

SPECIAL ALPINE CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Alpine City Hall, 20 N. Main, Alpine, UT
June 22, 2016

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER: The meeting of June 22, 2016 was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Sheldon Wimmer.

A. Roll Call: The following were present and constituted a quorum:

Mayor Sheldon Wimmer

Council Members: Roger Bennett, Lon Lott, Troy Stout

Council Members not present: Kimberly Bryant and Ramon Beck were excused.

Staff: Rich Nelson, Charmayne Warnock, Marla Fox, Cal Christensen

Others: Debbie Francis – Utah Youth Soccer, Angie Nydegger – Director of Operations for La Roca, Jake Carter – State Field Committee for Utah Youth Soccer and Field Coordinator and Board Member for SURF, Blaine Hale – Director of Coaching with SURF, Paul Ewing – parent of kids who play for SURF and La Roca, Ariel Bravo – Coach for La Roca South, Perry Bassett – resident and soccer coach, Nina Slighting- resident, Alan Slighting – resident, Karl Wild – resident, David Josse – Club President of North Utah County Soccer, Marlo Anderson – resident, John Nichols, Will Jones

II. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Soccer Management. Mayor Wimmer said he wanted to clear the air with the soccer leagues, talk about what was working and what was not working. There were a number of issues that needed to be resolved. He asked everyone in attendance to first identify themselves, which they did. The names are reflected in the roll call.

Rich Nelson, City Administrator, identified several issues. First, the recreation program was running great. It was the use of the fields by the competition teams that was complex. How did they divide the time on a limited number of fields among the many teams? Second, Smooth Canyon Park was not built as a soccer complex. It was built as a city park. They needed to figure out how to balance the needs of the neighbors who lived by the park and the people who played soccer. Third, there was the question about Alpine fields for Alpine kids. Mr. Nelson said that was more of a council concern because he was familiar with the competition leagues and the parents of kids who played on them. They were willing to pay lots of money and transport their kids all over to play soccer.

Councilman Troy Stout said he'd like to look at the issue of the Alpine residents have priority use of Alpine parks. People in Alpine wanted their kids to play on the fields that their tax dollars supported. Soccer was huge and youth all over the valley played in one club or another. There were too many teams to just have kids from Alpine play on Alpine fields. Two or three years ago they had wanted to implement some kind of system to see which teams had a majority of kids from Alpine so they would have a better chance of playing on Alpine fields. He said he didn't know how well that had been monitored since the team membership was constantly changing. He said he'd heard from people within Alpine and outside of Alpine that there was a partial monopoly on field usage, and if you were from a certain club, there was no hope that you would ever use an Alpine field.

Troy Stout said he recognized the difficulty of balancing the use of the fields between the different sports. There were finite resources and finite patience from the residents who were bombarded by kids from all over the valley. There were safety issues and complaints of kids running across the streets in front of cars. Football had a high demand, but soccer had more balanced participation because both boys and girls played soccer. He said he supported any kind of physical activity and felt the city should support that kind of lifestyle for the youth.

Mayor Wimmer said Alpine City had only so many soccer fields. Some of them connected with people's backyards because the park came as part of the open space for a PRD (planned residential development). He said Smooth Canyon was never meant to be a soccer field. It was open space. The park in Healey Heights also came to the City as open space from a PRD. He said they needed to make sure they were not overdoing the neighborhoods. People were not happy with games that started at 6 am. He said they needed to figure out what Alpine parks could handle and how Alpine took care of its own residents.

Davie Josse said he was over North Utah County Soccer. He'd been working with Alpine City for 16 years to manage the fields. There were 668 kids from Alpine who played soccer last year. Fourteen clubs were represented by those kids. He handed out a list of clubs showing the number of players and percentage of club members who were from Alpine.

| <u>Club</u> | <u># of Players</u> | <u>Percentage</u> |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| NUCS | 428 | 65% |
| Utah Surf | 95 | 14% |
| La Roca | 57 | 9% |
| Stars United | 38 | 6% |
| Rangers | 15 | 2% |
| Celtic | 13 | 2% |
| Arsenal | 9 | 1% |
| Forza | 3 | 0% |
| Avalanche | 2 | 0% |
| Olympique | 2 | 0% |
| Sparta | 2 | 0% |
| Utah Valley United | 2 | 0% |
| Blast | 1 | 0% |
| Shooters | 1 | 0% |

Troy Stout asked what percentage of those players were girls. Mr. Josse said it was about 35%. The state had a higher ratio of girls to be boys. It was almost half.

David Josse said that 16 years ago, NUCS was the only group in town. Then about five or six years ago, different clubs started coming in. He was approached by Alpine City and asked if he would manage the soccer fields, which he did. Contrary to what some had said, he had never deleted a text or email or voice mail. People may not have gotten the field schedule that they wanted but they'd never been told no. He rated the teams on how many Alpine residents they had and scheduled the Alpine teams first. He said there were two fields at Smooth Canyon Park, two at Healey Park, and three fields at Timberline Middle School. La Roca had paid for the exclusive right to the fields at Timberline. The problem was, there were 668 kids from Alpine playing soccer. That represented a lot of teams. Some coaches recruited players from Alpine because they wanted to play on Alpine fields. Recreation games had been played on Healey fields and competition on Smooth Canyon, but now they used the Healey field for competition too, and no recreation.

Mr. Josse said the problem was not the games, it was the practicing. He could have twenty teams of seven-year-olds and they would use the fields less than one competition team because the comp teams practiced so much. He had removed the goals from the Smooth Canyon fields because teams were practicing at 6 am. The teams were trying to beat the heat and beat other teams to the field. He said he felt they could play all the Alpine kids games on Alpine fields. It was the practicing that took so much time. However, practicing was quieter than games because they didn't have the cheering and whistles.

Smooth Canyon subdivision resident Alan Slighting said the residents were not trying to eliminate soccer. They just wanted their kids to be able to use Smooth Canyon Park some of the time. They wanted to see reasonable use. The competition teams were practicing Monday through Saturday from early in the morning until late at night. The fields were not designed for that kind of heavy use. There had to be a balance somewhere between the residents who lived near the park and the soccer teams. It was unreasonable that the residents couldn't go out and use they parks they paid taxes on.

David Josse said scheduling software was available which they could use to schedule the fields. He commented that he'd lost his job because he'd had to leave work early to come to the park in Alpine to direct traffic during soccer games, and his employer told he had to be at work or lose his job. He lost his job.

Regarding the fields, Mr. Josse said that Alpine had the best parks around. Thanks to the work of the Alpine City parks crew, everyone wanted to play on them. People in California played on dirt. He said Highland City had

banned a couple of clubs because they practiced so much. School ballfields had evident wear and tear from practice. He noted that it ironic that Alpine teams had full use of Cedar Hill fields. Lehi had field which they rented out but they gave priority to Lehi teams. The school district charged by the hour for the use of their fields. They were talking about raising their prices for competitive practice.

Debbie Francis said she was with the Utah Youth Soccer Association and was president of a club in Provo, and administrator of field issues. She said that a few years ago when they saw how much soccer was taxing the fields, they went to UYSA, a nonprofit entity that controlled competitive soccer in Utah. They talked about how serious the field issues were and said they couldn't expect cities to come up with solutions. This year they decided to have a field committee look for space where they could build new fields. The UYSA was dedicated to soccer for Utah kids. It would take five to ten years to see fields in every city they worked with. She said she wanted the Council to know that they were there to work with the cities. They wanted to get to clubs together to solve their issues so the cities didn't have to. She said soccer was one of the best things for the youth, both boys and girls. They had money in place to build soccer fields. It was the land that cost a lot of money. They were looking for an organization to work with to acquire land and build more fields.

Councilman Roger Bennett asked how many soccer field they needed to serve Alpine residents. David Josse said he didn't think they needed to build more soccer fields. Alpine and Highland were running out of kids. They had more kids graduating from school that coming in. He thought Alpine should try to get by for a couple of years and make it work rather than put money into more fields. Lehi was a whole different game. Their youth population was growing and they would need more fields. Rich Nelson agreed, saying the census showed the population Alpine was getting older.

Ariel Bravo said he coached for La Roca. He had come to coach two teams and now they were one of the biggest competitive clubs out there. The club was very strong and they had two teams who had won nationals. He said they paid Timberline and got the fields they needed to use but they were good neighbors and shared. He said they paid and got the entire space which was four football fields because it was important to train in one space. It was too hot to train at noon. It was better at 6 am. He said they felt like La Roca couldn't have access to the Alpine fields but they would like to. La Roca had teams for every age. One of things their club did was assist kids with scholarships so they could go to college. In order to do that, they charged the parents to have their kids play soccer.

Jacob Carter said he was co chairman for the state and field person for Surf. Alpine had an impossible situation. The thing that mattered was solving field scheduling Cities didn't have the money to build fields nor did the schools. If the people who wanted to play soccer wanted fields, they were going to have to build them. He didn't expect they would be building fields in Alpine. He understood the concerns of the neighbors and was grateful that they had put up with what they did. Statewide, soccer was played by both sexes almost equally. That year they had turned away 500 kids from Surf because they didn't have the fields. He said the population everywhere was growing and he'd come to the conclusion that there was nowhere to play. Twenty to thirty percent of the kids in Alpine played soccer. The younger kids could play on smaller fields but the high level competition teams needed big fields. He said he didn't know how they were going to handle practices. They lasted four and a half hours as opposed to about an hour for a game. But playing games without practicing made no sense. He said they had 137 Cedar Hills kids and didn't have any of them playing on Cedar Hills fields because the Alpine kids were there. If Alpine wasn't taking anyone but teams primarily made up of Alpine kids, that meant other teams which had fewer Alpine kids were playing somewhere else. Alpine families were getting older and moving out and other families with kids were moving in. They need to look at a long-term solution. He pointed out that other cities were allowing Alpine kids to play in their cities.

Regarding soccer times, he said that in the spring and fall the kids were in school. The hours they needed were between 4 pm and 7 pm. In the summer, they needed the mornings to practice because it was cooler. He thanked the Council for the opportunity to be there and talk about the issues. He was a volunteer and didn't get paid at all. He added that to change field usage times right now would be terrible for soccer because they were already scheduled.

Will Jones said he had served on the City Council and had been coaching soccer for many years. He observed that sometimes people created something to replace something that wasn't broken, because they thought it was broken. He said that the park in Smooth Canyon had been one of his developments and it was his intention that the park be a soccer field. If they developed the second phase and built the other half of the park, it would be another soccer field.

Then Healey Park came in and provided another field. When Creekside Park was built it was developed as a recreational park only. No organized sports were allowed. Mr. Jones said the biggest challenge was finding a place to practice. In Lehi he was building an eleven-acre park that would be used for soccer. It was a great sport. If there were 500 kids that were turned down to play soccer, they needed to make sure Alpine was helping carry the load.

There was a discussion about the parking problem. Residents who lived near the Smooth Canyon Park complained about people parking along the streets and it created a safety problem. Jack Carter said that the LDS Church allowed them to use the parking lot at the church by the Healey field and that solved the parking issue. It was pointed out that the problem was people didn't use it. They still parked along the streets. It was suggested that perhaps they didn't know they could legally park there. The Council discussed using signage to direct parking to the church parking lot and prohibit soccer parking along the streets in the neighborhood.

Paul Ewing said he was an Alpine resident whose children played soccer. He noted that eliminating the competitive teams would help the problem. Seventy-five percent of the players in NUCS were recreational. The remaining 300 Alpine kids played with other clubs. When you looked at where the teams originated, most of the kids were practicing somewhere else because the teams were based elsewhere. He felt the problem was smaller than it seemed. What they needed was better scheduling.

Nina Slighting said they moved to Alpine 14 years ago and the park wasn't even seeded. They'd gotten a questionnaire about what they would like to see in the park. Will Jones may have intended it for a soccer fields but the City had the ability to decide its use. She said she'd like to see the City have control over the fields with no one team or sport having priority. She asked if they could just have one scheduled game instead of two at a time. In the fall and spring, there were two or four games per night. That was four sets of parents dropping kids off early and two teams warming up and two teams playing. There was no place for the neighboring residents to walk around the park. They used to get a reprieve in the summer when soccer season was over but now there was no reprieve at all because the teams were practicing all day every day. Mowing became an issue and the teams left trash on the fields. She asked if there was some way they could dedicate a few evenings to the neighborhood to use the park.

Blaine Hale said he was the director of Surf and had grown up in Alpine. He lived by Burgess Park and they had the same problem with baseball and rugby. He asked how the City had solved the problem over there. He'd seen "No Parking" signs go up.

Troy Stout said the baseball organization funded the partial upkeep of the park, and their organization helped with the maintenance. For traffic, they enforced the parking restriction. If a car was parked in a no parking area for more than two minutes, the police were there. He suggested they need to do that with Smooth Canyon. They needed to put up signs, request patrol, and write tickets.

Alan Slighting said that when they had called the police about parking, the police told them they were nuts. It was a public street and people could park there. They needed an ordinance or something to empower the police to write tickets.

Rich Nelson said they had painted the curbs red by Burgess Park. Smooth Canyon was more difficult because if they painted the curb red, it meant that not even the residents could park there. Troy Stout suggested they put it on the next agenda and pass an ordinance on parking.

Debbie Francis said the Utah Youth Soccer Association could help with the parking by sending out emails to the parents of the teams that would be playing in Alpine and tell them they would get a ticket if they parked on certain streets. David Josse said they emailed their own teams. If the state could email the out-of-town teams, that would be great.

Perry Bassett said it was interesting to hear the different perspectives. The new parks would be a solution for Utah County, but not for Alpine. With two fields and overflow, teams warming up and teams that hadn't left the field yet, there was a lot of traffic and they almost needed a traffic light.

Rich Nelson said the Slightings had been wonderful to work with along with David Josse and Jake Carter. It was a difficult problem because Alpine didn't have a recreation management program. Mapleton spent \$42,000 a year on recreation. Alpine spent nothing, but they didn't have Mapleton's tax rate.

Lon Lott said he liked the idea of having contracts with the clubs to make sure trash was picked up and parking was enforced. It should be self-monitoring. People needed to take care of the facilities they used. They'd had the same issue with the food trucks on Monday night. Regarding scheduling, there needed to be some kind of control, but he wasn't sure the City should be responsible. Perhaps they should use software programs that could manage the scheduling.

Paul Ewing said he owned a software company that could build a program for the city that would make scheduling clear.

Ariel Bravo said there was money available. If Lehi had land, the money would go there and benefit every kid. Soccer was huge. At the end of the day, they needed a solution that worked for everyone. The neighbors wanted a better quality of life. If 8 am was the earliest a team could train, that was the way it was. He said he'd heard Jake Carter say they turned down 500 kids. La Roca teams would be playing in the new complex but they didn't have any Alpine fields on which to train. He asked if other teams were willing to share Healey and Smooth Canyon. Debbie Francis said the competition teams charged \$40 per player to build the fields.

Jake Carter said the City should recognize that if they had open fields at premier times of the day, other teams would show up to use them. He said that he personally walked the fields after the games and picked up trash so in general he hoped they were clean.

Alan Slighting suggested that there be a sign in the park that said there could be no organized sports using the fields before 8 am.

Mayor Wimmer said the meeting had gone on for two hours and they needed to close. There were several ideas they'd talked about which they could include in the contracts.

Marla Fox said she'd had parents of football players tell her they played on the fields at Timberline but when La Roca came to town, the football teams were kicked off the fields. So the football club asked to use Burgess Park which then displaced the rugby team that was using Burgess. Mrs. Fox said her children had played competition soccer and one thing she understood was that when they signed up, they would be driving to other areas. Alpine parents were complaining about driving kids to Eagle Mountain, but when a child tried out for a competition team, he had to go where that team was. The Surf coach lived in Alpine which was why they could have an Alpine team. If a child was good enough to make it to a comp team and the coach lived in Park City, what's where they would have to drive three or four times a week. Just because someone lived in Alpine didn't mean they were entitled to have Alpine be their home field if the team was based elsewhere. Alpine teams played on fields in other cities whose residents also paid taxes on the fields.

Angie Nydegger said that in the fall La Roca only had access on the weekday evenings at Timberline. They shared the field with football. In the spring, Matt King gave them only game time and not practice time. That was the problem. It was finding a place to practice that was the issue.

Sheldon Wimmer said he felt they had fully discussed the issues and thanked everyone for taking their evening to be there. It would be on the agenda for the next City Council meeting. The City Council will take necessary steps and they would have a good soccer program.

MOTION: Lon Lott moved to adjourn and thanked all those who volunteered their time to the youth. The Council appreciated it very much and the residents by Smooth Canyon Park were awesome. Troy Stout seconded. Ayes: 3 Nays: 0. Lon Lott, Roger Bennett, Troy Stout voted aye. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 pm.