**Elizabeth Park and Recreation District**

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**MEETING MINUTES**

July 16, 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 Kurt Prinslow and Doug Severinsen. Mike Barney was in attendance as well as Kevin Kimball of The Adams Group, and Bill Mott, resident.

II Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting on June 11, 2024

 Kelly asked if anyone had any changes to the minutes from June 11. There being none, Kelly motioned to approve the minutes from June 11, 2024. Kurt 2nd and all approved.

III Approval of Agenda

Kelly asked if there were any needed additions to the agenda and said he had one item he would like to discuss under other matters. He explained that he had received some questions from the high school girls’ softball team booster club about the new field and wanted to hear the opinions of staff and the Board. There being no other additions, Doug moved to approve the meeting agenda with the addition of discussing the new field under other matters. 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)

- Presentation of 2023 Audit Report, Kevin Kimball with the Adams Group

Mike introduced Kevin Kimball with The Adams Group, as the coordinator of the District’s 2023 audit. Kevin then proceeded to review the audit report and summarize the findings. He began by stating that it was a clean audit with no significant material findings. He said there were some journal postings needed and this is typical each year. He discussed the challenges associated with PERA pension funding that all special districts encounter and explained that each district must carry a portion of the pension liability in its books. He thanked the District for continuing to implement recommendations over the last few years and said the 2023 audit was efficiently completed and easier than in the past due to District efforts to improve financial and accounting practices. Mike acknowledged that the Board’s direction to maintain outside accounting services throughout the year has been a big help and that while the office was effectively managing the daily cash in and cash out as Kevin expressed, the accounting service has been very helpful in keeping the financial documents current. Kevin thanked the Board for the opportunity to work with the District and invited them to contact him should they have any questions or concerns that may come up as they further review the audit report and financial statements. Kelly thanked Kevin in return for completing the District’s 2023 audit.

V Continued Business

- Pickleball and Artificial Turf Ballfield Project Update

Mike shared that the project is quickly wrapping up and that this would likely be the last update given on the project as it will be complete before the next meeting. He shared that the contractor has now almost been fully paid and that there will be one final payment made in August. Kurt asked if there was a retainage fee or if the contractor will be paid in full on the next invoice. Mike said there was a retainage that was being held though he was unsure of the amount and would report back to the Board on that. Kelly asked how long the retainage would be held and Kurt explained that it likely would be released upon completing final punch list items that are identified during the project closing. Mike stated that the turf field crew had been working steady since starting and that they expected it to be done by the end of the week. He shared that he was unsure of when Renner was to surface the pickleball courts and would follow up with the Board after the project meeting on July 17. Kurt asked if the Board was interested in having a commemorative plaque installed on the site that lists the project stakeholders. Mike commented that he was planning on ordering one that would recognize the Board Members for their leadership and commitment to completing this project for the community. Kurt suggested that the architect / design team, engineer, and contractor(s) could also be included on the plaque as this is how he has seen other projects commemorated. Both Kelly and Doug concurred that a plaque should be included for the project site as this was a significant accomplishment for the District and the community. Mike stated that he would draft the messaging for the plaque and send to the Board to review.

- Discuss EC West Metro District Overlap Consent

Mike stated that he did not have any significant updates on the EC West Metro District Overlap Consent. He shared that he had hoped to receive a draft of an agreement from Jim Yates though it was not received prior to the meeting. He expressed that a proposal was being presented by the developer to either purchase or lease portions of the adjacent land owned by the State Land Trust for the proposed school and park campus. He commented that he had not heard anything further on that yet. Kurt asked if any of the property they already own will include designation as park or recreation use or if they were depending fully upon the state land for these proposed improvements. Mike shared that their plan is to include a lineal open space / park and recreation designated area that will sit between residential areas and public / service / commercial areas. Kurt expressed some concern that park and recreation development will be very limited if the state land is not approved to be used as a part of the development.

Kelly asked about the pool at Independence and whether they have yet begun allowing non-residents of Independence to use it. He reminded the Board that allowing some pool access to District residents was a part of the initial agreement the District had negotiated with Craft Companies when Independence was being planned. Mike commented that he recently saw a public discussion on the Nextdoor app regarding the issue and that he was going to also bring this up with the Board and Jim Yates. The Board directed Mike to discuss the matter with Independence ownership and coordinate the plans for some level of public access as initially intended. Mike stated that he will do so and follow up with the Board to keep them aware of what is being done.

VI New Business

 - Planning of Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Pickleball / Artificial Turf Ballfield Project

Mike stated that he would like to establish a date for the grand opening ceremony for the new pickleball and artificial turf field. He said August 3rd or 10th were two options and that it could also be pushed out further after the amenities are being used if needed. The Board expressed a desire to hold the event sooner rather than later. Kurt asked how the new amenities will be secured between the official completion of the project and the opening to the public to ensure the safety of visitors. He expressed a concern about individuals attempting to use the facilities before they may be completed and potentially encountering unsafe conditions. Mike agreed and stated that staff will be sure to lock access gates until the project site is cleared and amenities are safe for use. Doug asked whether the new field will be open for the public to use once the project is complete or whether a permit will be required for use. Mike stated that our hope is for the facilities to be open for public use unless permitted for a private practice / event. There was some discussion on potential issues that may arise such as sunflower seeds and gum as well as steel cleats that could damage the turf. The Board expressed a need for signage to help educate park visitors on the do’s and don’ts for the field and to help preserve the new amenity. Mike acknowledged that staff will have a greater responsibility early on for observing field use, identifying actual and potential issues, and helping the community learn and understand the rules for field use. Mike then shared that Dondi was not available to attend a ribbon cutting ceremony on August 3rd, and asked if August 10th could work. Kelly and Doug confirmed that they were available though Kurt stated he would not be available. He requested that he miss the event rather than Dondi and that it be held on the 10th. The Board was in agreement that it would be best to hold the event on the 10th. Mike shared that he was working with Lynn Watts to coordinate pickleball activities and demos on the new courts and with Rebecca to have the HS softball team showcase the new ballfield. He explained that he will also arrange for refreshments, and for special guests to say a few words.

 - Greater Elizabeth Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan Kick-Off

Mike shared that he and Kurt are both a part of the project team along with Zac and Alexandra with the Town of Elizabeth and Franziska Johnson with the Elizabeth School District. He stated that he and Kurt recently reviewed the draft RFP and provided suggested edits and comments. The suggested edits included removing the term “outdoor” when used to describe parks and recreation so as to be sure the study includes indoor recreational needs and desires of the community. A second edit included the addition of neighborhood HOA open spaces and Elbert County owned parcels to the list of potential resources that should be inventoried. Kurt discussed the importance of including these spaces within the study and the potential to provide trail linkages within the community. Mike shared that the RFP will likely be issued within the next couple weeks and that vendors will then have a few weeks to submit their proposals. He suggested that the first open house type event to engage with residents would likely be in the fall and that the study is projected to be completed by late Spring or early Summer of 2025. Kurt expressed to Bill Mott that the project team will want to work with him to help engage with seniors in the community to hear their opinions and thoughts for the master plan.

VII Legislative Matters

NA

VIII Report of Administrator and Staff

 - Budget Report

Mike reviewed the budget report and stated that both the EF and GF are tracking well and that there were no significant concerns at this time.

 - Maintenance Report

Mike shared the maintenance report and acknowledged the strong commitment of Ryan and the maintenance team over the last few weeks. He stated that despite the heat, they have ensured the parks remain in great shape and are working hard every day to provide great spaces for residents to gather and play. Tasks completed over the last month included auditing the sprinkler system and replacing / readjusting heads to improve efficiency and conserve water, trimming dead branches at Evans, prepped site for new shed at artificial turf field, prepped for Celtic Fest, completed equipment repairs, and others. Projects for the next month include building the shelter at the disc golf-course, complete the new dumpster enclosure at Casey Jones, build new enclosure for porta-pottie at pickleball courts, and installing the scoreboard for the new artificial turf field.

 - Programs Report

Mike shared the programs report prepared by Rebecca. He stated that registration numbers for youth fall sports appears low right now except for the 4-6 age group. He said he hopes we see an uptick in interest over the next two weeks as registration ends July 29th. He stated the District is holding a clinic for soccer coaches this coming Saturday and that it was free for anyone interested. Adult softball season has two more weeks and the tournament will be held on July 27th. Mike shared that Rebecca will offer a men’s division next summer as there was some interest expressed this year. Registration is open for adult kickball and volleyball and numbers are lot at this time. New pickleball classes and leagues will start in mid-August on the new courts. Lastly, mike shared that the MCT Youth Theatre camp had filled with 50 youth and was being held this week. He invited the Board to attend one of the two performances this Saturday at either 3 or 5pm at the middle school.

 - Childcare Programs Report

Mike shared the Childcare Programs report prepared by Tina. He stated that we are now in week 7 of 10 of summer day camp at Singing Hills and that everything is going really well. He stated that Tina has built a strong team that care about youth and want to facilitate great programming. He shared that interest has grown all summer and that we are at our max of 30 youth for next week. Reports from parents and youth have all been positive and staff are coordinating and facilitating engaging activities and trips. Mike stated that he will provide the Board with a program budget report after its conclusion to show total revenues and expenses.

He also reported that Tina has been working to recruit and hire staff for before and after school care for the coming school year. He explained that the District will begin managing the programs at Running Creek in January of 2025 and that Tina will be securing licensing for that site this fall.

Mike thanked the Board for agreeing to take on these childcare programs and expressed that he believes the District is providing a much needed service at a high level of quality for local families.

IX Other Matters

Kelly stated that he had heard from some parents regarding the booster club to support the high school softball team. He explained that whereas they will be using the new artificial turf field in Casey Jones Park as their home field, they had some questions about what may and may not be permitted. He said the group has done concessions in the past and asked if there would be any type of facility on site that could support this activity. Mike stated that there is no concession stand or other buildings on the site at this time, other than an equipment shed that will be placed along the third base line of the ballfield. He said there will be no electric or water on site, so coolers would need to be used, but it may be possible there could be some space in the shed to store items / supplies. He said he would need to check with Rebecca and report back. Doug shared his experiences with managing similar concession activities at athletic facilities and said they could bring a pop up tent and table or even purchase a trailer to use if feasible. The Board collectively expressed support for allowing the booster club to do concessions during the games as a fund raiser for the team provided they can manage the lack of dedicated space and utilities.

Kelly then asked about banners being put up on the fences and whether this was something the booster club could also do. Kurt asked whether the fences were designed to handle wind loads from banners / windscreens and Mike indicated that while he knew windscreens were to be included on the pickleball court fencing, he was unsure about the ball field fencing. Kurt asked that Mike confirm with the contractor whether banners could be hung on the fences and get back to the Board. The Board then had some discussion on booster club fund raising opportunities and District focused fund-raising opportunities that could help purchase site amenities such as benches and shade structures that were cut from the project to reduce construction costs. The Board directed Mike to draft a sponsorship program and associated policy for them to review.

X Adjournment

There being no other business, Kelly made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:32pm. Kurt 2nd and all approved.