

Minutes  
Cheney Park Board Commission  
Regular Meeting

**March 8, 2023**

Commissioners Attending: Chris Hoppe, Ryan Delaney, Chris Babcock, Ron Valencia, Kelley Cullen.

Commissioners Absent: Savannah Youmans, Jackie Randall.

Staff Attending: Kelly McGinley Ashe, Ethan Olson, Brett Lucas, Todd Ableman.

Staff Absent: Leslie Bridges.

Councilmembers Attending: Paul Schmidt.

Call to Order: Commissioner Hoppe called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Minutes: Minutes of the February 8, 2023 regular meeting were approved by Commissioner Delaney and seconded by Commissioner Cullen.

Information Items:

- A. 50 Acre Park Update – Brett Lucas from the City of Cheney’s Planning department stated that the City is working with CJ Alliance as our contractor and they are working with the Recreation Conservation Office (RCO). The property was purchased about 20 years ago with an RCO grant. The City has had different issues going on with that property over the years. Most currently we are trying to get the property compliant with the RCO office and their grant requirements. The City officials are meeting the RCO folks out at the site on Monday to get the delineation of the final park area and get some feedback from them and we will proceed from there. The biggest challenge is getting the RCO office to engage. Commissioner Hoppe inquired as to who would be in attendance at Monday’s meeting. Mr. Lucas stated that himself, Mr. Ableman, City Administrator Mark Schuller, and 3-4 people from CJ Alliance. Commissioner Hoppe inquired about the City’s desired outcome of this situation. Mr. Lucas stated that there are a couple options, one would be to use the whole 50 acres or use the south half only and the north half could be something else, possibly partnering with EWU for ballfields. The RFP the City is doing right now is for a park plan as well as a conflict analysis. Dr. Cullen is on the search committee with the applicant to get a sense of what is exactly out at that location and how it could benefit the City. Commissioner Hoppe inquired if “something else” means selling the property or developing. Mr. Lucas stated that the City would like to see something recreational in that area that still meets the RCO requirements.
- B. NAC Update – Keith Combs from NAC reported that both pool options were presented at City Council and now NAC is looking at the operations budget analysis. Mr. Ken Ballard of Ballard King Associates has helped out with that analysis. There have been a couple renditions of this analysis. The first one showed the operation subsidy was a little higher and after meeting with Mr. Ableman and Mr. Schuller we were able to make some refinements based on how the City intends to operate that facility and came up with a second revised option that has dropped the cost by about \$100,000. Mr. Comes handed out a summary of the analysis expenses and

revenue stating that this is not the complete analysis. A large part of our operating costs is staff. Mr. Ballard stated that the largest share of costs for pool operations will be staffing the pool with lifeguards. It could be several years before we can recover the cost if at all. Washington States minimum wage law to increase wages yearly will definitely impact the operational costs. Mr. Combs openly discussed the analysis with the Park Board members and Mr. Ballard for more clarification. Councilmember Schmidt inquired if the new configuration would require more lifeguards and how many lifeguards are needed. Mr. Ballard stated that for option 1 of the pool design, 10 lifeguards would be required at high use time and the need to accommodate guarding 3 areas of water including rotation. With option 2 of the pool design, 12 lifeguards would be needed with the addition of a slide and climbing wall. Modifications to the design would mean less or more guards. Councilmember Schmidt inquired about how the admission fee structure was created. Mr. Ballard stated that a mix of county numbers and city numbers were used to get the suggested admission fees. Councilmember Schmidt stated that he is more in favor of design option 2 and then fine tuning it from there. City Council will have to decide on a number they are comfortable with in order to move forward. Commissioner Hoppe stated that final decisions will be made by the recreation staff as they will be overseeing those funds and the allocation of funds. Council will also be considered on allocation of funds. Mr. Ableman stated that at this point there are a lot of unknowns. The Recreation staff will have to stay within budget as we have no more additional funding sources at this point. We need to look at funding options and funding sources like the county and private industries. Councilmember Schmidt stated that the recreation budget competes with the public safety budget. Commissioner Hoppe inquired if this is moving forward with City Council. Councilmember Schmidt confirmed that we are on track to get this pool project on the August ballot for a vote of the people. Councilmember Schmidt and Mr. Ableman agreed that it is really important to promote this through outside groups to assure a good outcome. Mr. Ableman recommended that NAC or Recreation staff present the finalized plans as an informational item at the March 28<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting.

- C. Dog Park Updates – Mr. Ableman stated that the fabric is up and one spot needs to be backfilled and the fence will be reinforced in the future if needed. It is currently being used. Commissioner Babcock inquired about seeding. Mr. Ableman said he is not sure what is acceptable for that area but we are open to suggestions. Councilmember Schmidt stated that after the fencing is finalized, we will see what is left for funds and see what amenities we can add.
- D. Spokane Parks Foundation Grant Award – Ms. McGinley Ashe stated that we were awarded a \$1500 grant to put dog waste stations in 5 of our parks. Those parks are Hagelin, Sutton, Veterans, Centennial and the new dog park and if there are funds left over we will put some at Moos Field as well. We should receive the grant in about 2-3 weeks and then we will purchase the dog waste stations and work with the parks maintenance team to get them installed.
- E. Gardner’s of Cheney – Ms. McGinley Ashe stated that she was approached by the Gardner’s of Cheney and they would like to maintain a small garden under the sign at Moos Field. They would like to place a stone plaque in memorial of those local gardeners who have passed on. She handed out a photo of what they have in mind. This has been done in the past and the Gardner’s would like to bring it back. Commissioner Delaney asked if the stone plaque would be secured. Ms. McGinley Ashe stated that she would bring that up to the Gardner’s of Cheney. The Gardner’s would be responsible for the maintenance of this garden so the responsibility would

not fall on the park's maintenance staff. Councilmember Schmidt suggested a written agreement between the Gardner's of Cheney and the City of Cheney.

Citizen Participation: None.

Action Items: Vote to approve/deny Gardner's of Cheney maintaining a small garden at Moos Field under the park sign. Commissioner Delaney motioned to approve, pending a written agreement between the Gardner's of Cheney and the City of Cheney. Commissioner Babcock seconded the motion. All in favor.

Tree Board Business: None.

Commissioner Reports: Commissioner Hoppe inquired about the Parks Director status. Councilmember Schmidt stated that Human Resources is still working on a job description.

Staff Reports: Ms. McGinley Ashe reported that she and Mr. Olson attended a community resources fair at EWU. The fair was very well attended and we handed out a lot of employment information so hopefully we will be well staffed for summer.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved By:

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Leslie Bridges, Administrative Clerk

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Chris Hoppe, Chairman