

Draft

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF PARKS & RECREATION
WAS HELD AT 5:30 P.M. 2024 AT THE WARC.**

PRESENT: Liffrig, Linghor, Heller, Roness
Staff: Barsh, Kaneko, Lynner, Cote

ABSENT: Jangula

OTHERS: Barsh, Kaneko, Cote, Lynner, Christen

5:30pm: Heller called meeting to order.

Additions or Deletions: N/A

- I. WPRD Annual Park Board Retreat
 - a. 2025 Preliminary Budget Forecast review
 - i. Questions/concerns/ideas
 1. Budget was made in consideration of what the City and Williams county are projecting for the 1% sales tax collection in 2025, & WPRD conservative estimate of generated revenues and expected expenses. WPRD budget is currently based off a \$10.75M 1% collection which is an average collection of \$895K per month for the district to operate with.
 2. General Expenses are higher because of program participation increases and program improvements.
 3. Some wish list items: automated scrubbers, eco harvester, fitness equipment (free weight side).
 4. The Final Budget will be balanced by including the staff "Wish list" items.
 5. Water World – signed the MOU with Community Builders to receive three years of operation expenses when Water World is completed and turned over to WPRD. We won't know operating cost until year 1 is done. Between studies, we had a base line of \$500k for operating cost of year 1. We will see what year 1 costs end up and will work forward from there. For 2025, we have Budgeted \$650k to make sure there is flexibility to operate Water World without creating budgetary issues in real time.
 - b. 2025 & Beyond Strategic Planning
 - i. Interstate engineering – Site Plan (Ice facility discussion)
 1. Anseth Property
 2. RFCC
 3. Davidson area
 4. Williston Square
 5. Agri Sports complex
 - a. JPA with Williams County will be presented for signature at the September Regular Park Board meeting – new ice facility will come to Williston. \$22M have been appropriated for this facility through the Public Safety Tax that was recently. The project will require support from a private fundraising arm to be successful.

All stakeholders will be included in the site review process to determine where the facility goes and identify any amenities that should be included, aside from ICE. It has not been formally discussed as of yet, but WPRD will be the likely operating partner of this new facility. 5 locations will be reviewed. The first stakeholder meeting will be on 9/24 and will be overseen by Interstate Engineering.

- i. Anseth property – 10 acres that is in consideration to be donated to WPRD to help the soccer community.
 - ii. RFCC – will have a study to see if we need to build from ground up or can we expand?
 - iii. Davidson Area – the green space behind the school admin building is being included to see if there is flexibility in the site.
 - iv. Agri Sports Complex – Current home to the Hockey Club but the site would involve a lot of political and infrastructure work.
 - v. Williston Square – WPRD will only consider the square if the facility is in close proximity to the Hanger and the Hanger can be used as a Turf center.
 - b. Site study will tell us where this facility goes and will tell us a lot of the other areas on what we can and can't do.
 - c. JPA says that the County is paying for the study. This will be a \$200K planning effort.
- ii. Continuing disclosure update – WPRD current bonding status
 1. WPRD Future bonding potential
 - a. Joe provided perspective of where we are at in our current bonding operations and how current sales tax is impacting our funding renewal strategy.
 - i. Sales tax continues to do well in 2024 and WPRD cannot risk losing .5% of the collection if the ARC is paid off prior to the sunset date of 2032.
 1. Continuing disclosures are on par with 2023, which was the best year WPRD has ever had financially.
 - ii. WPRD plans to strategize a funding renewal of the 1% sales tax collection in Q3 of 2025 for 20 years, to continue to operate the district and address capital needs.
 1. Also cannot risk losing the sales tax and placing an additional property tax burden on Williston residents.
 - b. Joe presented the WPRD sales tax renewal justification. Joe talked with bonding experts to understand everything. 20 year extension of 1 cent sales tax beginning July 2025. This extension before the sunset date does not affect the sunset date that was approved in 2012 (2032).

- c. With funding renewal, the first thing we would do is refund our current bonding agreement. Common practice for Public infrastructure bonding projects.
 - i. Financial benefit – To refund in 2017, WPRD had to put \$1M out of reserves into the agreement to make the bonds attractive. If refunded in 2025, the 1mm would come back to the district.
 - ii. Long-term funding benefit – Due to healthy sales tax, there is a likely potential that current ARC bonds will be paid off prior to sunset (2032). If that occurs, the WPRD sales tax collection would be cut in half. Staff believe that due to current economic & political conditions, it is important that the full 1% collection be extended to operate the district moving forward.
 - iii. Financial flexibility / real time accounting – With an extension, The current bonding structure would be simplified to all WPRD to budget in real time. This would create more flexibility for the district to generate revenues and increase reserve funds.
 - iv. Current / Future projects - With an extension and refund – WPRD can initiate Capital projects.
 - 1. – golf course extension, ice facility, trails and RFCC expansion ect.
- d. Refund scenarios
 - i. Scenario 1 is 15m add to debt service. 25 years max on amortization period. Max annual debt service will be \$2.4m. New Total debt service for \$32M.
 - ii. Scenario 2 is 30mm add to debt service. 25 years max on amortization period. Max annual debt service will be \$3.6m. New Total debt service for \$48.5M.
 - iii. These Scenarios are meant to serve as guides for future financial planning, not necessarily the only options. Generated revenue estimate would be 6m in 2026. Bond counsel will now use this information along with our future operational plans to determine where the line of debt service should be drawn.
 - iv. Bond council is confident in both scenarios providing a healthy financial future for WPRD.
 - v. Stil TBD – To avoid the potential of Future Sales Tax Rebates, there is also the option to seek the removal of the sales tax cap as well. This would likely be in conjunction with the City. We will evaluate this step with bond counsel to determine if it should be included in the 2025 funding renewal strategy.
 - vi. Funding renewal Strategy – WPRD staff are not allowed to lobby for a yes vote. A YES committee must be established from the community to push this measure forward. Board member involvement is allowed but

closely watched. We will pay close attention to the property tax abolishment to understand the political landscape to guide this decision. Joe will get clarification from legal counsel on how much park board commissioners can participate in YES Committee activities.

- iii. WPRD Known capital projects (in 2025 budget plans)
 - 1. Outdoor basketball court updates (Davidson Park)
 - a. Need more basketball court updates due to taking away 6 basketball courts.
 - i. Would like to restore the courts at Davidson but need to address water table concerns.
 - ii. We will use asphalt over concrete for these projects moving forward.
 - 2. Bathrooms @ SLP
 - a. Replacing the bathrooms at SLP.
 - 3. Frisbee Golf Course updates
 - a. WPRD got the Garrison grant for \$27K to help with renovating Frisbee Golf Courses.
- iv. Funding dependent 2025 projects (With 1mm kickback from renewal)
 - 1. ARC access control – fob system
 - a. Need to fob the ARC. Weary of keys out in the public since 2013. ARC is so busy that we need to know who is coming in. Freedom to work with other user groups to allow access to the facility.
 - 2. Teen lounge reconfiguration – concessions area
 - a. We need a concessions area in our facility due to the large events. Teen Lounge concept did not work in favor of operations and the space can be utilized in a more effective way.
 - i. The goal would be to Section off the teen lounge and redo it for flex space for fitness and reservations daily and serve as concessions space during large events.
 - 3. Keelboat paint
 - a. At the very least, the Keelboat needs to be painted. Discussion on future of the keelboat – While it is a community site that pays homage to the Lewis & Clarke Exploration, the reality is the space could be used to build a facility that better serves the communities need for more reservable spaces.
- v. Future Capital projects on the radar
 - 1. Golf Course expansion
 - a. Get 18 holes in the golf course. Community feedback makes this a high priority project. Also once completed, this project would generate revenue for WPRD to operate more freely.
 - 2. RFCC updates

- a. Site visit study will give us more information. What happens with the ice facility will dictate what the future of the RFCC will look like.
- 3. Harmon Park Pool area – CVB Grant project
 - a. We are working towards a facility project that will utilize the space from the old pool to serve as a splash pad in the summer & an ice rink in the Winter. Joe has begun working with contractors and architects to begin the planning stages of this project.
 - b. We would also look to reconfigure the site for more parking and improve the electrical to better serve vendors during the large community events that are held at Harmon Park annually.
- 4. Parking lot maintenance
 - a. Cote Park (Needs a site masterplan)
 - i. Need address parking lots at WPRD as a whole. Our biggest hazard is Cote Park. Narrow road and parking on both sides.
 - b. Western Star
 - i. 2nd highest parking lot priority.
- 5. Trails updates – Rhonda
 - a. Will be working towards state grants for trails. Williston is in need of a better trail network. Biggest cost of trails is the maintenance (snow removal).
- 6. Parks expansion – north of town (Loves Site)
 - a. There is potential for a future project north of town. If construction at the site begins, WPRD will be entitled to a portion of the land. WPRD has communicated to the City that our intention would be to construct 4 adult fields out there and then reconfigure the Western Star into a youth complex.
- vi. Potential new Full-Time position
 - 1. Membership Specialist
 - a. Conversation on role justification – evaluation process
 - b. Looking at operations – We have a ton of membership types that we are asking a lot out of our front desk staff. We are preparing them to fail since they are not equipped with the resources to provide customer service. The Membership specialist will be the one that oversees all memberships. For qualifications – would be communications and hospitality. We believe adding this role will improve operations at the front desk and result in less financial issues and better customer service for our patrons.

II. No correspondence or citizens to be heard.

III. MOTION by Liffrig SECONDED by Linghor the meeting adjourn.

IV. MOTION CARRIED.

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Next Park Regular Board Meeting **Tuesday, September 17th, 2024 @ 5:30pm** in the **Jordy Larvick Board Room at the Williston Area Recreation Center (822 18th St E)**

ATTEST: Kazuma Kaneko, Programs and Facilities Director