**Elizabeth Park and Recreation District**

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**MEETING MINUTES**

June 11, 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 7:01pm and led the pledge of allegiance. Other Board members present included Dondi Connelley, Kurt Prinslow, and Doug Severinsen. Mike Barney, Executive Director was present. Aleta Jeffress, resident, was also in attendance.

II Approval of Minutes – Special Session on May 21, 2024 and Regular Meeting on May 21, 2024

Kelly asked if there were any edits needed to the minutes from the Special Session and Regular Meeting on May 21. There were none. Kurt motioned to approve the minutes from the Special Session and the Regular Meeting on May 21. Doug 2nd and all approved.

III Approval of Agenda

Kelly asked if anyone had any items they wanted added to the agenda. He then stated that he would like to add two items under “Other Matters”. He shared that he wanted the Board to discuss the expressed interest of Aleta Jeffress to be appointed to the currently vacant seat on the Board. He also stated that he wanted the Board to hear from Doug on his upcoming move and how he wants to manage his position on the Board. Mike asked the Board if he could also add an update on the GOCO planning grant under other matters. Kurt then made a motion to approve the meeting agenda with the addition of the three additional items under “Other Matters”. Dondi 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 Aleta if she wanted to address the Board. Aleta stated that she was just there to observe at this time and learn more about the District’s operations and administration.

V Continued Business

- Pickleball and Artificial Turf Ballfield Project Update

Mike shared that the project is progressing along well and that things are on schedule for the project to be completed in late July / early August pending unforeseen circumstances. He said that a ribbon-cutting ceremony is being planned and will include some programming / activities such as a pickleball clinic, and perhaps a match between the Board Members. He shared that he solicited bids for gravelling the roadway from the new parking lot to the main road through Casey Jones Park, and Hitt Enterprises was selected to do the work for $9500. He said FNF had provided a cost of $16K for the change order, so the District saved a bit of money by sub-contracting out this work on its own. Mike also shared that the High School softball team intends to use the ballfield as its home field and that it will be a great venue for the team and one-of-a-kind field in Colorado. He then informed the Board that the second payment request has recently been submitted for $525,780.

- Discuss EC West Metro District Overlap Consent

Mike updated the Board on his meeting with Jim Yates of Craft Companies regarding the EC West development on June 4th. He stated that Jim expressed sharing the Board’s vision of a regional type park being included with then the development, comparable in size and scale to Evans Park. Jim had expressed that he has an area in mind for such a park that has the potential for an improved pond / water feature, trails and natural space, and an area for improved park amenities such as athletic fields. Mike shared that he informed Jim that the Board did not want to take ownership of pocket parks though was prepared to assume ownership and management of the proposed regionally sized park space. Mike stated that Jim was expecting the assessment of a fee per home or “lot fee” similar to that which is included within the special district overlap consent agreement with Independence. He added that Jim expressed the potential to further assess financing options and the timing of the payment of lot fees to fund park related projects such as the regional park and added that Craft Companies also has a budget for park infrastructure. Mike stated that Jim did ask if the District was willing to collaborate and potentially lead in the planning of the design for a regional park site and that he informed Jim that he is able to play an active role and take this on. The Board agreed that the District wants and needs to be a part of the park design process. Mike stated that Jim expressed a desire for the regional park site to be developed over time so as to incur the development costs over time as the community grows. The Board acknowledged that this was a logical approach and that as more homes are built more park amenities will be needed. Mike stated that he did not discuss specifics such as the amount to be assessed for lot fees though Jim did mention an eventual spend of between $5 and $10M within the EC West development for park and recreation related infrastructure and improvements between development stakeholders. Kurt asked if the timeline for the master plan initiative with the Town of Elizabeth and the school district could coincide with the planning for the proposed regional park site. Mike expressed that he felt the final design likely could wait and be a part of the master plan process, though a general vision of the park may need to be developed prior to its completion. Mike then shared that there are still many details that will need to be worked out though he was happy with the level of engagement and agreement from Craft Companies on the Board’s vision for park and recreation amenities within EC West. He also shared that Jim expressed interest in a recreational facility such as an aquatics or ice facility. Mike said he shared with Jim that a pool was the most frequently requested amenity that the District hears from residents and expressed great interest in collaborating with them on a public aquatics facility within the development. Kelly then asked whether the District had been able to make any progress with introducing aquatics programming at the Independence pool. Mike stated that Independence is still interested and willing to work with us, though we have been unable to identify / hire a part-time aquatics professional to coordinate any programming. The Board directed Mike to continue to work with Jim Yates to identify areas within the development that are appropriate for park and recreation amenities and to keep the Board updated as things develop.

VI New Business

- District Exclusion Petition Request by Barret - Public Hearing

Doug made a motion to open the public hearing for the Barrett exclusion request and Kelly 2nd. All approved. Kelly asked if anyone from the Barrett party would be joining the hearing. Mike reported that he had extended an invitation to Ty Barrett though heard back that he would be out of town for the hearing. He shared that Ty asked him to share with the Board that the Barretts own several properties within the District and that the mill levy is assessed for those residential properties. He also shared that the current property is zoned as Ag and that his mother who lives on the property is on a fixed income. Kelly asked if anyone else wanted to submit a public comment. There being no other public comment, the Board then asked Mike to review the request and provide his thoughts. Mike shared that based on county records, the property is located a bit north of the high school on County Road 13 and is just over 80-acres. He shared that there are two homes listed on the property and that he believed there was also a rental unit on the property. He stated that whereas there are residential units on the property, he believed that the property should continue to be included within the District. He also stated that he believed that at least one of the known residents of the property does use park facilities on a fairly regular basis, so some direct benefit is certainly being received by the resident(s) from the District and the property owner(s) should continue to contribute as other residents are required to do. Kurt commented that if there are three residences, then that equates to three homes each being on less than a 40-acre parcel, which would then not meet the requirements for an exclusion. The Board was in agreement in acknowledging that while properties zoned as agricultural use and over 40-acres are eligible to be considered for exclusion, they believe that each residential unit within the District should help support the park and recreation system unless there are truly rare and extenuating circumstances to be considered.

VII Legislative Matters

- Board Review of Exclusion Request by Barrett and Resolution to Approve / Deny Request

Kurt made a motion to deny the Exclusion Request by Barrett and Kelly 2nd. All approved. Mike stated that he would reach out to Ty Barrett to notify him of the Board’s decision.

VIII Report of Administrator and Staff

- Budget Report

Mike reviewed the budget report with the Board. He shared that the District has collected just over $750K in GF revenues through this year and projects to collect another $650K through the end of the year. He said revenues are generally tracking as expected though he was a bit surprised development fees were doing so well with the real estate market being what it is. He reported that GF expenses are also tracking as expected. Within the EF, Mike shared that both program and campground revenues are doing very well so far this year. Dondi asked for a clarification of what all is included within rental income and Mike shared that it includes the pavilion, picnic shelters, athletic fields, and special event permits such as the Stampede and Celtic Fest. Mike reported that EF expenses are tracking as expected and that there are no concerns at this time. He shared that as of 6/6/24, the District had just over $2.2M in its cash accounts including $1,058,792 in lease proceeds and that on 12/31/2024, he projects the District having $649K on hand. He then invited the Board to reach out to him should they have any additional questions or concerns about anything within the report.

- Maintenance Report

Mike provided the maintenance report and shared that the team had been busy preparing for the Stampede, aerating and fertilizing turf, installed culvert on gravel roadway in overflow parking area within Casey Jones Park, sprayed for weeds, performed equipment maintenance, rebuilt stairs at first tee on disc-golf course, seeded worn areas on multi-purpose fields, and made a repair to the hand controller at the splashpad. Projects for the next month will include tuning irrigation systems, spraying leafy spurge along park roadways, and re-working warning tracks on ball fields.

- Programs Report

Mike reviewed the programs report. He shared that Rebecca surveyed parents / coaches on whether they preferred coach pitch or machine pitch after some concerns were expressed about the reliability and consistency of the pitching machine. The survey showed that most preferred to have coaches pitch to players and that the second preferred option was to allow teams to use either option. Rebecca will adjust rules for next year to allow teams to choose between coach pitch and machine pitch based on what may be best for their players. Registration is now open for youth fall soccer and flag football with the seasons starting on August 24th. Adult softball will begin this Friday evening at Casey Jones Park with 10 teams registered. The team fee was raised from $640 to $660 this season to help cover increased fees for officials and get closer to target cost recovery. Adult kickball and volleyball registration is also now open and we are hopeful we will get enough teams for both leagues to go. Mike shared that there has been a lot of participation in pickleball programming lately with women’s and mixed leagues recently finishing their tournaments. Some drop-in skills clinics have also been introduced with great success and the mini-camp intro sessions continue to attract a lot of interest. The next league session will start in August on the new courts. The theatre camp is now full with a waiting list and will take place July 15-20th at Elizabeth Middle School. The Challenger Soccer Camp from July 8-12 has over 40 youth registered and also represents the largest group we have ever had for this program. Lastly, the District is supporting High School athletics through managing registrations for the annual golf fundraiser and helping facilitate the Independence Day 5K.

- Childcare Programs Report

Mike reviewed the childcare programs report prepared by Tina. He shared that the first week was a success and that campers seemed to have enjoyed the activities and crafts as well as field trip to Belleview Park and farm in Englewood. Plans are complete for week 2 which include a field trip to the Denver Aquarium and a splashpad visit to Evans Park. Mike stated that Tina has begun recruiting staff for before and after-school programs at Singing Hills. Tina continues to market the program and try to grow registration levels. Mike stated that while targeted cost recovery will not be achieved for summer day camps this summer as hoped, all direct costs will be re-couped, and a great foundation will be built for expanding this programming to Running Creek Elementary in the near future. Once at full operation, this new initiative of Childcare Programs will meet the District’s financial targets while providing the community with high quality and reliable child care services.

IX Other Matters

Board Interest from Aleta Jeffress

Kelly asked Aleta if she wanted to address the Board about her interest or if she had any questions about anything. Aleta shared that she had spoke with Kelly and Mike separately a couple weeks prior to learn more about the Board as well as the District and that she was certainly still interested in joining the Board. She commented that she has a strong commitment to public / community service and believes that she has direct experience and professional skills to offer to help the Board and the District achieve its goals. Kelly asked Aleta her thoughts on a future recreation center for the community. Aleta shared that she voted favorably for the last ballot initiative and was disappointed it did not pass. She said she is also interested in expanding recreation programming / services for seniors in the community and has an interest in supporting girls softball. She then shared a little about her experience in Aurora with past park and recreation bond initiatives. Kelly then asked if there were any timelines / availability concerns with starting on the Board and being able to attend monthly meetings. Aleta commented that some plans had recently changed and she is now able to begin serving on the Board if / when she may be invited to do so and thanked the Board for their consideration of her request. Dondi asked when the term for the vacant board position is scheduled for an election? Mike stated that he was not sure if it was 2025 or 2027 but would look it up and report back to the Board.

Update on Doug Severinsen’s Board Position

Kelly asked Doug if he could share his thoughts on whether he was able and desired to remain a member of the Board based upon his upcoming relocation out of state. Doug shared that based on the input from legal counsel that he is still eligible to serve due to keeping his home in Elizabeth, he would like to remain involved if possible. He stated that he enjoys serving the community and working with different groups to improve / expand park offerings. He stated that he would likely need to attend Board meetings remotely unless he happened to be in Town when a meeting is held as he will be back frequently. He also commented that another Board Member should probably be named Treasurer since he will be out of town most often. Doug stated that he is willing to resign his chair however, if the Board believes that is best and identifies another community member to serve in his place. Kelly commented that he would like for Doug to remain a Board Member for the foreseeable future, and Kurt and Dondi expressed agreement. Doug thanked Kelly, Kurt, and Dondi, and said the group can assess how things go and make any changes as needed if things are not working or another board candidate is identified.

GOCO Planning Grant Update

Mike shared that GOCO had contacted him and notified our group that our request for funding for our master plan effort with the Town of Elizabeth and the Elizabeth School District will be approved. He shared that he will be working with town and school district staff to begin defining the goals and objectives for the plan as well as the District’s individual needs in coming weeks. Kurt asked if a consultant had been selected for the project and directed Mike to ensure he is involved throughout the process to ensure the District’s needs and interests are effectively addressed. Mike stated that a consultant had not been identified yet, and that a project kick-off meeting was scheduled for June 27th. He invited Kurt or any other Board Members to let him know if they want to be a part of the project team and said we could have two Board Members be on the project team if desired. Mike assured Kurt he would be very involved and reminded the Board that the District would likely expand the project scope a bit to address its individual needs beyond the group’s main focus. Mike then shared that GOCO had requested comments or a quote from the Board for a press release announcing that funding was being awarded. He stated that Board Members could provide him their individual quotes, or if desired, he could draft a general statement from the Board. Doug expressed that he trusted Mike to write up a statement and the other Board members agreed, asking Mike to be sure to mention the value of the project partners and it being a multi-agency approach.

X Adjournment

Kurt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:32pm, Dondi 2nd. All approved.