**Elizabeth Park and Recreation District**

**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**AGENDA**

August 19, 2025 - 7:00 pm

Meeting to be held at:

Casey Jones Pavilion – Casey Jones Park

4189 Highway 86, Elizabeth, CO 80107

I Call to Order / Roll Call / Pledge of Allegiance

Kelly opened the meeting with the pledge of allegiance at 7:01pm. Other members present included Kurt Prinslow, Dondi Connelley, Aleta Jeffress, and Zac Craig. Mike Barney and Ryan Staley were present from staff. Adam Clark with Black Hills Energy along with two other members of his team, and Matt weber and two other members of the Stampede Board were also present.

II Approval of Minutes –Regular Meeting on July 15, 2025 and Special Meeting on July 21, 2025

Dondi motioned to approve the minutes from Regular meeting on July 15th and the Special Session on July 21. Kurt 2nd and all approved.

III Approval of Agenda

Kurt motioned to approve the agenda and Aleta 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)

- Requests for Approval to Sell Alcohol – Mile High Classic Disc-Golf

Mike explained that Mile High Disc Golf is hosting a tournament in Evans Park on September 6th and has made a request to partner with the Elizabeth Brewing Company to sell beer. Mike shared that the event is also a memorial for Jeremy Priest who worked with the District along with Cameron Burrow to design and develop the course, and recently passed away after a long battle with cancer. Zac motioned to approve the request for the sale of alcohol in the park for the event and Kelly 2nd. All approved.

- 2025 Stampede Summary – Stampede Board

Matt weber with the Elizabeth Stampede then addressed the Board and provided a summary of the 2025 event. Everyone was in agreement that the event went well despite some significantly challenging weather at times. Matt and staff shared that impacts from the event to the park were fairly minimal and that they are working together to complete some re-grading and seeding in areas this fall. It was noted that the new event tent area worked well from both perspectives and Mike suggested that a permanent event shelter be pursued in the future as a better option than bringing in a tent each year. Matt shared that they are still working on a draft long-term use agreement for the rodeo arena, and that they would present it for review once complete.

Dondi noted that she was pleased that the Stampede leadership has increased their engagement with the Board and thanked them for coming to the meetings on a regular basis and keeping them informed as well as working on site improvements.

Kurt asked the dates of the community rodeo and Matt shared that it will be split over two days on September 26 and 27.

Kurt then asked if the Stampede group would be permitting all of the campsites within the campground for next year’s event so as to reduce the number of RVs that dry camp in areas of the park. He also asked how many campers are usually dry camping outside the campground. Matt shared that there are probably around 30 RVS / campers that utilize dry camping. Mike asked for clarification on whether Kurt was stating that he feels they must reserve all of the sites as a part of the event permit or if he just wanted us to extend them an opportunity to reserve sites before the public. He shared that the District does hold 4-5 sites each year that the Stampede does pay for and allocate as needed for the event. Kurt explained that he would like to see us open camping reservations for the Stampede volunteers toward the end of 2025 before they become available for the public to reserve on January 1st, and encourage use of the campground. Mike stated that he will work with the Stampede Board to implement Kurt’s requested changes.

Adam Clark then addressed the Board and introduced him and his team as representatives of Black Hills Energy. He explained that they are requesting an easement through portions of Evans and Casey Jones Parks for a new gas line that will improve service to existing customers and create new capacity for future customers. He said they initially began pursuing the project about 15 years ago though it has not been budgeted until now. He shared that the line will be 8” in diameter and will be around 200 psi. He described the requested easement requirements, dimensions, and specific location and there was some discussion with the Board about how the work would be completed and what the potential impact would be to the park and District. He explained that they would like to start the project in early 2026 and anticipate a 3-month construction timeframe. He said that they would like to execute an agreement if the Board is amenable as soon as possible. He shared a draft easement agreement with the Board and stated that they are offering $10 per foot for the easement for a total payment of $24,666. He said they would also be responsible for all restoration of any disturbed areas. Kelly asked how that number was determined and if it was negotiable. He also asked what restrictions may be put on the District for the easement. Adam expressed that $10 per foot is a market standard and that they would be willing to consider other requests regarding the agreement that the Board may have. He stated that restrictions on the easement would include no permanent structures being built and not planting trees within the easement. Kurt asked if the Board could have an opportunity to review final plans for construction and Adam said that could be arranged to occur in mid-October. Zac asked who would be responsible for maintaining the easement and Adam replied that Black Hills will restore the area and reseed after construction and complete a one-year inspection to ensure that it meets compliance for environmental restoration. He said no regular maintenance of the easement will be needed by Black Hills. Ryan commented that the area being shown is mostly open space with the exception of the portion that will run along the south soccer field in Evans Park.

Mike expressed to the Board that they can have further discussion about the request later in the meeting under new business. He shared that he thought it may be helpful to hear from Adam first in the public comments portion of the meeting and then have an opportunity to discuss the topic further. The Board then thanked Adam for attending the meeting to discuss the request and agreed to discuss more under new business.

V Continued Business

- PROST Master Plan Update and Next Steps

Mike stated the Town Trustees had formally adopted the PROST Master Plan and that the final report has been shared. He said he is working on how best to share the report with stakeholders and place on the District website. He said presently, it only seems to be available through a password secured link. He said he will work to figure this out and get it posted as soon as he can.

He then shared that he recently met with the Town Planner and Town Manager to discuss their current and planned future efforts. He stated that the Town plans to continue work on Running Creek Park, redevelop Wade Park which is located in the Hillside neighborhood near True Value. He said they may also install a concrete walkway in the linear park just south of the High School in 2026.

Mike shared that the town staff expressed an openness to reviewing a proposal from the District to manage the maintenance and programming of town parks other than Running Creek Park. Mike stated that this could help improve the parks in town and provide some potential programming opportunities. He shared that there is a sand volleyball court that can be improved and utilized for leagues, a basketball court, and a tennis / pickleball court in Bandt Park, though it needs some attention. The Board encouraged Mike to develop the proposal and continue to assess the advantages and disadvantages of entering into an agreement with the Town to manage / program Town parks.

Mike shared that he also asked about the potential to develop an archery range within the south 40 open space area owned by the town. He said the archery range was identified through the master plan process and that one is shown to be included on the 150-acre park site south of Spring Valley when that park is developed. He stated that the archery group has reached out to Casey Westbrooke and that Casey is trying to help them get something done here in Elizabeth and is offering grant funding to help support the project. Mike shared that the Town Manager suggested submitting a proposal to Town Trustees near the end of 2025.

- Capital Projects Planning

Mike shared that the pumphouse and irrigation control system at Evans Park has failed and that it will require a $14K expenditure to repair. He said that the project must be pursued as we will not have the ability to irrigate any turf until the repairs are completed. He noted that this was not an anticipated need, and was not budgeted. He explained that the project would be paid for from the capital outlay line item in the budget as there were funds remaining from proposed projects that did not move forward.

Kurt commented that he attended the pickleball group’s brunch the other day marking the one-year anniversary of opening the courts, and that there are continued requests from players to add a picnic shelter to the site. He said that staff should include a shelter for the pickleball courts within the proposed capital projects for 2026 for the Board to review. He also stated that the proposal should include a concrete pad under the shelter.

Dondi suggested that the District pursue the proposed improvements for the Casey Jones Park roadway north of the church as Ryan had previously proposed. She said that all other roadways within the park have now been improved except this one, and it made sense to get this one done too. All Board Members agreed and directed Ryan to work with the contractor to complete the project.

Mike then reviewed the capital outlay line-item for 2025. He said that there is currently an unallocated balance of $110,291. He shared that the irrigation controls and the Casey Jones Park roadway improvements which they just authorized will reduce that balance to $91,291.

- Cresence Overlap Consent Agreement

The Board reviewed the draft overlap consent agreement that Mike had shared with them earlier in the week and offered the following comments. Kurt suggested that the District request funds from the developer through the agreement to support development of the proposed regional park south of Spring Valley. He expressed that the developer did not include park elements which the District proposed such as athletic fields, so the District needs to pursue these elements in other locations. He stated that these homes will directly impact the need for such facilities, and that the District must address this impact. The Board noted that the term “building permit” within the agreement may not account for an impact fee being assessed for each residential unit within the development. They expressed a desire to identify the fee to be paid as “residential unit fee” to ensure it is assessed to each single family and multi-family unit within the development.

There was then some general discussion on how best to effectively quantify the amount of the “residential unit fee” to be assessed. Kurt suggested that the cost to develop the proposed park south of Spring Valley be divided by the number of residential units being proposed within the developing neighborhoods in that area including Cresence, Moorestead, Miller Ranch, and any other proposed developments in the northern area of the district. Mike stated that he would do some analysis and provide some data to the Board on that suggestion. The Board also directed Mike to look at the impact fees of neighboring areas such as Douglas and Arapaho Counties for comparison and report back.

VI New Business

- Adoption of PROST Master Plan

Kelly made a motion for the Board to formally adopt the recently completed PROST Master Plan. Zac 2nd the motion and all members approved.

- Review Proposals for Potential Rec Center Ballot Initiative Consultation

The Board discussed the two proposals received for consultation and campaign support for the proposed November 2026 ballot initiative to fund a recreation center. Kurt asked if there were any other firms that we could get a proposal from, and Mike shared that he was not able to find any others. He said he is certainly willing to reach out to additional firms however if any of the Board Members provide him contact information.

For the Sean Walsh proposal, Kurt noted that it states the scope of work ends at the time the Board votes to approve the final ballot language, and he expressed concern that additional work seems like it will be needed after that point in the final two months before the election. Mike shared that he believes this is stated that way to ensure that the District does not expend funds on the campaign beyond the point which it is legally allowed to do so. Kurt expressed that he sees this as an issue and asked Mike to talk with Sean Walsh about how he can continue to promote the initiative within the community and work to get out the vote after the District must pull away from any promotional efforts. Mike said he would find out and report back to the Board.

Aleta asked about the exclusive mention of Facebook within the proposal, and whether other platforms will be utilized such as Instagram. Mike stated that he would find out and report back. Zac expressed that he felt the digital marketing plan needs some work and that there could be more effective means to reach residents and that additional efforts may be needed in this area.

Kurt commented that Groundswell, who provided the other proposal, seemed to be more focused on candidate campaigns in their past work rather than ballot initiatives based on his review of their website. He suggested that we request references from former clients that she has worked with on ballot / funding initiatives. Kelly expressed some concern with the reliance on door to door contacts within the proposal and questioned the logistics of successfully doing this in a rural community such as Elbert County. He expressed that homes are pretty spread out other than in the newer developed neighborhoods, and that many rural residents may not like someone coming onto their property. The other Board Members agreed that door to door canvassing could be problematic and inefficient for our campaign. Zac asked if they could remove the door to door canvassing and focus on other methods of outreach. Mike shared that in his conversation with the consultant, it became clear that door to door outreach was the foundation of their approach and what they attributed to much of their past success. He said he could ask if it can be removed or de-emphasized, though he expects that this is a critical element of their proposal that they feel is necessary.

Kelly asked if there was an opportunity to decrease the scope and cost and select certain elements from their proposals while rejecting other elements. Mike stated that he did have that discussion with the consultants and that in both cases, they cautioned against this approach. He explained that the consultants certainly acknowledged the high costs, but stressed that using a half-measure is usually not effective with these campaigns and that they really prefer the full scope is pursued. He said there may be some opportunities to fine tune aspects of the scope of work and lower the overall cost, though that should be done once we select the consultant we want to work with.

Mike shared that he would reach back out to the consultants with the questions raised and report back to the Board.

Kurt then asked Mike if he could look at the recreation district in Eagle Valley / Edwards to see the history of their mill levy and how they may have increased it over the years. He said it may be helpful to see how they have funded their parks and facilities for comparison. Mike said that he would look into this and report back to the Board.

- Discuss Offer to Purchase Gabehart Property

The Board discussed the potential purchase of property adjacent to Casey Jones Park. Mike shared that Mr. Gabehart continues to be interested in selling the property to the District. Kelly stated that he had researched the property and found that a quick claim deed was filed in April of 2025, which lists more than one owner of the property. He asked Mike to confirm ownership and ensure that Mr. Gabehart can sell the property on his own or if there are multiple owners that need to be a part of any sales agreement. Mike said that he would look into this and report back to the Board. The Board then had some general discussion about the potential value and utility of the property. The Board was in agreement that the property, due to its adjacency to the park and odd “L” shaped dimensions could be a good addition and may not have a lot of value for other uses. The Board encouraged Mike to continue to engage with Mr. Gabehart to identify a price provided that he is the sole owner and able to sell it. Dondi asked how the District would fund the purchase if a price could be negotiated, and whether we would need to add long-term debt. Mike stated that if the cost is over $400K, the District would likely not be able to fund the purchase entirely within the 2026 budget. He said that Mr. Gabehart did at one time express that he may be willing to spread payments over a period of more than one year, so he will inquire about that again should the cost reach that amount. Mike added that should Mr. Gabehart want full payment at the time of purchase and the cost is over $400K, then the purchase would need to be financed to some degree.

- Black Hills Energy Request for Easement

The Board revisited the Black Hills easement request proposal. Mike reviewed the initial meeting he had with Adam about the project and reminded the Board that he was told the District was being offered $40K for the easement. He noted that the current agreement presented to the Board was reduced to $24,666. Mike shared that the total area being requested is 1.13 acres and that he essentially sees this as Black Hills purchasing an acre of property from the District. He explained that they will have 24-hour access to it 365 days per year, and are also proposing restrictions for what the District may do on that acre of property. He then asked Kelly what the value of 1-acre of property within the area is valued. Kelly explained that the value can and does vary widely based on many factors, but noted that $40K is certainly within the range. The Board directed Mike to request $16 per foot for the easement within the agreement and also to include language to ensure that the south soccer field is in tact and available for play for the 2026 Spring season. Zac expressed that they should be able to adjust the construction schedule to meet our needs and may need to use sod in some areas rather than seeding the area and waiting for grass to regrow. Mike stated that he would contact Adam to request the $16 per foot for the easement and explain the needs around the south soccer field and Spring season and report back to them with any updates.

VII Report of Administrator and Staff

- Budget Report

Mike reviewed the budget reports. He stated that most everything was tracking as expected and that he did not foresee any issues through the rest pf the year at this time. He did share that campground revenues continue to lag behind last year by about 25% though August is proving to be a good month to date. He finished the report by sharing that the District projects having just under $800K at year end it its cash accounts.

- Maintenance Report

Ryan reviewed the maintenance report and shared some tasks / projects that had been completed over the past month including: irrigation system repairs, installation of the 2nd basketball hoop at Evans Park, lined all athletic fields for the fall season, swept the turf field, installed new park sign at Cimarron, sprayed for weeds, and mowed / weed-eated as needed.

- Programs Report

Mike shared the programs report and noted the following: 166 youth are registered for fall soccer which is down 30 from last year and 75 for flag football which is the same as last year; Rebecca held a training for officials; Little Dudes Soccer for (1-3) year olds remains immensely popular; registration is open for adult sports including pickleball, kickball, and flag football tournament; New pickleball league formats are being introduced including a ladder league; Yoga classes continue to be held in the pavilion with about 8 people attending each class.

- Childcare Programs Report

Mike shared the childcare programs report. He noted that summer day camps ended on Aug 8th and that we had over 2303 camper visits between the two sites over 10 weeks. He explained that this resulted in over $115K in gross revenues and earned a net of $37,755. He reminded the Board that this net revenue helps support the before and after school programs which the District must at times subsidize as well as help cover a number of indirect program expenses and agency overhead. He explained that the sudden departure of the Site Director at Running Creek early in the summer created a number of challenges throughout the summer, though he recognized Inez Christoffersen for acting as the interim site director and allowing the program to continue through the summer. He stated that the search for a new part-time site director has yielded no success to date and that he is now advertising the full-time Childcare Programs Coordinator position that has been vacant since January. He said that this individual will serve as the site director at Running Creek and will oversee all Kids Club programming for the District. Mike shared that he received the resignation from two Lead teachers at Running Creek Kids Club staff the weekend before school began and this has also created staffing pressures, requiring him to work some shifts himself.

VIII Other Matters

No other matters were discussed.

IX Adjournment

Zac made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:46pm and Dondi 2nd. All approved.