BYRON FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

MINUTES OF MEETING

NOVEMBER 16, 2020

Commissioners present: Gramer, Ludwig, Patterson, and Vincer.

Commissioners absent: Baker.

Staff present: Brown, Brunner, deOliveira, Gerke, Henkel, Herman, McCammond, and Schoenhard.

Guests present: none.

President Vincer called the meeting to order at 7pm.

President Vincer deleted Agenda Items 15B and 15C, Executive Session 2(C)(5) and 2(C)(11) from the agenda. PATTERSON MOVED AND GRAMER SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED. GRAMER – YES, LUDWIG – YES, PATTERSON – YES, BAKER – ABSENT, AND VINCER – YES.

At this time, President Vincer swore in newly appointed commissioner, Jeff Ludwig.

PATTERSON NOMINATED AND LUDWIG SECONDED THE NOMINATION OF BAKER FOR BOARD VICE PRESIDENT. LUDWIG – YES, PATTERSON – YES, BAKER – ABSENT, GRAMER – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

GRAMER MOVED AND PATTERSON SECONDED THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETINGS ON OCTOBER 5, 2020, AND OCTOBER 14, 2020, AND THE REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 19, 2020. PATTERSON – YES, BAKER – ABSENT, GRAMER – YES, LUDWIG – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

The correspondence was noted and briefly discussed.

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LUDWIG MOVED AND GRAMER SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2020. BAKER – ABSENT, GRAMER – YES, LUDWIG – YES, PATTERSON – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

President Vincer and the board set a special meeting date of November 30, 2020, at 4pm to hold a public hearing regarding the proposed bond sale.

President Vincer opened the floor to District Department Heads to present their Staff Reports. Director Tucker was not present at the meeting. There were no questions or discussion of the Administration Department’s Staff Report. Mark Herman, Education Department-7:15-7:18pm-He informed the board that he and Janet have been assisting preschool since they can’t go on any field trips. They have been doing outdoor education and they had a carnival at the Jarrett Prairie Center. Russell Brunner, Restoration/Maintenance Department-7:18-7:26pm-Reviewed photos with the Board of the crew clearing recently purchased properties, collecting seed, removing the docks at He-Leo, and the new truck. Russell thanked Commissioner Ludwig for his volunteer service in assisting with shaping the wetland area at He-Leo. Russell stated that about 700 loads of dirt were hauled from this site. He informed the board that several trees were knocked down in the recent storm. Most of the trees were dead ash trees. Scott deOliveira, Golf Operations-7:26-7:40pm-He informed the board that they are offering specials to golfers to encourage them to visit PrairieFire. Closing the course was discussed. It’s based on the weather. The leagues have begun and are going well at PrairieFire. The PrairieFire Invitational was discussed briefly. It will be held on November 27th from 1-4pm and the sponsorships collected and won will be donated to charities. President Vincer stated that this is a great idea! Scott

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told the board that Dach Fence has started installing the fence needed at PrairieFire. He reported that there have been some significant issues with the tracking lights at PrairieFire but have been repaired.

Matt Henkel and Mike Brown, Golf Maintenance Department-7:40-7:48pm-He reported that the crew has been raking bunkers, changing cups, and not mowing much. They blew out the irrigation lines so they are dry and ready for winter. At this time, Matt addressed the board. He said that today was his last day. He thanked the board for being so compassionate, thoughtful, and generous during this time he has been fighting brain cancer. He will be collecting disability but would like to still volunteer when he can and maybe return as a seasonal worker next summer. He encouraged the board to consider the proposed course changes that were presented by Andrew Canfield at a previous board meeting. He noted that these changes are intended to make the course more playable and enjoyable. The changes will also save money on maintenance costs. Commissioner Patterson stated that over the last 20 years that he has lived in Byron, he has heard comments about how good PrairieView Golf Course is and it’s due to Matt’s wonderful leadership. Commissioner Patterson encouraged Matt to come back and visit often. President Vincer stated that Matt’s reputation preceded him when he began serving on the board. He noted that Matt has earned all of his accolades, there’s no charity involved. He has a pretty impressive staff. President Vincer thanked Matt and welcomed him to come back anytime.

PATTERSON MOVED AND LUDWIG SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT THE COVID-19 PATRON PROTOCOL AND RESPONSES POLICY AS PROVIDED BY PDRMA. GRAMER – YES, LUDWIG – YES, PATTERSON – YES, BAKER – ABSENT, AND VINCER – YES.

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The board discussed possibly revising the nepotism section of the District’s Hiring Policy (1.4-Employment Policies and Procedures). President Vincer stated that he is not in favor of revising the policy. He noted that he believes revising it to allow relatives of employees and commissioners to be employed at the District would allow more ways to go wrong than right. Changing it also puts the staff in a really tough position. Commissioner Patterson stated that he has had experience with this situation and dealt with issues at all of his park districts. He recommended leaving the policy as it is because it protects the District and the employees. He noted that the policy could be “softened” a little by allowing a relative to work if that relative has a unique skill that is needed by the District and there is no one else to hire to do it. Commissioners Ludwig stated that he sees no reason to revise the policy. Commissioner Gramer has no issue with the District’s current policy. President Vincer will notify Commissioner Baker of the board’s discussion and decision.

PATTERSON MOVED AND GRAMER SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT THE 2021 TAX LEVY ORDINANCE AS CONTAINED IN ORDINANCE NO. 20-4. LUDWIG – YES, PATTERSON – YES, BAKER – ABSENT, GRAMER – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

PATTERSON MOVED AND GRAMER SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT THE BUDGET & APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021 AS CONTAINED IN ORDINANCE NO. 20-5. PATTERSON – YES, BAKER – ABSENT, GRAMER – YES, LUDWIG – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

Scott deOliveira and the board discussed the proposed 2021 golf fees. Scott noted that fees were slightly increased but still in alignment with other courses. Scott believes that there won’t be any “push back” on the new fees. President Vincer asked about including a PrairieFire gift card with the golf

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passes. Scott stated that it can be easily done. Commissioner Patterson noted that this is a great way to promote PrairieFire. Commissioner Vincer stated that the PrairieFire gift cards should be transferrable in case the golfer decides to give them away.

PATTERSON MOVED AND LUDWIG SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2021 PRAIRIEVIEW GOLF CLUB FEES AS PRESENTED. BAKER – ABSENT, GRAMER – YES, LUDWIG – YES, PATTERSON – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

LUDWIG MOVED AND GRAMER SECONDED A MOTION AT 8:22 PM TO CONVENE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION UNDER SECTION 2(C)(1) OF THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT FOR THE PURPOSED OF DISCUSSION OF THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE, OR DISMISSAL OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES, SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS WHO SERVE AS INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS IN A PARK, RECREATIONAL, OR EDUCATION SETTING, OR SPECIFIC VOLUNTEERS OF THE DISTRICT OR LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE DISTRICT, INCLUDING HEARING TESTIMONY ON A COMPLAINT LODGED AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE, A SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL WHO SERVES AS AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR IN A PARK, RECREATIONAL, OR EDUCATIONAL SETTING, OR A VOLUNTEER OF THE DISTRICT OR AGAINST LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE DISTRICT TO DETERMINE ITS VALIDITY. HOWEVER, A MEETING TO CONSIDER AN INCREASE IN COMPENSATION TO A SPECIFIC EMPLOYEE OF THE DISTRICT THAT IS SUBJECT TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT WAGE INCREASE TRANSPARENCY ACT MAY NOT BE CLOSED AND SHALL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND POSTED AND HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS ACT. GRAMER – YES, LUDWIG – YES, PATTERSON – YES, BAKER – ABSENT, AND VINCER – YES.

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GRAMER MOVED AND LUDWIG SECONDED A MOTION AT 8:37PM TO COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION. LUDWIG – YES, PATTERSON – YES, BAKER – ABSENT, GRAMER – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

GRAMER MOVED AND LUDWIG SECONDED A MOTION AT 8:38PM TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. PATTERSON – YES, BAKER – ABSENT, GRAMER – YES, LUDWIG – YES, AND VINCER – YES.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Gramer, Secretary

Board of Commissioners

AG/mg