

**Canon City Area Metropolitan Recreation and Park District
575 Ash Street
Canon City, CO 81212
(719) 275-1578**

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
August 13, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER The Canon City Area Metropolitan Recreation and Park District Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Board President, Nick Sartori, in the board meeting room located at 575 Ash Street.

ROLL CALL

Board Members:

Present: Nick Sartori
Joel Dudley (*via Teams*)
Andrew Palmasano
Melissa Smeins

Staff: Kyle Horne Executive Director
Dawn Green Finance Director

Attorney: Dan Slater

Guests: Pat Grette

ACCEPTANCE OF CONSENT AGENDA

There was agreement to adjust the order of the agenda items under Unfinished Business due to the later entrance into the meeting by the presenter on the pool survey results.

Board member Andy Palmasano made a motion, seconded by board member Melissa Smeins to accept the consent agenda as written on the August 13, 2024 regular meeting agenda. Motion carried unanimously, all present voting aye.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Board member Melissa Smeins asked if it was acceptable for Every Town Needs a Pool to campaign at Recreation District events. There is no policy regarding this, and it hasn't been done in past practice. Attorney Dan Slater stated that the District can't stop someone from campaigning at District events on District property. This topic will be on the agenda at the special meeting next week. Board members have been speaking to members of the public about the pool and the proposed mill levy increase.

Board member Nick Sartori's article for the newspaper about the project was published and Kyle will be reaching out to former board members (and current board members) about also submitting articles.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

Executive Director – Kyle Horne reported:

According to CEBT, the District's health insurance provider, the health insurance portion for 2025 will increase 13.5% and dental will increase 4%. The District needs to decide about coverage by mid-October. The current health plan is a PPO 3, and the District could look at a PPO 4 (with higher deductibles and out of pocket) to save money, but this would increase the cost to the employees. The passage of propositions 50 and 108 would change property taxes resulting in a reduction in revenue for the District.

The District has not received notice yet of the increases for property and liability and workers compensation insurance for 2025.

The District received \$5,000 from the El Pomar Foundation for the Magellan survey and was awarded \$10,000 of the \$30,000 grant request for the dog park improvements.

Kyle spoke with a representative from Placer AI. The company tracks cell phone usage to measure traffic patterns. In the demo, it showed that 86,000 cell phone users were in Rouse Park in 2023, which was up 8% from the previous year. A one-mile stretch of the Arkansas Riverwalk from Sells Ave. to Ash St. saw 35,000 users. During COVID this number was 45,000. The cost of the program is \$22,000 per year. The representative offered a deal for 16 months at \$10,000. At this price, Kyle will see if the City is interested in splitting the cost. Board member Nick Sartori stated that he saw some value in the program.

Kyle met the new President of Pueblo Community College (PCC). PCC is putting in an 18-hole disc golf course. Kyle stated the District would promote the course.

Dan Slater:

Dan Slater stated that the plat is signed for the Whitney property, and it should be on the County's agenda to finish the land swap for the trail.

On a personal note, Dan informed the Board that he has been nominated as a District Court Judge. The Governor will make the decision. If selected, he would take office on October 1st and the District would need to find a new attorney.

The trail connector project was discussed. The County's Road and Bridge Department is aware of the proposed trail and signage would be needed near the road

crossing. The City will have materials to improve the parking area. Terra Firma will build the trail, and a fencing company will be sought for the fencing.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Update on Use of Backfill Funding and Battery Powered Equipment

The new roof and gutters on the office building are complete. A lot of purlins did need to be replaced.

The District received a quote on battery powered equipment. Right now, it can be purchased with a 50% discount- 30% from the State and 20% from Stihl. A copy of the quote was included in the board packets. It includes 2 chainsaws, 6 blowers, an edger/pole saw, 6 trimmers and 6 battery packs with charging station. According to the company, the energy cost to charge a piece of equipment is \$1 per year. They also offer a zero-turn mower for \$17,989.

As the District did not receive the full grant amount for the dog park project, \$20,000 from backfill can be used to cover this shortfall. The programs department would also like to upgrade their camera. Including the cost of these items in the backfill funding list leaves a balance of \$61,169.18 which may be used for end of year bonuses or for reserves.

Board member Nick Sartori made a motion, seconded by board member Andrew Palmasano to use backfill funding for the dog park improvement project and the equipment. Motion carried unanimously, all present voting aye.

NEW BUSINESS

Intergovernmental Agreement with Fremont County on Coordinated Election

The agreement would allow for the District to run a coordinated election with the County. The District is only committed to the process once ballot language is submitted.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-14

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ENTRY INTO AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH FREMONT COUNTY FOR THE PURPOSES OF CONDUCTING A COORDINATED ELECTION IN NOVEMBER 2024

Board member Andrew Palmasano made a motion, seconded by board member Nick Sartori to approve Resolution No. 2024-14. Motion carried unanimously, all present voting aye.

Discussion on Draft Ballot Language

Kyle and Dan were on a call with Tom Peltz, Todd Snidow, the City Administrator and the City Attorney to discuss the ballot language. Copies of the draft language were included in the board packet. There are no numbers in the draft. With pool option A, the increase would be 3 (three) mills and option B would be 4 (four) mills. Attorney Dan Slater reviewed the draft and does not have a problem with it. There are further meetings on the issue on the 19th and 21st. The ability to keep the mills is included in the language. TABOR

requires the language to include numbers for the cost at the full life of the loan with interest. Much of the language cannot be changed. Board member Melissa Smeins questioned what information goes into the voter blue book. The District needs to summarize the comments received, both pro and con, and submit them to the County. The board will vote on the ballot language on the 21st.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Update on Pool Feasibility Study and Survey Results

The board returned to unfinished business when Ryan Winger from Magellan Strategies joined the meeting remotely. He stated that Magellan's survey took place from July 25th to August 4th and piggybacked on the surveys completed by Councilman-Hunsaker. Magellan sent out text messages for the survey and received 1,027 responses. The survey asked the same tax impact questions to the respondents both before and after being informed about the pool closure and the District's funding for operations. For pool Option A 65% approved of a .25% sales tax increase. There was no movement in no votes between informed and uninformed. However, for the 3 mill increase tax question, the approval rating moved up 4% to 62%. The responses to the debt financing question were similar. For pool Option B (a .30% increase in sales tax), the approval rating increased 3% from uninformed to 61% informed. The 4 mill increase in property tax question approval rating increased 2% to 61 % and the approval for the debt increased as well. Mr. Winger summarized the common themes from the responses to the open-ended questions. Respondents preferred sales tax over property tax increases. Some were more supportive of the indoor option. Those on fixed incomes wanted the District to look for alternative funding sources. Some want a more modest option. The need for recreational facilities was mentioned.

The information gathered from the survey was weighted to reflect the voting population and there was a slide showing the demographic information of the respondents.

Kyle informed the board that City Council has the information which was presented tonight. He also stated that Todd Snidow commented that he was shocked at how high the numbers are. Board member Nick Sartori asked-Who should be focused on more? In reply it was stated that Democrats and younger voters are more supportive of the project, and it is crucial to get them involved. The biggest hurdle to overcome is getting voters to understand that the three questions need to be voted on together. Also, based on expected turnout, there is a need to reach out to Republicans. Board member Nick Sartori commented that it is good to see the informed voter approval ratings go up. The board discussed the responses to the open-ended comments on the survey. Kyle thanked Ryan, David and Kate from Magellan Strategies for their work on the survey. Ryan stated that the survey is a snapshot and not predictive. However, the result of voting is very rarely out more than 5% off from the survey. A good campaign is needed. With the pool closed, it does urge people to do something to correct it. Ryan is also concerned with ballot fatigue.

Next Steps in the Pool Process

Kyle informed the board that the Fremont County Board of Commissioners have agreed to give \$100,000 in ARPA funds to the project if the ballot is successful.

The board discussed whether to ask for 3 or 4 mills. The difference in taxes is \$20 on a \$300,000 home. It was commented that this is not a lot to ask considering what the District does. Pat Grette spoke and mentioned that there are so many variables, and asking for too large a percentage increase will jeopardize the project's passing. She stated that it is a balancing act and wondered if there were some things the District could do to tighten its belt. With a 4 mill ask, she stated that only 1/3 of it was for the pool (1.5 mills) with 2.5 mills for operations. In response, she was told that per Stacey Siefert a 4 mill ask is one of the lowest asks in the history of the community. Board member Nick Sartori stated that this would be an investment for the future. And board member Andy Palmasano stated it is important to set the District up for success.

On August 19th there is a workshop with the Canon City Council at 5:00 p.m. at the Council chambers to discuss moving forward with either option A or B. There will be a vote and the first reading of the sales tax ballot question. Todd Snidow from RBC will be there.

On August 21st, the Recreation District Board will hold a special meeting to finalize the ballot language and to discuss the added agenda item concerning campaigning.

The ballot language is due September 5th in both English and Spanish.

On September 3rd, the City Council will have the second reading of the ballot language on the sales tax and will then submit it September 4th.

NEW BUSINESS

Audio/Sound Quote for Aftermath Haunted House

For 2024, the District budgeted to improve the haunted house and would like to invest in sound this year. A copy of the proposal (\$8,524) was included in the board packet.

Board member Nick Sartori made a motion, seconded by board member Andrew Palmasano to approve the purchase of the sound equipment. Motion carried unanimously, all present voting aye.

Discussion on Potential Resolution to Oppose Initiatives 50 & 108

There is a chance that these initiatives will get pulled from the ballot if the State convenes a special session. These initiatives will hurt special districts. Kyle asked the board if they would like to pass a resolution against them. A draft copy of the resolution is included in the board packets. Kyle will send a version of it to Dan for a resolution in September.

Move September Board Meeting Date Due to Special Districts Association Conference

The District will need to move the regular September board meeting to September 17th as the Special Districts Association conference is the week before. Packets will be sent out on time and A/P will be completed on the regular day. The board discussed this and agreed to move the meeting to the 17th of September.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Board member Melissa Smeins made a motion, seconded by board member Nick Sartori to go into executive session for negotiations under C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(e) to discuss potential options for an agreement with the City of Canon City on a swimming pool. Motion carried unanimously, all present voting aye.

The board went into executive session at 9:12 p.m. The executive session ended at 9:43 p.m. and the board returned to the regular meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Board Chairman, Nick Sartori adjourned the meeting at 9:43 p.m.

Submitted by:

Approved as written or amended:

/s/ Dawn Green

Dawn Green, Finance Director

/s/ Nick Sartori

Nick Sartori, Meeting Chair

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**EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES
August 13, 2024**

Executive Session was called at 9:12 p.m.

The substance of discussion during executive session was negotiations under C.R.S. section 24-6-402(4)(e) regarding potential options for an agreement with the City of Canon City on a swimming pool.

The executive session adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

Submitted by:

Approved as written or amended:

/s/ Dawn Green

/s/ Nick Sartori

Dawn Green, Finance Director

Nick Sartori, Chairperson