



**Parks, Recreation, & Forestry Advisory Board – MINUTES**  
**Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, City Council Chambers 7:30 A.M.**

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The meeting was held in the Council Chambers and is available at:  
<https://vimeo.com/868487261?share=copy>

**CALL TO ORDER** 7:31 AM

**ROLL CALL** In attendance were Caldwell, Dardis, Griffith, Neilson, Reth, Running, Weigel, and Clark. Also in attendance were P & R Director Ehnes, SRAC Facility Superintendent Rauterkus, Parks Maintenance Superintendent McDonald, City Attorney McDonald, City Administrator McFarland, Mayor Senden, and Front Desk and Concession Coordinator Heiting. Absent: Coburn, Winterstein.

**DECLARATION OF ANY POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST** No conflicts of interest were declared.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA** Caldwell moved, Dardis seconded and all voted to approve the agenda.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** Weigel motioned to table the approval of the August 17<sup>th</sup> minutes due to not being included in the packet. Reth seconded, and all voted to approve the motion to table the approval of the minutes.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** Public comment was opened at 7:32 AM with no comments received.

**OLD BUSINESS**

***Board Items***

- Question and answer session on the September staff update.
  - Ehnes provided an update on the Rocketship renovation at Evans Park. Ehnes met with the team that is renovating the Rocketship to discuss surfacing for the project. The fundraising committee for this project has brought in roughly \$15,000.00. Due to the continued cost of supplies, the Rocketship renovation team is discussing returning to the city to ask for more funding to finish the project.
  - Clark questioned if the city was planning on having a grand opening for the playground that was installed by the city. Ehnes stated that the construction of the playground is completed with the surfacing scheduled to be completed by the end of September. Ehnes agreed that when the project is completed, a ribbon cutting/grand opening would be possible.

**Next Meeting – October 26th , 2023, 7:30 A.M. Council Chambers**



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---

- Clark suggested that a grand opening event would be a great opportunity to draw the community to the park to see the progress and encourage the community to donate to the Rocketship renovation.
- Weigel questioned if the height of the slides was compliant with current safety standards. Ehnes stated that the slides are manufactured to the appropriate height and meet all safety standards, but do seem abnormally close to the ground.
- Caldwell questioned when the skatepark structure was scheduled to be removed. Ehnes stated that the school has not been in contact since receiving the letter from Superintendent Easton informing the city of the need for removal. The timeline given to the City was fall of 2024, the city will schedule removal prior to September 2024.
- Neilson questioned if there are any activities planned for this fall at the Sportsplex. Ehnes stated that due to the buildings being under construction, appropriate amenities are not available. Depending on the construction status, and if alternative amenities are available, the fields may be available for play in the spring of 2024.
- Neilson questioned the status of the naming rights for the Sportsplex. Ehnes stated that due to the large task of raising two million dollars, a firm has been hired to assist in the fundraising efforts.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### ***Director Items***

- Discuss sports field pay-to-play structure and establish a sports field task force.
  - Ehnes presented a presentation regarding a pay-to-play structure for all organizations utilizing field space.
  - Weigel discussed her concern about the financial stability of different organizations and allowing all organizations the opportunity to utilize adequate field space, regardless of being able to obtain the funds required.
  - Dardis questioned what happens with the assets purchased by the organization that will be used at the Sportsplex. Ehnes stated due to different organizations using the field space, all assets purchased by organizations will need to be dedicated to the city due to the complexity of use.
  - Caldwell commented that due to the complexity of different organizations using the equipment, a dedication of equipment would eliminate any conflict if the equipment is deemed unplayable as well as continue to be aware of field space regardless of equipment contribution.

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- City Administrator McFarland commented on his past experience with different municipalities and expressed the need for a collaborative view from the board, as well as the need for continued discussion on community needs as well as cost recovery.
- Griffith commented that a pay-to-play structure provides a more precise rental. Organizations that reserve the field space are more aware of utilizing the space for the reserved time. Griffith stated that there is a difference in field availability and field reservations. Implementation of a new structure would eliminate monopolizing field space.
- Clark discussed the organization's responsibilities and required maintenance that would be eliminated if the city were to implement a pay-to-play structure. The city would be responsible for all maintenance and continued upkeep throughout the seasons, therefore eliminating tasks required from the organization.
- Griffith discussed creating a task force to help create discussions with different organizations to develop a plan to navigate any potential restructuring.
- Caldwell moved, Weigel seconded and all voted to assemble as a task force to study the MOU pay-to-play process.
- Ehnes requested that nominations for task force members be submitted via email.

#### ***Rec & Aquatic Center Items***

- Adjust the 2024 fees at the Spearfish Rec and Aquatics Center.
  - Rauterkus discussed a fee increase for the waterpark fees and summer programs. As well as a new fee structure to remove the non-resident rate for various government buildings and all shelter reservation fees.
  - Weigel expressed concern over the increasing cost of admission, Rauterkus explained the obstacles the facility experiences with hiring and the increase in the cost of operation.
  - Weigel questioned if the Rec Center offers a scholarship to help families in need of assistance with the purchase of services offered by the Spearfish Rec Center. Rauterkus discussed the scholarship opportunities and advised anyone who is in need of assistance is welcome to fill out and submit a scholarship application.
  - Ehnes discussed the different services that are provided and how scholarship fees are allocated.
  - Reth questioned if it would be an option for staff to ask for donations that would assist with the scholarship fund when completing a transaction. Rauterkus agreed that

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asking for a small donation fee is a great idea to help build the scholarship fund to help assist those in need.

- Caldwell moved, Dardis seconded and all voted to approve the fees as presented.

**FYI ITEMS**

- October meeting date
  - The October Advisory Board meeting has been rescheduled to October 26, 2023, due to a scheduling conflict.
- PRF Advisory Board Compensation
  - Starting January 2024, Advisory Board members will be compensated \$60.00 per meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

- Griffith moved, Reth, seconded and all voted to adjourn at 8:50 A.M.

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