

**TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT, SOUTH CAROLINA
RECREATION COMMITTEE
MONDAY, AUGUST 6, 2018
Municipal Complex, Committee Meeting Room, 3rd Floor
100 Ann Edwards Lane, Mount Pleasant, SC 29464**

Minutes

Members Present: Gary Santos, Chair; Tom O'Rourke

Members Absent: G. M. Whitley

Staff Present: Eric DeMoura, Steve Gergick

Mr. Santos called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

1. Approval of Minutes from the July 2, 2018 meeting

Mr. O'Rourke made a motion to approve the July 2, 2018 minutes. Mr. Santos seconded the motion. All were in favor.

2. Public Comments

None

3. Facility Rental Fee Waiver Requests

a. Third Annual Coed Harper's Heroes Charity Softball Tournament at the Jimmy Seignious Softball Fields, October 20, 2018.

Mr. Gergick said they had received the request letter to host the tournament to raise money and donate all the proceeds to the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) Foundation named the Pediatric Neuroscience Research Fund. He said this was the third year that they are requesting use of the fields and it has worked out very well and the Department had been happy to facilitate it in order to accommodate raising the funds for that charity. He said that Harper was diagnosed with spina bifida and has had tremendous assistance through the university medical center.

Ms. Jenna Brown, 1717 Indigo Island Drive, Hanahan was recognized. She said that three and a half years ago she came before the Committee

pregnant with Harper. She had been diagnosed with the most severe form of spina bifida and they were told she would never walk and she would need to have several surgeries within the first year of life. She said that their community and their family wanted to have the tournament to raise money for them. She said they pushed it back and Harper was such a miracle when she was born that they were asked to be a campaign family for the research fund, so they have events and fund raisers to raise money for awareness. She said it benefits children with neurological disorders such as brain tumors, epilepsy, hydrocephalus, and spina bifida. She said it was one of the fund raisers that they host annually. She said one can view Harper's story as MUSC filmed a documentary on them at MUSC.edu and in the search engine put Harper's story.

Mr. O'Rourke said it common for people to ask for facilities and asked would if it would be easier if the Committee gave Mr. Gergick authority to certain limits without coming to them or was it better to bring every request to them. He said he does not know what the criteria was. He asked if the Committee had ever denied a request.

Mr. Gergick said there may have been some request with a reduced price. He said they always pay the cost for staffing but for most the request had been approved.

Mr. O'Rourke said that administratively the Department knows what they are doing. He said it was nice that the Committee knows about what the Town is helping with. He said he does not want to deny a request unless criteria is set up. He said he thought in the future Mr. Gergick could inform them and it could go through.

Mr. O'Rourke made a motion to approve the fee waiver request for the Third Annual Coed Harper's Heroes Charity Softball Tournament at the Jimmy Seignious Softball Fields, October 20, 2018. Mr. Santos seconded the motion. All were in favor.

b. Wando Young Life, Park West Pavilion, September 2018-May 2019 and Young Life Wyldlife Club, Jones Center Multipurpose Room, September 2018-May 2019.

Mr. Gergick said they are under the umbrella of Young Life Charleston. He said Wyldlife is the middle school age branch and the Wando Young Life Club was the high school level. He said that both groups have used Town facilities for the last five years using the Jones Center Multipurpose Room and the Park West Lake Pavilion. He said they are requesting fee waivers for both and they in the past have covered the staffing cost for the Jones Center. He said they have been good stewards of the facilities, clean up after themselves, and taken care of any incidentals.

Mr. Neil Gardner, 726 Spark Street, Mount Pleasant said he was the Director of Charleston Young Life. He said they have 14 schools around Charleston with college age or older leaders being involved with high school students. He said in Mount Pleasant he leads at Wando High School and coached varsity soccer. He said they try to hold the meetings at third party sites. He said it is a religious organization designed to care for children. He said they like to meet at a place other than a church as some children may be interested but may never step into a church which is why they choose neutral places. He said they sing songs, play games, and at the end one of the leaders gives a talk. He said each meeting is approximately an hour and has been great and a huge blessing that he hopes will continue.

Mr. O'Rourke made a motion to approve Wando Young Life, Park West Pavilion, September 2018-May 2019 and Young Life Wyldlife Club, Jones Center Multipurpose Room, September 2018-May 2019. Mr. Santos seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. O'Rourke asked Mr. Gergick if he receives requests that he does not bring before Committee.

Mr. Gergick said that most of the time he does bring it to the Committee unless there is something that is specifically a problem with a rental such a conflict in availability of a facility.

Mr. O'Rourke said it would help them beforehand if they knew whether Mr. Gergick recommended approval or not.

Mr. Gergick agreed with Mr. O'Rourke's request.

4. Discussion regarding artificial turf fields and Seamon Whiteside presentation of cost analysis

Mr. Gergick said at the last Committee Meeting they had discussion about artificial turf for Carolina Park or another future location. He said Councilwoman Whitley had specifically wanted to know comparisons about what it would take for a natural grass field and an artificial turf field, so they could go into a discussion with an understanding of what they would be obligating themselves for. He said they contracted with Seamon Whiteside who has completed Phase I at Carolina Park and is completing Phase II and also beginning the design work for Phase III at Carolina Park. He said they were a natural fit to be able to do this cost analysis because it makes a difference as far as where it is done at a specific location and where one would be constructing something. He said the Department asked for a more detailed cost analysis for construction of an artificial turf field as compared to a natural grass field.

Mr. Lee Gastley, Seamon Whiteside and Associates, 1881 Capri Drive, Charleston said the figures shown were not bids. He said they are not an evaluation in great detail of different types of synthetic turf systems as there are many. He said they selected two turf products, GrassTex AT740 and a Shaw Sports product called Momentum and compared those against natural turf called Celebration Bermuda field. He said they established five criteria for the evaluation. He said that items that were similar to both a natural turf field and a synthetic turf field such as lighting or a certain amount of fill material to get to a subgrade level or connection into a surrounding draining system they did not counted that. He said they just counted the differences between them. He said they established the five

criteria, the Subsurface Base Preparation, Subsurface Drainage, Sports Surface Materials and they have a square foot cost of the profile of the product. He said they have two more criteria which is Subgrade Preparation and then Miscellaneous items. Mr. Gastley said the major differences between the Synthetic Turf A which is a GrassTex product and the Momentum product is that the GrassTex product does not use an in-fill which most synthetic turf products do. He said that GrassTex has a foam mat on the bottom that takes the place of the shock pad that you see in a lot of them and they do not have the rubber, geofill, or sand as an in-fill. He said another difference between the two is the amount of base material that they require under them. He said that the Shaw product requires six inches of aggregate and the GrassTex product requires four inches of aggregate. He said the Shaw product and most synthetic turf products require a concrete border around the perimeter to affix it to. He said the GrassTex product does not as they are comfortable using a nailing board. He said that was some of the major differences between the two and it does affect the cost. He said they looked at utilizing the same size field as the other soccer fields at Carolina Park. He said they are 65 yards wide by 125 yards long with a ten-foot apron around them. He said the calculation gives them 81,700 square feet of surface. Mr. Gastley said when you look at the categories of Synthetic Turf A and Synthetic Turf B, is \$8.16 a square foot cost for the GrassTex, \$9.11 for the Shaw, and \$2.90 for natural turf. He said the natural turf cost are primarily in the growing medium. He said he knew the Town had completed some Cambridge systems on some of the existing fields. He said that the goal would be to bring in ideal material from day one. He said it would be one foot of good free draining amended soil instead of average fill that is going to get compacted over time. He said that is a large ticket item for the natural turf field and the irrigation system is a little more and they would still have over \$75,000 worth of underdrain associated with the field. He said they showed it as a sodded field as opposed to a sprigged field. He said it would be less if it was sprigged and would be approximately \$35,000 or so less. He said for the purposes of this comparison they said they were going to sod it. He said that basically the cost differences per square foot are \$8.16,

\$9.11, and \$2.90. He said they were able to acquire a summary of the new Wando-Beckham field that is close to being completed. He said that had Field Turf Medallion which is a Shaw product call Sprinturf and Astro turf. He said that was the products that bid that. He said that their unit prices were \$8.90 for field turf, \$9.10 for the Shaw, and \$7.61 for Sprinturf and the Astro turf was \$9.06. He said that if one compares that to the numbers shared today they are in that same category at \$8.16 and \$9.11. He said that the last two categories they compared were Subgrade Preparation. He said it would depend on how much rock the product needed with possibly more or less fill material to get them to the appropriate grade for playing. He said under Miscellaneous both systems recommended there be irrigation because of the heat buildup that they can have with synthetic turf especially in the south. Mr. Gastley said it was not as much as a natural turf irrigation system because all they would be concerned with is basically getting the surface wet and not looking for head to head coverage trying to grow grass. He said that the irrigation price for grass was more expensive. He said that the synthetic turf needed to be protected so he accounted for a six-foot black vinyl coated chain link fence around the field which is an additional \$23,000. He said there are also maintenance gates and pedestrian gates. He said they put a ten percent contingency, but it could be five percent. He said the GrassTex product is \$814,000 for the field, the Shaw product \$887,000, and the grass field \$306,000. He said it was 2.6 times more expensive on the capital outlay for the synthetic turf field verses a natural turf field. He said they have the respective unit prices associated with each.

Mr. Santos asked if Cambridge drainage system was calculated in the price as well for the grass.

Mr. Gastley said Cambridge is more about coming in after the fact and correcting a heavily compacted field. He said they would bring in good free draining amended soil from the beginning and doing a one-foot profile of it. He said they still had over \$75,000 of regular drainage in the field. He said he thought the Cambridge system was around \$75,000 and another

\$20-\$22,000 for the sand slit component. He said they did not think they would need all of that if they bring in good material from day one.

Mr. Santos asked if they were to put a Cambridge system in it would be around \$90,000.

Mr. Gastley answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Santos said it seemed as if they were installing the Cambridge in on a lot of the fields because of the rain.

Mr. Gergick said they did put the Cambridge in a lot of the fields but not at Moultrie or Town Hall field because they drain well. He said they were built the right way. He said that was what Mr. Gastley was suggesting that it would be built the correct way and would not need the additional Cambridge drainage. He said that the other fields that were built with the lesser soil do require the Cambridge and has been extremely successful.

Mr. Santos said that the problem with building them the way they are built now from what he is hearing from the coaches is the crest. He said when playing soccer or when the field is slanted a certain way they like it to be flat, so it is a truer motion for the ball. He asked if they had heard that.

Mr. Gergick answered in the negative but said it certainly made sense on a soccer field as opposed to a football field.

Mr. Santos said his concern was they would have soccer out there and said most of the children will be attending Wando and Wando now has the turf fields. He said if they are playing on grass and going to turf the next year they are going to have to learn to play on turf while they are at Wando. He said if the Town had the turf field by the time they get to Wando they are familiar with turf fields and it was one less thing they have to adjust to. He said he was thinking about the cresting and the Cambridge. He said with the rain recently he did not know if it was a trend, with global warming, but it is raining a lot more and a lot heavier and they need to prepare and not react.

Mr. O'Rourke said if they were going to build the fields and look at them it does not make sense to pay twice as much for something they would not

have to. He said they were going to use them and use them a lot. He said he was not sure that previous designs on fields were wrong. He said that previous designs on fields after years and years of constant use has created the compaction to make the drainage problem. He said they are bringing the new drainage system on some fields and that helps. He said they presently use fields for ten months out of the year. He said this was about being able to use fields 12 months out of the year. He said there is a cost for that. Mr. O'Rourke said he did not want to get anyone's business about rotation but thought the citizens deserve a field for 12 months out of the year. He said he kept using the word experiment in that he thought they should try this in the Town to take a look at it and see how they like it. He said there is not consensus on whether or not if this was a good idea. He said that instead of putting eight of them down they should take a few of them and put some turf on it and the Recreation Department scheduled and see how it goes. He said the costs are always important, but it is about use. He said there was fencing cost in other projects and they are not just individual fields. He asked about the turf they were putting just one fence around that field and was that why the fence cost came in.

Mr. Gastley answered in the affirmative. He said if one is spending that much for a field they would want to protect that investment as best as they could to keep someone riding on a four wheeler off of it.

Mr. Santos said that Mr. Gastley mentioned the Lucy Beckham field and asked if that would be turf.

Mr. Gastley answered in the affirmative and said it was synthetic turf.

Mr. Santos said that he knew that the Wando stadium was turf but asked if they were doing Lucy Beckham turf as well.

Mr. Gastley said he was talking about the joint stadium not the stadium at the Old Wando. He was talking about the combination stadium.

Mr. Santos asked if Lucy Beckham was going to remain grass.

Mr. Gastley said that was his understanding, but he was not sure.

Mr. Santos asked if Mr. Gastley calculated maintenance in the price.

Mr. Gastley said that maintenance was not in this, but he had looked at two very good reports that Mr. Jody Peele has done over the years and said that he has no qualms with what was generated. He said they were estimating approximately a \$16,000 savings with a synthetic turf field over what they are spending for natural turf. He said Mr. Peele knows the numbers better than he did as far as what they are spending. He said it was certainly savings. He said at the end of the day it comes down to how does one price the value associated with the extra play and the ability to play on the surface all of the time.

Mr. Santos asked if that was 2016 numbers.

Mr. Peele said it was 2014-2015 numbers.

Mr. Santos said the cost is probably a bit higher at the present time. He said that maintenance was a big thing as they could use the Public Services staff for other things rather than cutting grass and fertilizing fields. He said also by not watering fields on a constant basis they would save money there as well. He said he thought they needed to have the total cost including maintenance because that is a yearly one. He said if they are able to rent the field out there will be revenue being generated to help defray the cost as well. He said they need to look at how much they are getting for their fields now when they rent them out. He said they need to look at last year's in how much money did they make renting the fields. He said they need to look at the numbers to see how much they can generate to offset the costs. He said it is not just about the cost but revenue as well.

Mr. O'Rourke asked Mr. DeMoura what they should do.

Mr. DeMoura said that if it was the desire of the Recreation Committee to pursue a turf field, as they had talked in the past, the best location would be a Carolina Park. He said they are in the midst of a second phase and have a third phase budgeted in the plan. He said if it was their desire they need to look at how they can incorporate it into that third phase. He said it would put it exactly how it might operate and if they want to pursue this, then give staff a month to bring it back as to how it might look in the third phase.

Mr. O'Rourke said he thought they did want to pursue that and said it would be fair for Ms. Whitley to be there during the final vote. He said what would help them is to know with this added cost what will be removed from the project budget. He asked if the estimated probable cost of that phase had been completed.

Mr. Gastley answered in the negative. He said he thought the Town had an established in-house budget for it which he thought should be enough to do what they are talking about doing. He said they had not completed a detailed cost estimate of Phase III.

Mr. O'Rourke said if they could know something that they could then take to Council. He said he thought that the Committee at the end of the day is going to want to take something to Council for a vote and it will entail this element of the project. He said that based on Mr. Gastley's preliminary budget he would want to know what may have to come off as a result of that. He said he would urge him not only to look at what is cut but how to value engineer some of it and maybe not cut at all. He said they could change the scope of some things. He said he strongly thinks it could be great for use. He said he saw a lot of the emails to Ms. Whitley and all of them about use. He said there will be uses for this that they do not even know about yet that could be really good.

Mr. Santos said he had someone who wants play over the summertime and offer clinics for the children. He said he was not able to tell him anything yet, but they are already asking for it. He said in addition to that he would like to get updated cost of the maintenance not 2014-15 numbers but 2018-19. He said he also wanted a cost of the Cambridge because he does not want them to build a field and then be told they need to put one in and that would be extra. He wants to know in advance what that would be. He said with rain that has happened it may need it. He said that in talking to a coach they do not like the crested fields playing soccer because the ball rolls faster and they want it flat. He thanked Mr. Gastley for the information.

Mr. John Near, 3694 Waldorf Court, Carolina Park said he was either way on the fields. He said they mentioned it after the fact which is the

operations cost and also numbers in a per month usage because that hits the extra two months they would have. He said if they get two months more usage out it that will affect how the people look at the cost per month. He said the natural grass will look a little bit more expensive because they will be able to use the artificial for those two months of the year. He said it may help to give apples to apples rather than saying they can use one a little bit more and natural a little less.

Mr. Santos said that someone wanting to do clinics for the children had mentioned Mr. Near's name. He asked what the gentleman's name was.

Mr. Near said it was Mr. Alan Bahadori who is the coach for a team called Lowcountry United. He said it was a semi-pro team that fit the niche and play in the United States National Premier Soccer League (USNPSL) which is an amateur league within the rank system of United States Soccer. He said they made it to the finals against a team from Canada this year. He said he was not a spokesperson for the club, but he follows them. He said the mission of the team is to work within the communities. He said they have players in the Charleston County area and they were looking for a way to give back to the community in exchange for some presence on fields. He said that one of those things is giving clinics to the children in the community. He said it was something they could use to weigh one of the cross benefits of having more field availability.

Mr. Santos said he was glad Mr. Near came because he saw his name on the email.

Mr. O'Rourke said he was worried they are going to financially analyze this thing to death. He said he thinks they are going to create a discussion at the Council level that is going to make them sick. He said they could have sat outside and compared a two-gym outdoor gym or what is being built. He said it would have been cheaper to have a nice little roof and not have any air conditioning. He said it would have been a lot better and asked what they were doing. He asked do they want to do it or not want to it. He said it is going to cost money. He said if they are trying to justify the fact that this is not going to cost more then they are lying because it is going to cost more. He said they need to suck it up, deal with it, and move

forward. He said if they five people on Council that want to do it, then they do it.

Mr. Santos said it was the same as the track. He said Mr. DeMoura was there when they were doing to track. He said they had people complaining about the cost with the rubber track, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) approved track. He said they said it was too much as there was a track down at the Town Hall location. He said it was a battle and they did. He said it was a \$1.2 million track. He said that since that time the track team has won the state championship every year they have had the track. He said they just had a gentleman from Mexico set the state record in the 800 and the national record in Mexico in the 800 on that track. He said that the track had been used by the citizens for health reasons and used a lot. He said the pool was the same thing in the late 90's. He said they did not want a pool out there. He said they fought to get a pool, so they got a 25-yard pool instead of a 25 meter that they could actually use and have tournaments to bring revenue in to help pay for some of that infrastructure. He said they have been through this fight before and heard the same thing that it cost too much. He said they have been very successful in everyone of the ones the Town had completed had been successful. He said he fully believed they would be very successful with the turf field.

Mr. O'Rourke asked Mr. DeMoura if they had some direction.

Mr. DeMoura answered in the affirmative.

Mr. O'Rourke asked if that would be done at the next meeting.

Mr. DeMoura answered in the affirmative.

5. Discussion of Mount Pleasant Recreation Foundation

Mr. O'Rourke said he asked for this to be brought up. He said he wears a lot of hats in the Town, but the two largest hats are Finance and Recreation. He said he always had his eye on Finance and also knows philanthropy done right can get a lot of money for more than scholarships for kids to play a sport. He said he was talking about building facilities and a lot of things like that. He said there was money out there. He said the

Foundation was stagnant at present. He would like to talk with Mr. Gergick and his staff about whether there is a desire to look at bringing that in some way. He said that the scary thing about non-profit is that one does not have any control. He said they are going to want control. He said he had not seen the by-laws and had not seen anything. He said creating by-laws, so the Director has control is very important. He said with a separate non-profit there is a separate Board out there acting. He said as a Director it would make him a lot bit nervous unless the by-laws made sure that all the benefits of their work were coming back to the Department in that manner in which the Town wants it. He said it was not unfair for the Director to sit on that Board to let them know what the Department's goals were. He said they should be asking what the Department wants. He said the Director may say turf fields are pressing and can a million dollars be raised for that. He said there are people in the Town with money and tax problems. He said when they can explain tax credits to people such as that they could really get some money. He said when they sell what this is all about and the wholesome great things that they are doing. He said that today was step one discussion and do not have to say it in the minutes but can call him later and say they do not want to this and he will back off. He said he thought it was a way for the Department to get some things they want without having to deal with the budget and the Committee not having to deal with police, fire, and everyone else. He said they need to look at a way to create a group of people in this community, smart people that will go out and raise the funds for the things that they want. He said they have it there, sitting there, totally inactive. He said it was set up for good purposes as far as creating funds, so they do not go back where it is financially if people want to do certain things. He said there was so much they could do if money could be dumped on their desk.

Mr. Santos said he thought it was good discussion. He said they were able to do somethings with it. He remembered they put a lot of money in the caged basketball courts. He said there was some infrastructure things they could do for Recreation through a 501(c)(3).

Mr. O'Rourke said the best way to do this is to let the Committee present this to the Department. He said they do not need a vote and they can comment but do not need to. He said that between now and next month Mr. Gergick could let them know whether or not he and staff want to do it and think it is a good idea or think they should wait or if there are any questions. He said that his job and he use to be the Executive Director of Charleston County Parks and he is not through there until March 17. He said for the last ten years he had been in charge of that foundation. He said he was doing that with that foundation and they are building swimming pools and doing a lot of things with philanthropic money. He said that there are people in this community willing to give for great causes.

Mr. Gergick said he would like to find other sources of revenue to do things that they would like to offer to the community. He said he did not know how that works with the Foundation and did not know much of the details of the Foundation that has been established already and what by-laws exist.

Mr. O'Rourke said there has to be by-laws. He said it was set up and was a separate 501(c)(3) non-profit but it was inactive. He said it could easily be active. He said if it was something they want to pursue, and it could take a year to do it. He said to get the staff together and figure out how this would work and get the by-laws where the Department wants them and creating a Board of chosen people by the Department. He said to make sure that there are the right people to help.

6. Program/projects update

Mr. Santos said participation numbers were up in everything except tennis from last year.

Mr. Gergick said registration numbers have been strong. He said each of the youth and adult sports were good. He said July 5-8 the track team had nine regional champs at the Regional Track Meet in Rome, Georgia and 43 athletes qualified for the National Meet in Greensboro, North Carolina. He said swimming lessons and the Senior Center membership was going well.

He said they had fantastic summer camps with 2300 participants in 92 camps compared to 87 camps last year and has really improved and doing well. He said they had an Annual Membership Appreciation Day at the Senior Center two weeks ago and they cooked hot dogs and said thank you to a lot of the members. He said the Farmers Market continues to do very well. He said upcoming events in August was the Movies in the Park every Friday and the upcoming Friday they are going to have a special celebration recognizing the All-American City Award. He said there was not a Culture, Arts and Pride (CAP) meeting in July. He said they had been working with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) to put the first sculpture in the roundabout on Mathis Ferry Road. He said two new sculptures were added to the pocket park on Coleman and will be in place there until next summer. He said they are sending out calls for submission for the next round of Traffic Box Art installation. He said that had been very popular and has been an award-winning program. He said at the Towne Center they are going to be installing It's Raining Art! He said that is where they put poetry or a line from a song in invisible ink on the pavement so when it rains it comes out and shows up. He said Towne Center had really embraced the program and CAP will be doing 14 new ones over there with submissions from Wando High School and a Jennie Moore student that are providing poetry to go there. He said CAP had been working with Councilwoman Whitley on the design and mold for a fiberglass sculpture art project going throughout the town. He said the current suggestion was fiberglass shrimp boats that would be painted and decorated in different areas of the town.

Mr. Santos said that Ms. Tami Dennis had done a fantastic job with the track program. He said that a lot of people do not know that when Wando started building their stadium they did not have a track, so the Town offered Wando the use of the track. He said Wando used one side of the track and the Town used the other side of the track. He said that Wando's boys and girls won the state championship. He said the Town's track team won the state championship and went on to the nationals. He said three state champions working off of a half of a track. He said that was unbelievable and goes to show the kind of programs the Town is putting

forth because most of the children go on the Wando and he was very proud of them. He said that the track has done well for all these years and has produced some excellent athletes.

Mr. Gergick said the project on the gym outside of Town Hall is moving along. He said they have the second floor over the lobby area along with roof decking.

Mr. Santos said he was looking forward to it.

Mr. O'Rourke said it looked great and thought it would be a parking nightmare.

7. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Bedenbaugh, 8/6/18