

MINUTES OF THE HARMON FIELD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
Tuesday, July 1, 2025

Chairman Warren Watson called the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors meeting to order at 6:00 PM at the Tryon Town Hall, McCown Room.

Board Members Present: Chairman Warren Watson; Vice-Chairman Lynn Cromer; Secretary-Treasurer Rick Covil; Steve Sloan; and Stephen Nelon

Board Members Absent: none

Staff Present: Brad Gordon, Park Superintendent; and Meg Rogers, Town Secretary/Cashier,

Welcome New Member Stephen Nelon

Chairman Watson welcomed returning member Stephen Nelon. Nelon was appointed to fill the remaining term of Greg Miner, who recently resigned.

Officer Elections

Covil nominated Warren Watson for Chairman. Cromer seconded the nomination. Nominations were closed. Watson was elected Chairman unanimously.

Watson nominated Lynn Cromer for Vice-Chairman. Sloan seconded the nomination. Nominations were closed. Cromer was elected unanimously.

Watson nominated Covil for Secretary-Treasurer. Cromer seconded the nomination. Nominations were closed. Covil was elected Secretary-Treasurer unanimously.

Chairman Watson asked to add an agenda item to discuss adopting a Harmon Field expenditure authorization policy. The Board approved the addition to the agenda as item 3-A.

Approve Meeting Calendar for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

As previously discussed at the June 19, 2025 work session, a new schedule for meeting dates and times was reviewed for approval. Meetings in Fiscal Year 2025-2026 would be held twice per month, on the first Tuesday and then 16 days later on the third Thursday after the first meeting. All meetings would be held at 6:00 pm. Meetings would be held at Tryon Town Hall, McCown Room unless otherwise determined ahead of time. Nelon made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Harmon Field Board of Supervisors Meeting Schedule as proposed. Sloan seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0. Harmon Field Park Superintendent Brad Gordon informed the Board that he would be unable to attend the July 17 and August 5 meetings as he would be on vacation during those dates.

Approve Harmon Field Expenditure Authorization Policy

Chairman Watson stated that he and other Board members had felt rushed to make spending decisions on high-cost items without sufficient time for review. Watson suggested that requests for approval of high-cost items be presented at a regular meeting for preliminary discussion and held over until a second reading at the next regular meeting for final discussion and a decision. Watson proposed a threshold for that process to be activated. Watson proposed that expenditures up to \$1,500 would be permitted without formal approval by the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors. Expenditures greater than \$1,500 up to \$5,000 would require approval

by a vote of the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors. Expenditures greater than \$5,000 would require two readings and discussion at two Harmon Field Board of Supervisors meetings before approval after the second reading. Watson made a motion to approve the proposed expenditure authorization policy for Harmon Field. Covil seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Approve Minutes from June 3, 2025 regular meeting and June 19, 2025 work session

The Minutes from the June 3, 2025 regular meeting and June 19, 2025 work session of the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors were reviewed. Covil made a motion to approve the Minutes from the regular meeting on June 3, 2025 and work session on June 19, 2025 as presented. Nelson seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Approve Financial Report for June 2025

The June 2025 Harmon Field financial report was reviewed. Harmon Field had received \$311,224.96 (70.15% of the amended FY 2024-2025 budgeted revenues). Total Operating Expenditures were \$277,252.07 (82.25% of the amended FY 2024-2025 budgeted operating expenditures) and Capital Expenditures totaled \$53,554.60 (50.26% of the amended FY 2024-2025 budgeted capital expenditures). Total Expenditures were \$330,806.67 (74.57% of the amended FY 2024-2025 budgeted total expenditures). Running fund balance as of June 30, 2025 was \$97,873.29.

Gordon briefly went over any line items that were over its budgeted amount. Gordon reported that vehicle maintenance and repair should go down in the next year. Options for reducing electricity costs were discussed. Elimination of most of the power outlets in "Hog Heaven" area would provide a saving of approximately \$30 each per month. The meter at the old concession stand near the track was also off. Covil stated that the 3-phase meter at the community center building was expensive and asked if it was off. Gordon believed it was off, but would check on that. Power at the cabin was turned off at the meter but the cabin's account was not inactivated yet, pending decision about demolition.

Nelson made a motion to approve the June 2025 financial report as presented. Sloan seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Harmon Field Tennis Courts Reconfiguration Trial

Park Superintendent Gordon reported that pickleball was very popular at Harmon Field. Recently one pickleball net was donated and another purchased for permanent installation. The two portable pickleball nets could then be moved to the third tennis court to create two additional pickleball courts. The portable nets would be secured by sand bags. Gordon reported that tennis players at Harmon Field mostly used the remaining two courts and rarely used the third court that would be converted for pickleball. Gordon recommended installing a netting barrier between the tennis courts section and the pickleball courts section as a buffer. Gordon proposed taking up the FlexCourt® tiles on the third court before using it for pickleball, but was concerned about the condition of the asphalt under the tiles. Steve King, an active tennis and pickleball player commented that the FlexCourt® tiles could be left in place on the third tennis court and pickleball lines painted on the tiles in a different color, similar to the system used at Stearn's gym. Staff could paint the lines on the FlexCourt® tiles at a cost of less

than \$1,500. Covil made a motion to reconfigure the third tennis court for pickleball with the FlexCourt® surface left in place with pickleball lines painted on the tiles in a different color. Nelson seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Park Superintendent's Report

Harmon Field Park Superintendent Gordon briefly went over his printed report for July 2025.

- Gordon was continuing to work with Tryon Town Planner Tim Daniels and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) consultants on all FEMA projects at the park.
- Crews were working on cleaning areas of the park that were behind the orange safety fence.
- Harmon Field staff had helped the Tryon Street Department weed eat the Tryon Cemetery and, in return, the Tryon Street Department would be sending staff to help Harmon Field staff (Damion) while Gordon was on vacation in July.
- With the new budget year, Harmon Field staff were developing an inventory sheet for Harmon Field so staff would know what supplies, parts and equipment were needed and what Harmon Field already had and organize and note where these were stored.
- Staff had also started on July 1, 2025 filling out daily work logs. These logs would document daily personnel hours as well as equipment hours.
- Nelson-Cole Exterminator Service was contracted to spray three nests of yellow-jackets inside the park. Nelson-Cole would be coming in July to put out insecticides on the normal areas since most of the park was open now.

Update on Storm Damage & Cleanup

Gordon went over his printed update on the storm damage & cleanup.

- The Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) had moved out and staff had contacted the initial grading company to come back to smooth a few areas that needed attention.
- Staff had moved the orange safety fence so patrons could walk all the way around the four barns, up between the cabin and the playground area.
- Staff had also opened up the walking path along the river from the small picnic shelter to the east entrance across from the church, except for a small section at the soccer field.
- The bridge was remaining closed due to the abutments caving in and undermining the asphalt. The contractor for the abutment repair said it would take 6 to 8 weeks for the rock to be produced at the rock quarry. Once the quarry started to produce the needed rock, the contractor would start the grading to prepare the site and do what could be done without rock. Both rock and netting would be installed as part of the abutment repair.
- The open-air gym project was a few weeks out. Fencing replacement would take 2-3 weeks and flooring repair would take 3 to 4 weeks. Fencing would be replaced before flooring repairs were done.
- The Dallara baseball field repairs had a start date of July 14 or July 15.
- The crushed culvert at the main entrance of Harmon Field was fixed. Staff were waiting on a grate cover for the poured concrete collection box.
- A PO number had been issued for the playground repairs. Blue Ridge Playgrounds said that it would take approximately 12 weeks to get the parts. Staff could put down the mulch and replace the fence, but the remaining fixtures were not safe. Total cost with installation and mulch would be approximately \$40,000 and would open for use in approximately 4 months. The contractor planned to order fence for all Harmon Field projects at one time to save money. When the start date for playground installation was set, the fence contractor could put up the fence just before installation of the playground equipment started.

Update on Open-Air Gym

Gordon briefly went over his printed update on the open-air gym project:

- Staff had told gym project contractor Derek Champion to hold off on the kitchen at the open-air gym for the time being, with changes to the master plan and buildings at Harmon Field, staff thought it would be fair.

Draft Harmon Field Master Plan Discussion

The Board formally voted on and approved master plan elements as discussed at the June 19 work session. Cromer made a motion to leave the dog park in its current location and leave the playground at its current location for now. Nelson seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Watson asked for confirmation that remediation funds from structures that could not be rebuilt, such as the screen shed and the boardwalk, could be redirected to renovating the community center building. Gordon reported that the town's FEMA consultant had submitted a letter of intent to FEMA to allow using the remediation funds for other facilities. FEMA funds would require ADA compliance and flood insurance coverage. Gordon recommended putting the maximum funding to renovating the community center which was completely outside the new flood risk zone and could provide multiple uses. The community center was bigger than the cabin and could accommodate more people. Other uses suggested included music events, family reunions, training classes for town staff and meeting space for other groups.

Fate of the Harmon Field cabin was discussed. Watson asked if the building could be moved to another site at Harmon Field. Gordon believed that the cost to move the cabin would be high. Watson asked if Harmon Field could sell the cabin to a third party to be deconstructed and removed. Gordon reported that all flood debris and demolition material had to be taken to a FEMA-approved waste site to qualify for remediation funding. Gordon could ask the FEMA consultant if Harmon Field could salvage the cabin materials and how salvage would impact the FEMA reimbursement. Gordon believed that any sale revenue received for cabin salvage materials would probably be deducted from the FEMA funding. Covil suggested leaving the cabin stone chimney and fireplace and the slab and building an open-sided picnic shed over the slab. Gordon stated that a county structural engineer would have to confirm stability of the stone chimney because it was in the floodplain.

Gordon urged the Board to approve adding a soccer practice field at the east end of the park to reduce damage to the formal soccer fields by sparing them from use for both practice and formal games. Per the Polk Recreation/YMCA representative, the proposed practice field would not need sod, irrigation or special grading and would only require minimal maintenance.

Requesting a grant for design and development around the community center was discussed briefly. There could be issues with duplication of federal funding sources that would be prohibited. Chairman Watson stated that the Board wanted to plan the area around the community center for its best use. Watson recommended moving Harmon Field structures away from the river and leaving the riverbank as open space.

The FEMA requirement that all structures constructed or repaired with FEMA funds be covered by flood insurance in the future was discussed briefly. Gordon had requested flood insurance cost information and had asked whether that requirement applied for structures outside the 500-year flood area. Gordon would relay information on those areas as he received it.

Gordon requested that the Master Plan include enclosing the Harmon Field large maintenance building across the river with security fence and adding an open sided roofed area attached to the back of the building to shelter Harmon Field equipment so all the park equipment would be secure in one location. This project would be scheduled after the completion of the bridge abutment repair.

Gordon reported that the most-used facility at Harmon Field was the oval walking track. Gordon advised that repaving the oval track should be part of the master plan. Possibility of grant funding and/or county funding for the repaving was discussed briefly. The oval track was currently walkable, but had cracks and resealing repairs did not last long and looked bad. Covil asked if there was FEMA funding to repave the oval track, and Gordon responded that the track damage was from wear and tear before the flood and no additional damage was caused by the flood, so repaving did not qualify for FEMA funds. Covil asked if mitigation funds could be used to repave the paved walking path along the river. Brad confirmed that only the section of the paved walking path washed away and damaged by the flood was covered by FEMA mitigation funding. Those sections could be moved further from the river bank for safety. The parts of the paved walking path further from the river on the east end of the park only needed silt removed and did not qualify for FEMA funds for repaving.

Possible County funding for renovation of the community center building to serve as a new election polling place, since the cabin was no longer available, was suggested.

Gordon reported there was interest in space at Harmon Field for skateboarding. Gordon recently had to eject skateboarders from the open-air gym, but they complained there was nowhere in Tryon to skateboard. This situation could be an opportunity to consider meeting this need at Harmon Field as part of the long-term Master Plan.

Enlargement of parking area near the community center building was supported by the Board members. Gravel parking areas needed minimal maintenance.

Gordon informed the Board that it was important to approve the Master Plan as soon as possible so that applications for grant funding could begin now. The Master Plan could be amended as needed in the future, but an approved Master Plan was essential to be competitive for grant funding. Big grants usually took 6-8 months from application to award and construction. Watson suggested an intensive retreat with Board members, architect and staff to expedite development of a Master Plan they could approve now. Chairman Watson requested that Town Manager Fatland update the Board on the grant opportunities and their relationship to the FEMA funding so the Board could include those considerations in their decision-making process. Knowing the amount of funding potentially available would help the Board to keep the Master Plan scope within those funding constraints.

Chairman Watson summarized that the Board was in agreement with approving some elements of the proposed Master Plan. The Board was in agreement that the screened shelter and boardwalk would not be replaced. The Board agreed that the cabin should be demolished if that was required. The Board agreed that the remediation funds from FEMA for those structures be directed to renovate the community center building.

Gordon reported that the field house bathrooms near the gym would probably have to be demolished and suggested using the original design plans from Brady-Trakas for the bathrooms building near the concession stand to build a similar bathroom building, smaller than the field house and easier to maintain, for the east end of the park. Opening the community center

bathrooms for use at the east end of the park was also suggested. Town Planner Daniels had researched and determined a feasible location for a small bathroom building just behind the existing tennis courts, a location that was outside the 500-year flood zone and on a Town sewer line.

Chairman Watson asked that members send him any ideas about the Master Plan update.

Other

- **Equestrian Facility Renovations** – Lewis Pack presented a lengthy justification for restoring the Harmon Field equestrian facility, including all the barns and rings that existed before the flood. His presentation included the historic significance of Harmon Field to the equestrian community of the area and Pack's assurance of strong moral and financial support for the facility's restoration from the equestrian community, Blue Ridge Hunters & Jumpers Association (BRHJA) and Tryon Riding & Hunt Club (TRHC). The Board members responded that removal of the flooded barns and reduction in the size of the equestrian facility to two barns and three rings would better fit Harmon Field's capacity to maintain with limited staff and fewer horseshow events held at Harmon Field to fund the maintenance cost. Restoration of the two river barns, warm-up ring and lunging area would be expensive and would leave those facilities at risk in future floods. The Board assured Pack that the riverside barns would not be demolished immediately and there was time for Pack and staff to get firm quotes on cost to renovate and maintain those facilities as well as to confirm availability of donated funds to complete the project. The Board stated that funding had to be guaranteed for the renovation as well as ongoing maintenance. If Harmon Field staff and/or equipment would be needed to do equestrian facility maintenance or support horse show events, that expense needed to be included in the renovation and operational funding calculations and matched to renovation donations and guaranteed horseshow revenue to determine the facility's feasibility going forward. Chairman Watson assured Pack that the Board wanted to preserve Harmon Field's equestrian heritage, but the Harmon Field equestrian facility had to fit within Harmon Field's operational feasibility limits going forward. Chairman Watson asked Pack to send the list of repairs needed to restore the equestrian facility to its pre-flood condition as well as to get it where it should be for optimal operational condition to Tryon cashier/secretary Meg Rogers to relay to the Board. The list would be used to get quotes to determine true cost projections to compare to funds available.
- **Correspondence Received** – A thank-you card had been received from the Hospital Foundation of Advent Health for Harmon Field's support of their recent Men's Health Tune-Up health fair and car show event held recently at the Harmon Field gym and parking area. Members asked that a scan of the thank-you card be sent to them.

Next Meeting Date

The next regular meeting was scheduled for Thursday, July 17, 2025, 6:00 pm at Tryon Town Hall, McCown Room.

Adjourn

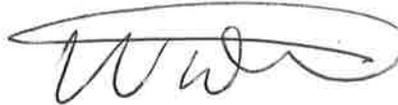
Meeting was adjourned by Chairman Watson at 7:57 pm

Submitted By:



**Rick Covil
Secretary-Treasurer**

Approved:



**Warren Watson
Chairman**