

**MINUTES OF THE HARMON FIELD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
WORK SESSION (As Amended)  
Tuesday, January 3, 2023**

Chairman Nelson called the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors work session to order at 6:20 PM at the Tryon Town Hall, McCown Room.

**Board Members Present:** Chairman Stephen Nelson; Rick Covil; and Warren Watson

**Board Members Absent:** Secretary-Treasurer Miguel Santibanez

**Staff Present:** Travis Aldred, Harmon Field Superintendent; and Meg Rogers, Town Secretary/Cashier

**Blue Ridge Hunter Jumper Association (BRHJA) Contract Discussion**

Blue Ridge Hunter Jumper Association (BRHJA) representative Jamie C. Dunn reported that the BRHJA organization was not stable enough at this time to operate the Harmon Field equestrian facility and could not currently generate enough revenue to operate and help maintain the facility. In the past the BRHJA had a group of knowledgeable volunteers managing the shows with the help of Lewis Pack, but now, with those volunteers and Lewis Pack stepping down, a professional show manager was needed to do this job. Corn proposed that Harmon Field staff take over managing the equestrian facility instead of leasing it to BRHJA to operate. Dunn provided a handout with estimates of projected revenues and expenses for three-day and one-day horse shows held at Harmon Field. According to the worksheet, BRHJA would rent the facility for its own three 3-day shows in 2023. Carolina Schooling (CSS) Series had scheduled two 1-day shows and Progressive Show Jumping (PSJ) had scheduled one 3-day show in 2023. Dunn projected that Harmon Field could generate \$4,522 per BRHJA show (X 3 shows), \$1,950 per CCS show (X 2 shows) and \$5,022 per PSJ show (X 1 show) for a total revenue of \$22,488. Dunn proposed a profit sharing program whereby this revenue could be distributed between a fund to maintain the equestrian facility and Harmon Field at a percentage rate to be determined by the Harmon Field Board. 70%-30% 60%-40% or 50%-50% distributions were estimated based on the projected \$22,488 revenue. Watson suggested that a higher percentage for facility maintenance would be needed to start so repairs and restoration could be completed then a lower percentage for annual maintenance after the facility was restored. Janet Howard would be taking over the management of the BRHJA 3-day shows. Dunn, Howard and Lewis Pack would be willing to help as advisors to Harmon Field or Town of Tryon staff on maintenance needs and help to get quotes for maintenance work. Dunn suggested that the horse show camper fees could be increased with three to four hookups at \$35 per night each. Other suggestions were made on ways for Harmon Field to bring in revenue by running the horse show facility. Dunn stated that the electric meters and water meter currently in BRHJA's name would have to be put back in Harmon Field's name as payer if Harmon Field took over facility management.

Dunn confirmed that all the current existing jump standards and rails stored at Harmon Field belonged to Lewis Pack. Pack charged \$375 per show date to show manager for jumps with Pack and his staff transporting the jumps to the show location and moving them back to storage at Harmon Field after the show ended. The show manager was responsible for moving the equipment within the rings as needed during the show. Pack was responsible for all maintenance of the jumps equipment. Reservation of the jumps equipment was the responsibility of each show manager and was reserved with Pack as much as one year before the actual show date. In the past, for 3-day shows, Pack rented a water truck and his staff filled it at the Harmon Field spigot up to 15 times per day to wet down the rings (because the sprinklers were not operational). Dunn recommended setting the horse show rental rate and deposit to include the rent of the water truck and labor to wet the rings for the 3-day shows.

Covil asked if Harmon Field staff would have to provide constant oversight on site during the events? Dunn responded that each show's show manager would sign the rental contract and would be responsible for using the equipment and oversight of their show volunteers. For BRHJA shows, Dunn noted that \$105 would be charged to rent each stall per day with \$65 per stall going to pay the BRHJA show manager and \$40 to go to Harmon Field per her projected revenues handout. Show managers were responsible for providing ribbons, prizes, liability insurance, etc. Dunn passed around a sample contract used by BRHJA in the past for their rentals to horse show groups which included requirement for specific insurance coverage.

Emergency repairs of the show rings surfaces and fund raising to get this done were in progress at a cost of approximately \$20,000. \$15,000 had been raised to fix the rings and Tryon Riding & Hunt Club had committed \$5,000 to the project. Other immediate needs included adding a new circuit breaker at each barn and inspection of the wooden stalls and ring fencing for needed replacement of faded, broken or rotted wood boards and start repairs. Watson stated that the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors needed someone very knowledgeable on horseshows to serve on the Harmon Field Board and oversee how this horse show facility management worked. Covil stated that he wanted to keep equestrian activities at Harmon Field. Dunn stated that it was important to balance the traffic and use of the facility against the cost to maintain and repair usage damage that was constantly occurring at shows, especially the shows managed by inexperienced volunteers. Increasing the number of shows each year could do more damage causing diminishing returns. The projected goal was good maintenance of the facility and keeping horse shows at Harmon Field. Covil stated that the facility should be maintained property or shut down. Watson stated that the proposal would need backing and a plan. Dunn suggested that the Tryon Riding & Hunt Club (TRHC) might be willing to provide some annual funding because of TRHC's historical connection to Harmon Field. Chairman Nelon stated that the projected numbers seemed to work. Covil stated he would support keeping horse shows at Harmon Field as long as Harmon field would break even on maintenance of the facility.

Dunn stated that the BRHJA needed a decision as soon as possible. If Harmon Field accepted the proposal for Harmon Field to take over operation of the facility, the shows

could continue. If not, BRHJA would probably have to shut down the facility. All BRHJA's funds were going for the emergency repairs to the rings so they could be used in 2023 with nothing left to pay an annual rent fee. The sample horse show rental agreement could be adapted for use by Harmon Field/Town of Tryon to use for the March 17, 2022 show if the emergency ring repairs were completed. BRHJA needed a decision by the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors February 7, 2023 meeting. Dunn would return to the February meeting for a decision. Covil stated he would support trying the proposed operating change for one year to see if it would work but feared that operating the facility might be harder to do than it looked on paper. Aldred stated he believed the costs would be higher than projected on the handout. Covil asked Aldred to get estimates for water, electricity meter costs currently paid by BRHJA to provide better idea of real expenses and net revenue. Aldred stated the electricity was \$30 per meter when inactive and \$50 to \$55 per meter during months with shows. Aldred stated that big shows brought their own operating crew and equipment and Harmon Field staff only had to take care of trash. Small shows required more help and could hire Harmon Field staff on an hourly basis to do the work, but only Town of Tryon or Harmon Field staff could operate Town of Tryon owned equipment. Aldred also stated that a 3-day show required five days of dragging the rings by staff. Aldred was asked to get all the numbers before the February 7, 2023 meeting.

#### **Recreational Vehicle Camping at Harmon Field Discussion**

Aldred recommended renting camping spaces in the Hog Heaven area of Harmon Field to generate revenue for Harmon Field. Aldred estimated a few thousand dollars per year or, if advertised, more. Currently camping was allowed for horse shows at \$40 per day per space with electricity, water and trash pickup and for special approved groups/events at Harmon Field (such as Air Stream Event, Boy Scout campers and Civil War reenactments). Aldred received at least 10 calls per year asking for small group camping at Harmon Field. Watson confirmed that there were hookup sites at Harmon Field for up to 100 campers. Covil stated that the downside was lack of security for the children and families using the park facilities. Watson was unsure how the reservations, applications and payments for camping could be handled. Watson did not want to compete with area campgrounds and wanted to be in compliance with zoning regulations. The hookups at Harmon Field did not have concrete pads, as required for camping venues. Aldred asked for clear guide on which organizations qualified as approved groups. Watson stated that the applying organization needed to come to the Harmon Field Board members for their request to be approved on a case by case basis.

#### **Financial Reporting Changes Discussion**

The Harmon Field Board of Supervisors had expressed concerns regarding project financial reporting and lack of clarity in the current monthly financial statement for Harmon Field. A request for the Town Clerk to attend the February 7, 2023 meeting to answer questions about the financial reporting to clear up the Board's concerns. The Board also requested an update on the maintenance building restoration project expenditures through the end of January 2023.

**Adjourn Work Session**

Chairman Nelon adjourned the work session at 7:48 PM.

**Submitted By:**



**Meg Rogers, staff support  
substituting for Miguel Santibanez,  
Secretary-Treasurer**

**Approved:**



**Stephen Nelon  
Chairman**