

MINUTES OF THE HARMON FIELD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
Tuesday, May 2, 2023

Chairman Nelson called the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors meeting to order at 5:30 PM at the Tryon Town Hall, McCown Room.

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

Board Members Absent: Secretary-Treasurer Miguel Santibanez

Staff Present: Jim Fatland, Tryon Town Manager; Travis Aldred, Harmon Field Superintendent; and Meg Rogers, Town Secretary/Cashier

Approve Minutes from April 4, 2023 meeting

The Minutes from the Harmon Field Board's April 4, 2023 meeting were reviewed. Watson made a motion to approve the April 4, 2023 regular meeting minutes as presented. Dunn seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Approve Financial Report for April 2023

The April 2023 Harmon Field financial report was presented by Fatland. According to the report, Harmon Field had received \$280,764.52 (72.42%) of its annual budgeted revenues as amended for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 and had spent \$263,405.08 (67.95%) of annual budgeted expenditures as amended for FY 2022-2023 leaving a fund balance of \$175,437.95 as of April 30, 2023.

Town Manager Fatland noted that the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors had approved the budget amendment at the last meeting. Fatland asked Dunn for confirmation that the invoice for the Equestrian Facility Restoration Project work would be submitted and paid before the fiscal year ended on June 30, 2023. Dunn confirmed that it would. Fatland stated that collection of the Harmon Field special district tax showed 99.98% collection rate which was very good. The maintenance shed restoration project had expended approximately 50% of the insurance settlement funds. Harmon Field Park Superintendent Aldred reported that the remaining work included HVAC (\$5,000) and other final work (~\$5,000) for a projected amount of \$10,000 to complete the restoration project. Watson asked why the Rental Revenue was below the budgeted amount. Fatland explained that rental revenue now only included lease rent payments from the concession stand tenant. Revenue from Blue Ridge Hunter Jumper Association (BRHJA) lease rent payments had originally been included in this revenue line item, but was now being posted in the HF Horse Show Fees Revenue line item because Harmon Field was now operating the facility instead of leasing it to BRHJA. Usage Revenue line item reflected the cabin, picnic shed, gym and other facility day rentals and was well above the budgeted amount.

Covil made a motion to approve the financial report for April 2023 as presented. Watson seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Open Air Gym Room

Fatland reported that rent amount negotiations were in process for rental of a portion of the gym room according to the proposed room division plan submitted and approved at the last Harmon Field Board of Supervisors meeting. The electrical usage was hard to estimate because the electrical meter included the library building, the field house and the gym & locker rooms. Tryon Arts & Crafts School (TACS) had asked for a 3-year lease, but the Town's auditor recommended avoiding any leases longer than 12 months due to additional cost of new accounting requirements for long-term rentals. After recent negotiations, TACS Executive Director Will Barclift was receptive to a monthly rental fee of \$175 plus \$25 per month electrical usage flat fee for a total of \$200 per month. Fatland recommended a 12-month lease. At the end of each lease period, a new lease contract would be reviewed for approval for the next 12-month period. Putting the gym room on a separate electrical meter for monitoring usage was discussed, but could be costly. Additional meters were also subject to a minimum \$25 per month fee per meter even when not in use. Covil made a motion to approve a 12-month rental contract for half of the gym room for a monthly rent of \$175 plus \$25 for utilities for a total of \$200 per month. Watson seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0. Lease would go into effect as of May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024.

FY 2023-2024 Harmon Field Budget-Update from County & Town

Fatland reported that he had received a bid for the paving work at Harmon Field from Darryl Price Paving at \$190,650 to include the main entrance road, entrance road at the tennis courts and gym parking lot (except the part owned by TACS). Fatland had met with County Manager Pittman regarding Polk County paying 64% of the cost to do the paving and Harmon Field paying 36% of the cost in lieu of requesting a Harmon Field tax increase for FY 2023-2024. Pittman would be responding to the request after the May 8, 2023 Polk County Board of Commissioners meeting. Fatland and Pittman had also discussed a compromise on Harmon Field rental fees for Polk County Recreation/YMCA soccer fees to keep the amount the same as last year and Polk Rec/YMCA paying any extra expense incurred. Polk Rec/YMCA would pay for equipment and minimize costs for striping, mowing, etc. Polk Rec/YMCA would also try to get a mower donated to Harmon Field. Watson and Covil were concerned that Harmon Field would be losing money – with expenses to maintain and prepare the soccer fields higher than the fees paid by Polk Rec/YMCA. Fatland stated that at the end of the soccer season, staff would calculate total costs to maintain & prepare the facilities during the season and Polk Rec/YMCA would pay the overage. Fatland stated that if Polk County paid for 64% of the paving costs, reducing the facility fees received for soccer would still be a good deal for Harmon Field.

Watson recommended decreasing overall electrical expenses by turning off as many of the currently active 27 electrical meters at Harmon Field as possible and getting separate meters for the library building, field house and parts of the gym when the room is subdivided so actual usage could be tracked and billed.

Proposed Pickleball Courts

Luke Harkey, leader of the Harmon Field Pickleball Advisory Group, told the Harmon Field Board that a professional grant writer, Debra Torrance, had agreed to help them apply for funding to build a pickleball court facility at Harmon Field. Harkey distributed a handout that included the names of the Advisory Group members (Harmon Field Superintendent Travis Aldred, Equine Sanctuary at Red Bell Run fund-raising organizer Virginia Bailey, Polk County Rec/YMCA representative Laura Baird, TACS volunteer David Briere, Landrum pickleball coordinator Donna Donnelly, Tryon Downtown Development Association board member Nick Fisher, group leader and retired Presbyterian minister Luke Harkey, volunteer with Board of Ukulele Kid's Club Project Jay Lichty and Harmon Field Board of Supervisors Chairman Steve Nelson) and the Advisory Group's request that Harmon Field Board of Supervisors appoint an Ad Hoc Steering Committee to assume responsibility for funding and development of pickleball courts at Harmon Field. The appointment would give standing to the Pickleball Advisory Group which could then present the project to the Tryon Town Council and, if approved, seek foundation grants and community funding for the project. Once the project was completed, the Ad Hoc Steering Committee would be dissolved and Harmon Field staff would provide continued maintenance and facility management thereafter. Covil made a motion to appoint an Ad Hoc Steering Committee to assume the responsibility for funding and development of pickleball courts at Harmon Field. Dunn seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Superintendent Aldred recommended locating the new pickleball courts at one end of the gravel parking lot across Harmon Field Road from the Presbyterian Church. The gravel lot was currently 135 feet in length from the near end close to the library building to the far end lined with large rocks. For a pickleball court of 60-feet by 40-feet, Aldred stated that minimal grading would be needed if the courts were located at the far end using 45-feet of the lot and 15-feet beyond where the large rocks currently mark the end of the lot. Using this already flat area would save \$20,000 on fill dirt and grading. Watson was concerned that any new tenant of the library building could need all of the gravel parking lot space for parking. Aldred had estimated cost for building the courts at his recommended location would be approximately \$200,000. If the portion of the parking lot could not be used, the cost would increase to \$220,000 to include the fill and grading. Aldred needed a decision from the Harmon Field Board on whether to include the parking area space or not to get firm quotes for the construction. Covil made a motion to move forward with the pickleball courts location using part of the gravel parking lot. Dunn seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Equestrian Facility Update

Dunn reported that the facility rentals were doing okay. Storage issues were being resolved and the stalls cleared out. New jumps were to be delivered soon and the BRHJA jumps would be in the storage container with one set of jumps for small shows in the small storage trailer to save money and effort in staging horse shows at the facility. Former Town Manager Ollis had negotiated the purchase of the storage containers as part of the Harmon Field maintenance building fire insurance settlement to store Harmon Field's equipment until the maintenance building could be restored. Dunn reported that the sprinkler system serving two of the show rings was still having problems even after valve replacements. She would be getting an expert to see if it was feasible to repair the system for use.

Rental Updates

Superintendent Aldred reported the concession stand tenant had paid for April 2023, but had not yet paid rent for May 2023.

Update on Dog Park Issues

Fatland reported he visited the Harmon Field Dog Park and talked to several dog park users while there. He observed that the dog park was well maintained, mowed and looked okay. The users he met had had only praise for the dog park and had only one concern about a hole someone's dog had dug in the park that needed to be filled in. The complaint Superintendent Aldred had received about the conditions at the dog park did not appear to be accurate. Aldred reported that he observed a lot of poop left in the dog park sections when he was mowing the area. Covil stated that Harmon Field staff should not have to mow the area with poop in the dog park. Fatland stated that an active dog owners' task group was important to dog park sustainability. Nelson stated that several dog owners had attended Harmon Field Board of Supervisors meetings to support the need for the dog park, but never really set up a formal group to enforce the rules and raise money to maintain or enhance the dog park. Aldred stated he might have a list of the people who had requested the dog park project.

Park Superintendent's Report

Park Superintendent Aldred presented his report.

- Electrical remote controls by cell phone quotes – Aldred had gotten quotes ranging from \$2,000 to \$4,000 for each of the electrical control boxes. The quotes were for electrical control boxes at baseball field A (Dallara Field) (\$2,000), baseball field B (\$3,000), dog park (\$2,000), tennis courts (\$4,000) and the gym (\$2,500). Possibility of getting a grant to cover cost of the remote control electrical boxes was discussed. The current pickleball court project would be seeking grant funding for the courts and fencing only. Future enhancements could include lights, shade cover and remote lighting controls. Fatland stated that the Harmon Field Master Plan would need to be amended to show the proposed facilities and improvements to pursue grant funding. The updated Master Plan would be schematic drawing showing Harmon Field existing facilities and new/proposed facilities like the dog

park and pickleball court location. Watson asked about the cost to get the Master Plan updated. Fatland stated the cost should be negligible.

- Tennis Camp at Harmon Field – Aldred had had received a request to reserve the Harmon Field tennis courts (the 3 current courts) for a one- to two-week camps for three hours per day during the rental period. Aldred asked for direction from the Board on whether to allow this rental to use all the available tennis courts or to limit the number of courts they use to keep one or more courts available to the public during the camps. Aldred reported that the courts were currently in public use all the time during the days and in the evenings. Current tennis court reservation/rental fee was \$20 per hour per court (if the applicant resided in the Harmon Field tax district) or \$30 per hour per court (if the applicant resided outside the tax district). If lights were used the current rates were \$25 per hour per court (inside) or \$35 per hour per court (outside). Watson stated that if the camp director would only be reserving the courts for a few hours each day, the rental would be feasible. The public would be able to use the courts before or after the camp reservation periods. Rental fee for the three courts for three hours per day at \$30 per hour per court would generate \$270 per day rental revenue for Harmon Field. For two week (10 days) camp the total revenue could be as much as \$2,700.
- Polk County Recreation/YMCA had offered to pay the expense if they could revise the infield of the Dallara baseball field to remove sod and restore the dirt infield so that it could be used by the all the age groups in the leagues. Aldred had told them that Harmon Field would not pay to make the change and that any changes to the field would have to be approved by the Dallara Foundation. The YMCA rep who spoke to Aldred was unwilling to contact Dallara. Watson stated that the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Dallara Foundation for the Dallara baseball field specified a sod infield. Watson and Covil stated that the Dallara Foundation had not complied with the terms of the MOU with regard to some facility elements and maintenance funds. Covil made a motion to let Polk County Recreation/YMCA remove the sod in the Dallara baseball field, restoring the dirt infield so all age groups could use the ballfield, subject to review of the MOU. Dunn seconded the motion. Fatland reported that Mr. Dallara had contacted him multiple times about reducing the fees charged to Polk County Rec/YMCA for baseball. Fatland agreed to contact Charles Dallara about the request. As Dallara supported Polk County Rec/YMCA in requesting lower fees, he might be okay with Polk County Rec/YMCA requested changes. The issue would be between Dallara and Polk County Rec/YMCA. Watson and Nelon wanted to wait to review the MOU before voting on the removal of the sod. Motion was approved by a vote of 3 to 1 with Chairman Nelon voting against.

Next Meeting Date

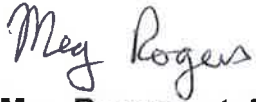
The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, June 6, 2023, 5:30 pm at Tryon Town Hall, McCown Council Meeting Room.

Adjourn

Chairman Nelon adjourned the meeting at 6:44 pm.

Submitted By:

Approved:



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



**Stephen Nelon
Chairman**