

**UPPER VALLEY PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICE AREA (PRSA)  
Joint Meeting with Leavenworth City Council  
Via Zoom Conferencing  
September 29, 2020**

# **MINUTES**

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

PRSA Chair Jason Lundgren, called the September 29, 2020 special joint meeting of the PRSA and Leavenworth City Council to order at 3:00 PM.

Board Present: Jason Lundgren, Aaron Simon, Mia Bretz, Lauri Malmquist, Bob Bugert, and Eron Drew.

City Council Present: Mayor Carl Florea, Sharon Waters, Carolyn Wilson, (Jason Lundgren and Mia Bretz)

City Staff Present: Ana Cortez and Chantell Steiner.

## **II. DISCUSSION**

### **A. Strategic Planning Discussion Continued**

#### **1. Chelan County Park Study and Future Recreation District Opportunities**

Boardmember Bob Bugert reviewed the upcoming timelines for ballot measures in 2022 noting deadlines for the February election to be in December of 2021 and the April election to be in February of 2022. He stated that the Committee is contemplating whether it should continue with the status quo of pool operations only or to consider changes to the scope of the PRSA. He updated the Board on his discussion with the other Commissioners and the Port of Chelan County to put together a previous study on the community's willingness to approve a Park / Recreation Ballot Measure. He noted that the effort involved getting private donations as campaign rules do not allow for agencies to campaign for themselves. He noted that Alcoa and the Town Toyota Center had concerns at the time so no ballot was sought; although, voters showed good support to consider a measure. However, East Wenatchee's Eastmont Parks & Recreation District proceeded and succeeded.

#### **2. PRSA Recreational Needs Assessment**

Chair Jason Lundgren gave a brief update of the history of the PRSA Committee to explore a recreational needs assessment; ultimately the group found a need to consider hiring a staff person to assist the reformation of future initiatives of the District. Aaron spoke to the history of voting by the Peshastin residents who have fully supported the pool in the past; however, it was clearly noted by previous board member Doug Clarke that anything other than the pool would likely not be supported. As far as he is aware, many of the rest of the constituents support the pool; if a new initiative is sought, the voters will want to see what it looks like. Members shared their thoughts on the future of the PRSA, while some were supportive of exploring new initiatives, others were supportive of maintaining the status quo in order to avoid potentially losing support of the facility. Many members supported the need to consider a staff support person for the PRSA. Boardmember

Bretz noted her history over the past four years of exploring this topic including the lack of fund stabilization in the past, the ongoing outreach and study that she has done with constituents, continual turnover of board members, and the balance needed from residents within and outside of the boundaries of Leavenworth. Marco Aurilio concurred that the outreach efforts will be necessary for a new ballot measure; he feels the community needs a centralized recreation district to assist the existing volunteer groups. Sharon Waters recalled the history of the formation of the District and the original intent to solely support a pool in the community. She spoke to the recent failure of the last maintenance and operation levy to increase the funding for capital related improvements; that measure failed because of the confusion that the Board was considering expanding services to support a community center. She noted her recent tour of the Osborn School and the potential for some of the building to be salvageable for use as a community / recreation center; however, she is not sure if the PRSA is the right organization to lead that initiative. Various members concurred that the original intent of the PRSA was to support the pool; however, times have changed and there appears to be more desire to look at expanding services by some local residents. Mayor Florea stated that he would like to see the community unite and create a more regional entity for expanding trails, parks and other recreational amenities. Aiden Ringel noted the positive results of 70%-80% of 100 students that would support an initiative to cover the pool for year-round use. City Administrator Ana Cortez gave a brief update on the City's efforts to conduct a study of the Osborn site with the Center for Creative Land Recycling; she noted that merging the City and PRSA studies was not a good fit due to the political aspects of multiple agencies. Boardmember Bugert noted the potential to seek funding support from the Land Trust, local Rotary, or other entities to assist in the funding for the assessment. Board members thanked those present and the comments received in support of seeking more outreach from the community on the future of the PRSA; based on comments received, it seems clear that more outreach is necessary.

### 3. PRSA Employee Support

Board members shared their thoughts throughout the meeting on the need to consider funding for a staff support person to assist with the existing duties performed by Finance Director Chantell Steiner as well as to assist the Board in the Recreational Outreach and upcoming ballot measure. Boardmember Bugert reiterated the need to have outside support for advocating for the PRSA and future initiatives to avoid any lobbying concerns. The Board will need to put together a job description in order to proceed with consideration of a staff person. The Board reviewed options for onboarding a staff member versus hiring a consultant. Director Steiner reviewed the budget noting the strong fund balance due to the closure this year of the pool from COVID-19; she stated that the Board could recommend at least 18 months of funding a staff support person as well as the ability to increase the budget for the recreational needs assessment to \$30,000. The Board discussed logistics of having a staff person, who they would take direction from, and how that would be funded through the City's Pool Fund from the pool's revenues from taxes and user fees. In reviewing the budget, the Board noted the need to be cognizant of the stability of the fund and to be aware of potential community concerns at building staff capacity over basic operational needs.

### 4. Pool Dome

Boardmember Simon stated that although this is a small town, the pool is a huge asset to the community. He stated that there are so many competing questions on how and what the PRSA does and can do and he sees a future need for a year-round pool with a lot of opportunities over the next twenty years. For now, he believes it is important to secure a staff person and continue with the outreach/survey; future discussions for capital improvements, such as covering the pool or considering a community center, should be considered after the new entity is approved by voters. Marco Aurilio stated that community members need to be apprised of options on what is available; he supports the concept of an aquatic center and believes it could be profitable. Director Steiner noted the options to consider a future capital levy request for larger projects, such as covering the

pool with a dome, rather than co-mingling capital with operational levies that could confuse voters. In closing, Director Steiner stated that she will include in the City's Pool Fund the request for the City Council to approve funding for a part-time staff person with \$40,000 in 2021 and \$20,000 in 2022 as well as the additional \$15,000 for the recreational needs assessment.

### **III. ACTION ITEMS**

None.

### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

Seeing no other business, Chair Lundgren closed the September 29<sup>th</sup> special joint meeting of the Upper Valley Park and Recreation Service Area and Leavenworth City Council. The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Chantell Steiner.