

**MINUTES OF THE  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
AUGUST 22, 2023  
6:00 p.m.**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Russ Row at 6:00 p.m.

Attendees: Russ Row, Joel Vogt, Jim Trantham, Tina Charron, Kyle Buettner, Matt Buettner, Gary Most, Mayor Stan Darter, Tim Birk, Shawn Kennedy, Mechelle Childers, Mary Gardner, Julie Bradley, Amy Grandcolas, JP Fitzgibbons, Derrick Huebner and Ed Siemers.

1. Petitions by Citizens on Non-Agenda Items.

Mr. Ed Siemers, a City of Waterloo resident, requested to speak. He wanted to know if the City contributed an additional \$200,000 to the construction of the Splash Pad, would the City mandate any stipulations or restrictions. Chairman Row stated this is what tonight's meeting is about.

2. Splash Pad Funding.

Chairman Row presented a brief background of the situation. The City has already committed \$200,000 from the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year. Recently, Mayor Darter attended a Park Board meeting where the Board was discussing the building of the splash pad in Zimmer Park. The splash pad project is running into a construction time crunch, and there are concerns about the complexity of the project. After this meeting, the Mayor met with several groups and individuals to discuss the issues at hand. Construction would have to begin by September 15, 2023, to meet the June 22, 2024 operational deadline. If the deadline is not met, the Park District will lose a substantial amount of money. In talking with all the parties involved, the splash pad can be built if the City contributes an additional \$200,000, and Tim Birk oversees the project. Changing the plans to make the facility smaller will now cost more money as everything will have to be redone. Therefore, economically, the plans for the splash pad cannot be changed. The only options are to move forward or, as mentioned, abandon the project and the Park Board will lose a significant sum of money.

Park Board Treasurer Julie Bradley provided the Finance Committee with a breakdown of the Park District's financial costs relating to the Splash Pad Project. She then reviewed each line item in detail along with analysis, cash on hand, and a breakdown of monies lost if the project is abandoned. Although the Park District could potentially pay for the splash pad without additional assistance, its reserves would be depleted. This would leave very little funding available for other projects. The splash pad's operating cost is estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000 per year, which includes water, chemicals, electricity, and park personnel monitoring chemical levels on a daily basis. This money would be built into the Park's operating budget. The Park Board feels they have the yearly funds to support the splash pad once it is completed.

Mayor Darter stated that he understood concerns that \$400,000 is a lot of money, however, the splash pad is something that the community could use for twenty-plus years. This facility also provides an amenity for younger families which helps grow the City of Waterloo. We also hope it

encourages the surrounding communities to visit to Waterloo, use our parks, and patronize our businesses. JP Fitzgibbons, the contractor for the facility, stated he could 100% guarantee the project would be completed by the June 22, 2024 deadline. This is based on the assumption that construction will begin on or before September 15, 2023.

It was also mentioned that the Park District could levy a bond for the money without a referendum. If that happened, the splash pad would be built with tax money. The City is proposing a payment from gambling proceeds. The Mayor further explained that the \$400,000.00 would be paid for out of the Gaming Fund in two phases: \$200,000.00 from the current 2023-2024 Fiscal Year and \$200,000.00 from the upcoming 2024-2025 Fiscal Year.

Chairman Row mentioned that Tim Birk, Director of Public Works, would oversee the project. Mr. Birk provided a breakdown of his estimated time and materials. Alderman Most pointed out that this project would add 20% to Tim's time. He also expressed concern that the Water Plant Project also needed Mr. Birk's attention and that project was likewise on a tight schedule. Mr. Birk will work with Park Board Superintendent Don Prater as a partner on the job.

The Park Board is expected to have the splash pad open five (5) months out of the year.

Committee Member Trantham commented that while most people he talked to welcomed a splash pad, there were also residents who felt the money could be better spent elsewhere within the City. The elderly especially would like to see more sidewalks. Alderman Trantham also pointed out that the size of the Park District's budget and reserve capital indicate a sign of good management.

A motion was made by Alderman Kyle Buettner and seconded by Alderman Charron to recommend the allocation of \$400,000.00 to fund the Splash Pad with funding to be paid for out of the Gaming Fund (\$200,000.00 from the current 2023-2024 Fiscal Year and \$200,000.00 from the upcoming 2024-2025 Fiscal Year), with the project being overseen by Tim Birk, Director of Public Works.

The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote by all Finance Committee members.

3. Comments.

Mayor Darter thanked everyone who worked with him on this funding project.

Motion to Adjourn made by Alderman Vogt and seconded by Alderman Trantham.

Motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Chairman Row adjourned the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Mechelle Childers - City Clerk