

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE FARGO PARK DISTRICT OF JANUARY 27, 2020**

The special meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Park District of the City of Fargo was held on Monday, January 27, 2020, at 7:30 a.m. at the Fargo Park District office at 701 Main Avenue, Fargo, North Dakota. Present at the meeting were Commissioners Jerry Rostad, Vicki Dawson, Rusty Papachek, Joe Deutsch and Stacey Griggs. Also present was Diane Jones.

The purpose of the special meeting was to discuss the reviews of the candidates for the executive director position.

The meeting commenced with each Commissioner discussing what he or she was looking for in the next Executive Director. Commissioner Papachek stated that the executive director is the CEO of the Park District and the he or she must be knowledgeable, professional, have vision, work with the Commissioners, be able to manage and lead staff, be nimble and able to adapt, and have knowledge of the Budget. Commissioner Griggs agreed with Commissioner Papachek's comments and added that the executive director must be able to create new plans and visions that inspire others to follow and be able to work collaboratively with staff, officials and the community. Commissioner Rostad noted that the executive director must be community minded, able to lead the staff, adapt the programming, manage the budget, maintain on-going support of current facilities, and provide strategic direction of the Park District. Commissioner Deutsch added that the executive director must have a strategic vision due to the vast footprint of the Park District and must be able to work with the City of Fargo and the School District. Commissioner Dawson agreed with the comments of the other Commissioners and added that the executive director must be professional, personable, approachable, community minded, who can develop others, capable of fundraising and able to make hard decisions.

The Commissioners then expressed their general thoughts on the candidates and their interviews. The Commissioners were in general agreement that the search committee did a fantastic job finding five highly qualified candidates for the position. The Commissioners were in general agreement that two of the candidates stood out above the rest, Dave Leker and Susan Faus.

Commissioner Deutsch noted that he believed that Dave Leker is ready to become the next executive director of the Park District. Commissioner Deutsch noted that there was positive feedback from both local and state officials for Dave Leker and that Dave Leker's experience with the Park District is valuable. Commissioner Rostad noted that the Commissioners received specific answers from Dave Leker due to his experience with the Park District and that almost every staff member that Commissioner Rostad spoke with was in support of Dave Leker. Commissioner Griggs noted that she also spoke with staff who were in support of Dave Leker and that her belief was that Dave Leker is the guy for the job today. Commissioner Papachek noted that he supported both candidates and that he didn't believe that the Park District could go wrong with either finalist. Commissioner Dawson noted that Susan Faus had stronger references and that she wanted to make changes, but noted going with the external candidate would be a challenge.

Commissioner Joe Deutsch moved and Commissioner Stacey Griggs seconded a motion to make Dave Leker the final candidate for the executive director position subject to negotiation on the terms of his employment. Upon call of the roll, the motion passed unanimously.

The Commissioners then discussed the salary that they would offer to Dave Leker for the executive director position. Commissioner Rostad noted that he researched the compensation for other regional cities and noted that their pay ranged between \$125,000.00 and \$163,000.00. Commissioner Rostad further noted that Dave Leker's current compensation as interim executive director is \$147,860.00. Commissioner Dawson noted that she does not want to go backwards and wants incentives in place to increase the salary if certain goals are achieved. Commissioner Papachek stated that the base salary should be \$150,000.00 with a review period and a chance for a pay increase. Commissioner Griggs agreed with the base salary of \$150,000.00 and a review period.

Commissioner Rusty Papachek moved and Commissioner Stacey Griggs seconded a motion to offer Dave Leker a salary of \$150,000.00 with a performance review after 90 days to potentially adjust the salary. Upon call of the roll, the motion passed unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded and upon unanimous consent the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 a.m.

Jeffrey B. Gunkelman