

**MINUTES
CITY OF ELKO NEW MARKET
PARKS COMMISSION MEETING
MAY 14, 2025
6:00 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sutton called the meeting of the Elko New Market Parks Commission to order at 6:01 p.m.

Commission members present: Sutton, Vernon, Jones, Hokeness and West

Members absent and excused: None

Staff Present: City Administrator Tom Terry, Planner Jake Skluzacek and Public Works Assistant Derek Cavanaugh

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Sutton led the Parks Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Planner, Jake Skluzacek, reminded the Commission that the City Code establishes the City's Parks Commission, including composition, terms, and organizational matters. Skluzacek read the section of Code that stated that the Commission shall elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson to service for terms of one year.

Skluzacek continued, currently, the Chairperson for the Parks Commission is Commissioner Sutton, and the Vice-Chairperson is Commissioner Vernon. Skluzacek was asking the Parks Commission to appoint a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for the upcoming year.

Commissioner Jones jokingly asked Skluzacek if there were term limits. Skluzacek responded that there were term limits at one time according to the by-laws but those have since been amended to eliminate the requirement.

Commissioner Vernon stated that she was happy to remain Vice-Chair or give the position to one of the other Commissioners if they had an interest. Commissioner Sutton also reaffirmed Vernon's willingness to have another Commissioner take his position of Chair if someone had an interest.

A motion was made by Hokeness and seconded by Jones to re-appoint Commissioner Sutton as Chairperson and Commissioner Vernon as Vice-Chairperson for the upcoming year.

Motion carried: (5-0).

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Sutton asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Planner, Jake Skluzacek informed him that there were no changes to the agenda as presented.

A motion was made by Hokeness and seconded by Jones to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried: (5-0).

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Sutton asked if there were any changes to the meeting minutes. There were no changes to the meeting minutes as presented.

A motion was made by West and seconded by Jones to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2025; meeting as presented.

Motion carried: (5-0).

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Capital Outlay Discussion

Planner Skluzacek began his presentation by explaining that the City of Elko New Market Parks Department utilizes three main sources of funding for capital expenditures. These include Park Dedication, Charitable Gambling, and Capital Outlay.

Skluzacek explained that during a new development, the City can decide if the developer donates a portion of land to create a park or receive a cash payment as a one-time fee in lieu of land dedication. This form of funding is known as Park Dedication. The City of Elko New Market's 2040 Comprehensive Plan outlines that the preference is to acquire park and trail land through land dedication. At times when it is not advantageous for the City to accept a land donation, the equivalent cash amount goes into a Park Dedication account that can be used for the creation of new parks and trails. The Park Dedication funds must not be used for ongoing operation or maintenance of existing City park and trail facilities.

Charitable Gambling was developed as an additional means for non-profit organizations to raise money to help their community. The Charitable Gambling funds that the City receives must be spent for defined charitable purposes. Skluzacek further elaborated that the Charitable Gambling Fund can be used for activities and facilities benefiting youth under the age of 21. This funding is obtained through charitable organizations who participate in charitable gambling such as pull-tabs. The City Code requires that 5% of all proceeds are submitted to the City pursuant to State Statute. This is estimated to raise approximately \$10,000 annually.

However, revenue from this source is not guaranteed as it relies on these organizations continuing their charitable gambling activities. Charitable Gambling funds are currently allocated in the Capital Outlay Plan exclusively for the replacement of existing park playground equipment and for no other eligible purposes.

Finally, Skluzacek reminded the Parks Commission that Capital Outlay funds are funded by property taxes. They are used to maintain, upgrade, or acquire capital assets. These assets are physical property of a significant cost and durable nature. This is different than the expense of repair, maintenance, and operating expenses. In past practice, the City's Capital Outlay plan has been based on what resources are or will be available in the short term, less than five years. The result has been a short-term cash in/cash out system. Long-term expenses were not anticipated, and the system was reactionary. The lack of long-term financial planning does not adequately consider the full lifecycle cost of the current system or long-term planning with growth in mind.

In 2023, the City reviewed its Capital Outlay Plan for parks, funding all existing equipment until 2052. The intent was to complete a comprehensive analysis of Capital Outlay funding for the park system to plan for existing long-term needs of facilities along with supporting the discussion of new assets in the future. The Parks and Recreation Capital Outlay Budget Model inventories what the City currently has for assets. This inventory includes the expected lifespan and replacement cost for each item. By examining the model, the City can identify upcoming needs and how much funding it takes to maintain the current system.

Skluzacek continued, stating that it was also important to understand that this financial model did not include any future assets that may be added to the growth of the City of Elko New Market. When Capital Outlay items are introduced to the system, the long-term costs (maintenance, repair, or replacement) also need to be considered along with the original investment cost of the item. Utilizing the Capital Outlay Budget financial model allows for a financial analysis that considers future expenses, anticipated revenues, and projected reserves. The result is that the Capital Outlay fund is projected to have sufficient funds well into the future.

At the June 12, 2024, Parks Commission meeting, the Parks Commission reviewed the current Capital Outlay Plan to ensure consistency with the Commission's priorities. At the time, Staff did not recommend earmarking the additional Park Dedication funds from recent developments such as the Niagara Bottling development as they were not yet received. Future identified projects that could potentially be completed using the additional funding, which was discussed at the June 12, 2024, meeting included a trail connection from Wagner Park to CSAH 2, a permanent pickleball court, and multiple City Park signage projects.

Skluzacek compiled preliminary estimates for costs associated with previously identified future projects which were discussed at the June 12 meeting and displayed the figures as follows:

- Trail Connection from Wagner Park to CSAH 2 - \$15,000.00 - \$18,000.00*
- Permanent Pickleball Court - \$77,500.00 - \$161,000.00**
- Pete's Hill Park Signage - \$1,000.00 - \$2,500.00

- Park and Trail Map Signage - \$6,750.00 - \$7,250.00
- Woodcrest Park Basketball Court Rehab - \$3,600.00 - \$11,700.00***

*Assuming Public Works completes grading, base, drainage, and restoration.

**Assuming no cost for land acquisition, estimate ranges due to material choice and court number (2-4).

***Assuming no cost for removal of current concrete surface, estimate ranges due to material choice.

During the December 11, 2024, meeting, a motion was made by Commissioner West and seconded by Commissioner Jones to amend the City's Capital Outlay Plan to include funding for the Wagner Park trail extension project. The motion carried 4-0. Due to limited funding, there was a strong indication by the Commission that not all previously identified future projects may be completed with the additional Park Dedication Funds.

Since then, Skluzacek explained that Staff have incorporated several proposed changes to the existing Parks Capital Outlay Plan. The Wagner Park shelter replacement (\$255,000) date was pushed back to 2042 due to the structure's condition. Therefore, delaying the replacement will allow for more flexibility in the plan. Additionally, Staff are expecting a final plat application for the Highlands at Eagle View. Partial cash and land dedication were received by the City as part of this proposed development. Staff have included estimated costs for a new playground facility to accompany the development. The estimated total cost for the project is \$180,600 and has been included in the proposed 2026 Capital Outlay Plan.

Other recommended changes included in the proposed 2026 Parks Capital Outlay Plan were related to more accurately reflecting replacement costs and timelines for existing equipment based on most recent purchases by the City. The addition of a play area border line item has also been added to relevant parks as they will technically be associated with the City's Capital Outlay Plan moving forward as budgeted replacement items. Additional changes included reconciling payments to reflect the actual year in which the payment was made for several pieces of equipment.

The result of the proposed 2026 Parks Capital Outlay Plan as described by Skluzacek was a fully funded park system until 2052. As demonstrated by the Year End Fund Balance graph Skluzacek displayed to the Commission, all funds will maintain a balance of over \$50,000 into the year 2052. Skluzacek lastly noted that assuming the Commission does not recommend spending more than has been identified in the proposed 2026 Parks Capital Outlay Plan, there would be no impact to the City's budget.

City Administrator, Tom Terry, mentioned that the City's practice is not to include any potential Park Dedication funding in the budgeting process as it is too hard to predict how much the City will get for certain developments. There is also a risk of the developments not coming to fruition which would cause issues if that funding were to be budgeted in advance of the City receiving it. Terry continued that the fund is not projected to drop below \$50,000 in the City's modeling which would allow for the emergency replacement of a typical piece of equipment if necessary.

Commissioner Hokeness asked for clarification on the levied amount of Capital Outlay funding. Terry confirmed that the levied amount of Capital Outlay funding will remain at

\$75,000 starting in 2027 as that amount is enough to cover the costs associated with the City's Capital Outlay until 2052. Terry explained that any additional request for funding would need to be approved by the City Council through an amendment to the City's Parks Capital Outlay Plan.

Skluzacek was asking the Parks Commission to provide a recommendation related to the City's Parks Capital Outlay Plan to be incorporated into the budget for the next five years. This would ensure that the Parks Capital Outlay stays consistent with the Capital Outlay for other City departments. The current amount of funding proposed for 2026 is \$70,000.

Lastly, Skluzacek shared the City's draft Parks Capital Outlay Plan for 2026 to discuss multiple items which Staff would like to amend. Skluzacek stated that the Boulder Heights Park Picnic Pavilion is predicted to exceed its budget due to unanticipated costs associated with providing electricity to the pavilion. To compensate for this, Skluzacek recommended removing the proposed drinking fountain for the park as it would save an estimated \$6,500.

Public Works Assistant, Derek Cavanaugh, confirmed that Public Works would have to pull electricity across the street to access the park. A transformer, breaker box, and meter would also be required for the outlet at the pavilion to receive electrical service. Commissioner Hokeness and West argued that perhaps electricity was not needed at this time. Chair Sutton asked if this would be something that could be done in the future, Cavanaugh responded that it could be done later but there would likely be more restoration work needed if that was the case.

Terry reinforced why the outlet was proposed to begin with, referencing the neighborhood open house in the beginning stages of the Boulder Heights Park planning process. The neighborhood requested an electrical outlet in the pavilion. The added benefit would be that the City would be able to light the shelter to deter unwanted use after hours and potentially provide for a camera if necessary. Staff had not anticipated the full cost of providing electricity in the budgeting process so at this point, Terry stated it was Staff's recommendation to continue with the electricity work for the pavilion as opposed to funding the water fountain.

Commissioner Hokeness stated that pavilions are seasonal and are well lit for most of the day. Hokeness believed if it was a larger pavilion that was going to generate a lot of events, then electricity may be warranted. Vice-Chair Vernon agreed with Commissioner Hokeness and stated that there was enough light in the park for activities. Discussion took place amongst the Commission on the topic. The Commission was in general agreement to eliminate the proposed drinking fountain for Boulder Heights Park and put the electricity to the pavilion on hold until a future date when more funding is made available.

Skluzacek displayed the new tab in the City's draft Parks Capital Outlay Plan for 2026 which featured the proposed Highlands at Eagle View development. This development will feature a similar park to Boulder Heights that will be constructed in 2026 if the final plat goes according to plan. The City Council instructed Staff to budget for a play system, sport court,

and a picnic pavilion for this park. Skluzacek stated that this was simply for budgeting purposes, and the actual park design is yet to be decided. The numbers Skluzacek used for estimates were based on the most recent purchases by the City. The total estimated budget for this neighborhood park was \$180,600.

Skluzacek noted that there were no planned Capital Outlay expenditures listed in 2026 or 2027. In 2028 purchases will pick up as major pieces of equipment throughout the City will be planned for replacement. Skluzacek briefly covered the planned purchases for 2028. One of the purchases included \$1,200 for the replacement of the worm spring rider at Wagner Park. Skluzacek reminded the Commission that this piece of equipment was decommissioned in 2022 therefore, no replacement costs should be associated with it. Skluzacek recommended that the Commission eliminate this from the proposed 2026 Parks Capital Outlay Plan. The Commission was in general agreement with the recommended amendment.

Chair Sutton noticed that there was not any line items associated with the portable restroom enclosures discussed previously by Staff and the Commission. Skluzacek agreed with Sutton and stated that Staff will amend the Plan to include a line item for portable restrooms for relevant parks. The plan was to construct one enclosure per year until all parks with portable restrooms also had enclosures. The first park planned for an enclosure was Boulder Heights Park. Skluzacek stated that Staff's intent is to still follow this plan, it was an oversight that the Plan has not yet been amended with these anticipated costs. Discussion took place amongst the Commission on play area borders for parks.

Commissioner Hokeness discussed some repairs for a piece of equipment in Historic Elko City Park. Terry stated that Staff would look at possible repairs for the structure and see if they are worth doing as the piece of equipment is scheduled to be replaced in 2028. Skluzacek quickly went through the anticipated Capital Outlay purchases for 2029 which only included replacement ramps for the skatepark at Wagner Park.

A motion was made by Sutton and seconded by Jones to recommend adoption of the City's Parks Capital Outlay Plan as presented with the changes discussed by Staff and the Commission.

Motion carried: (5-0).

8. UPDATES & REPORTS

A. April Parks Commission Update – attached

Planner Skluzacek had his report attached to the packet. Skluzacek thanked the groups who participated in the City's Adopt-A-Park cleanups in early May. Public Works Assistant Cavanaugh stated that Public Works Staff have recently painted the inside of the Wagner Park Shelter. Additionally, the Public Works Staff also seeded and are continuing to water the Wagner Park baseball fields. The concrete pad for the portable restroom and sidewalk at

Boulder Heights Park had also been completed in late April. Commissioner Hokeness thanked the Public Works Staff for all the work that they do for the City's park system.

B. April Parks Commission Financial Report - attached

Planner Skluzacek had his report attached to the packet. There was no discussion on the Parks Financial Report.

C. CCEC Update – Chair Sutton

Chair Sutton provided an update to the Commission on the CCEC's current activities. Sutton let the Commission know that there were 278 kids volunteering for the Easter Parade. Discussion took place on the volunteers provided by Niagara Bottling. Sutton was impressed with how much the group of roughly 13 employees helped with organizing and cleaning up at the event.

Sutton mentioned that Fire Rescue Days now has their own separate Committee from the CCEC. City Administrator, Tom Terry, was present to provide an update on the Fire Rescue Days Committee meetings. Terry explained that there was discussion for the Fire Rescue Days Committee to become a non-profit organization; however, it was determined that it would not be sustainable so Fire Rescue Days will remain a City hosted event for the time being. Discussion took place on the proposed layout for Fire Rescue Days events.

D. Old Elko Police Department Study Group Update – Commissioner Hokeness

Commissioner Hokeness provided an update to the Commission on the recent Old Elko Police Department Study Group meetings that he has been serving as a Parks Commissioner representative on. Hokeness stated that it has been a good Committee. They have had about six meetings now going over various options for the property.

Hokeness added that the Commission had decided to preserve the building for community space. Future discussions will take place on remodeling options. Hokeness believed that the food shelf would be allowed to still utilize the building for their operations although the City's CCEC group may need to find another option for storage. The group is preparing to go to the City Council with recommendations for resources and funding. Discussion took place on the availability of residents renting the building once completed. A formal decision on the ability to rent the space has not yet been made.

9. PARKS COMMISSIONER'S QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Commissioner Jones had a question about the new water tower siting study that the City is engaging in. City Administrator, Tom Terry, stated that the new well is for what is called "firm capacity" for safety. Terry explained parts of the study are meant to analyze how big of a tower is needed and where exactly is the most efficient location for the system. That work is planned to occur over the next few months. A well bid is expected in 2026. Discussion took place on the operation of water towers.

Commissioner West asked for an update on the proposed Wagner Park Trail project. Planner Skluzacek provided an update for the Commission. The City's Engineers are scheduled to go out to stake the proposed trail in the next couple of weeks. An open house is scheduled for the project on June 17 to walk the proposed trail and ask questions at Wagner Park. Feedback from the open house will be communicated to the Parks Commission for an official recommendation on the project to the City Council. Discussion took place on the proposed project.

Public Works Assistant Cavanaugh informed the Commission that grading has begun on the Parkway Meadows development north of City Hall at the end of James Parkway. Discussion took place on the park dedication associated with the development.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Parks Commission is set for Wednesday, June 11, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall in the Council Chambers.

11. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Hokeness and seconded by Jones to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m.

Motion carried: (5-0).

Respectively submitted by:



Jake Skluzacek
Planner 1