about its relationship with the District as they manage this transition and plan for the future. Kevin shared that event expenses increased from about $600K to $680K this year, accompanied by increased revenues as well, though overall net was lower. He stated that this was partly due to the displacement of on-site parking and associated increased parking expenses. He said they are working to try and ensure the event remains affordable for families despite the rising costs. He shared that he would like to request setting up a time to meet outside of a Board Meeting to discuss the Casey Jones Master Plan and future improvements to the rodeo arena. He said his group is hoping to gain some assurance of the Board’s long-term commitment to the equestrian amenities within the park and the Stampede programming. Kurt asked what type of meeting is being requested and what the best format may be for such a discussion. Kevin expressed that he thought it may be a series of meetings to present the master plan to his board, share the vision and long-term goals of the Stampede, and develop plans to pursue site improvements. Mike stated that the meeting would need to be a public meeting if more than two District Board Members attend, and District business is being discussed. He suggested a work / study session be scheduled and noted that the agenda would need to be posted at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Dondi expressed that she has been requesting to meet with the Stampede Board on a regular basis for several years now and agreed the groups need to get together to discuss the event, master plan, and how best to fund future improvements in the park. She also requested that the District and the Stampede shore up and execute the memorandum of understanding that has been discussed for several years now and expressed that it will be helpful to formalize the relationship and provide clarity for both parties. Kelly directed Mike to work with Kevin to identify a day / time that will work for both parties and schedule a work session. Mike suggested he will try and get it scheduled for 5:30pm on September 17, prior to the regular meeting.

V Continued Business

- Naming of the New Sports Complex in Casey Jones Park

Mike shared that Dondi had requested this item be included on the agenda. Dondi then stated that she wanted to assess whether there may be an opportunity to sell naming rights for the new sports complex. Kurt commented that he thought the District needs to be sure to maintain Casey Jones Park within the name / association and asked Dondi to explain more about her suggestion. Dondi used the example of Empower Field at Mile High Stadium and stated that we could do something similar to raise funds for additional site / park improvements. Mike said that he is aware of some park districts that have done this such as Shea Stadium in Highlands Ranch, now sponsored by Halftime Help, a cleaning company in Littleton. He said the most difficult part of doing something like this may be identifying the value / cost of the sponsorship. He stated that he would do some research to try and learn more about Districts / agencies that may be offering sponsorships such as this and how they go about valuing the sponsorship. Mike stated that the current sponsorship program that the Board recently directed him to create does offer a field sponsorship and court sponsorships, but they are set-up as annual terms. Doug commented that naming rights for the complex would likely require a 3 year or longer term and would include site signage and other publicity efforts. Mike stated that he would follow up with the Board after he learns more.

VI New Business

VII Legislative Matters

- Board Appointment of Aleta Jeffress to Vacant Chair on District Board of Directors

Kelly made a motion to appoint Aleta Jeffress to the Elizabeth Park and Recreation District Board of Directors. Doug 2nd and all approved.

- Aleta Jeffress Oath of Office

Kelly then administered the oath of office for Aleta before inviting her to join the other Board members at the table for the remainder of the meeting.

VIII Report of Administrator and Staff

- Budget Report

Mike reviewed the budget report with the Board. He stated that both general fund and enterprise fund revenues and expenses were both tracking as expected and that there were no concerns at this time. He shared that the District projects to have $660K in its accounts to start 2025. He invited the Board to contact him individually should they have any questions, concerns, or comments about the report as they do any further review.

- Maintenance Report

Ryan Staley provided the maintenance report. He shared that fields were aerated, campground dumpster was relocated to newly built pad, a shelter was built near the disc-golf course, rebuilt two hydrants in the campground, relocated scoreboard from middle school to The Nest, lined fields for fall sports, installed ropes to delineate parking in overflow parking area near pickleball courts, and de-thatched athletic fields. Projects for the next month will include building enclosures for the campground dumpster and porta potties near the pickleball courts, clean-up of Cimarron Park ballfield, and fertilization of athletic fields.

- Programs Report

Mike shared the programs report prepared by Rebecca. The District had 197 youth register for fall soccer and 84 for flag football. The 9-12 flag football division did not have enough coaches volunteer, so staff are facilitating a large group format that will include weekly practice sessions and then intra-squad scrimmages on Saturdays. Games are scheduled to start this Saturday for fall sports and will continue for 8 weeks. In adult sports, kickball is currently occurring with 5 teams participating and everything is going well. The season concludes on September 12th. Pickleball clinics have been very successful with 10-20 people at each session. A tournament is being held on September 21-22 on the new courts and will include a fundraising focus to help secure additional site amenities. Lastly, Yoga classes are ongoing with classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9-10am. Zumba recently finished for the summer and a fall session will be announced soon.

- Childcare Programs Report

Mike shared the childcare programs report prepared by Tina. Summer camp ended on August 9th after 10 weeks of programming and both youth and parents had high praise for the new program. Tina hopes to incorporate more group lunch opportunities for next summer as well as secure additional scooters for outdoor play. Mike added that the summer day camp program was successful in covering all its direct and indirect costs this summer with a small positive net income. He expressed that as the before and after school programs come online along with the programming at Running Creek starting in 2025, the net income from these new Kids Club programs will increase and help support other District operations. The report also shared that Tina is currently completing Singing Hills licensure requirements and inspections and will be preparing the licensure application for Running Creek in coming weeks. Mike shared that he and Tina are also discussing approaching Legacy Academy and gaging their interest in having the District coordinate and manage a Kids Club program at the school.

IX Other Matters

- Pickleball Programming

Mike shared that Dondi had requested this item be included on the agenda for discussion. Dondi commented that she was just interested in making sure we were coordinating tournament events to help raise funds for park improvements and heard that was the case in the programs report, so no further discussion was needed.

Kelly then commented that he was at the new artificial turf ballfield and observed sunflower seeds being spit out, which he thought we were not going to allow. He stated that he thought staff were going to install signs stating “no sunflower seeds”. Mike asked Ryan if the signs had been installed yet, and Ryan confirmed that the field rules signs had been hung on the entrances to the field at both dugouts. Mike then asked Kelly whether he was speaking about seeds being spit on the field or on the landscaped artificial turf area. Kelly confirmed he was referring to the landscaped turf area, not the field itself. Mike then asked the Board if the intent in banning seeds was limited to the field itself as staff had been thinking, or whether the Board wanted to ban seeds on the landscaped artificial turf area as well. After some discussion regarding how the turf area could potentially be cleaned and the potential for seeds to migrate onto the field itself, the Board was in agreement that staff should install additional signage prohibiting the spitting of seeds onto the landscaped artificial turf.

X Adjournment

There being no other business, Kelly made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:19pm. Kurt 2nd and all approved.