**Wasatch County Parks & Recreation SSD #21**

**Board Meeting**

**October 9, 2018**

**Minutes**

**Attendance**:

Danny Goode, Chairman Tom Bonner, Director

Spencer Park, Vice-Chairman Heath Coleman, Asst. Director

Kendall Crittenden, Member Laurie Duke, Admin. Assistant

Steve Farrell, Member

Greg McPhie, Member

Mark Nelson, Member

Mike Petersen, Member

Danny Goode called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

Tom Bonner presented the minutes for September 11, 2018.

Greg McPhie made a motion to approve the September 11, 2018 minutes.

Steve Farrell 2nd the motion. Motion carries.

Danny asked if there were any Public Issues for future meetings. There were none.

Danny asked if there were any Governing Board Issues for future meetings. There were none.

**Warrants**:

Tom presented the warrants for September 6, 2018 through October 6, 2018 in the amount of $71,854.08. Greg asked about percentage to budget how we were doing and Tom responded that we are in good shape. As far as the fair we still have a couple bills that will be coming in and we also have a few sponsors we need to collect from.

Spencer asked about the Qualtrics charge of $2,500. Tom explained that Qualtrics is a data company that allows us to send out surveys that give us helpful feedback such as, where people are coming from, and how their experience was, what they liked and did not like, etc. Tom said that the fair was the first event that we used them for, but that we will be using them for the Wilderness Circuit Finals coming up and other ticketed events coming up. Kendall commented that the $2,500. is for all of our events from the fair 2018 until the fair 2019 and Tom said that was correct.

Greg McPhie made a motion to approve the warrants for September 6, 2018 through October 6, 2018 in the amount of $71,854.08.

Kendall Crittenden 2nd the motion. Motion passes.

**Heber Valley Pickle Ball Club**

Doug Jenkins, President of the Heber Valley Pickle Ball Club, addressed the board. He started off by thanking Ken Mickleson and the club board for helping to put together his presentation. He then thanked Tom Bonner, Amaria Scovil, and their staff’s, for all of their help and the way they accommodate their club. He commented what beautiful facilities we offer with Southfield Park and the Recreation Center.

Currently their club has over 100 paying members, approximately 31 from Heber, 54 from Midway and the others coming from Summit County. The sport is growing rapidly and is starting to attract a lot of younger players. Right now we have 3 courts at Southfield Park and they use the Basketball court for a 4th court. They play doubles so these 4 courts can accommodate 16 players at a time, but often there are 20 or more players waiting at a time.

Their proposal is that our city and county elected officials hold an inter-local governmental meeting to develop a plan to add 6 more courts at Southfield Park and re-surface the 3 courts we already have. He said that both Heber City Mayor and Midway Mayor are supportive of this endeavor.

Doug reported that an estimated cost, at this point, would be approximately $35,000. per court, for a total cost of $210,000. for the 6 new courts. It is estimated that the resurfacing of the 3 courts would be approximately $10,000. There is sufficient space to the west of the existing courts, and he thanked the Board for previously stating that they would donate that area for additional pickle ball courts.

Doug asked a couple members of their club to address the Board to state the advantages and benefits of providing more courts.

Jane Bowers, resident of Heber, stated the advantages as follows;

* Location: Southfield Park is a perfect location as it is visible from Midway Lane. People going by can see the courts and this promotes interest. That is how she became involved.
* Cost Efficient: Due to the amenities already in place, such as: parking, restrooms, pavilions for picnics and shade, courts being separate from residential areas, etc., it is cost efficient for additional courts.
* Safe Trail Access: Many of the players ride their bikes along the trail from Midway.
* Social Interaction: This is an important reason they play. Their club invites everyone. They come from all over the country, from all different walks of life, and it is a great way to socialize. In the summer, Southfield Park becomes their Senior Citizen Center. However, pickle ball is attracting many younger players as well.
* Economic Benefits: With additional courts it would be possible to host tournaments, which could bring out-of-town teams using our hotels and restaurants. She stated that in March, Ryan Starks, Executive Director of Heber Valley Tourism of Economic Development, wrote a letter supporting a pickle ball complex at Southfield Park which could increase visitation and generate more out of town dollars to our community. In recent years many Utah communities such as, Ogden, Bountiful, Farmington, Brigham City, Kaysville, and St. George have created pickle ball facilities understanding the value it provides to their citizens as well as bringing in out of town dollars.

Judy Eaton, resident of Midway, then addressed the board to discuss the benefits of adding additional courts. Judy stated that, as senior citizens, they really need four things to stay healthy and engaged:

* Good Nutrition
* Good Health Care
* Exercise
* Social Interaction

Pickle ball takes care of two of those needs: Exercise and Social Interaction. Pickle ball is a low impact sport, with limited running, that is easy to learn. It is a family friendly sport and is also now part of the curriculum in elementary schools, so it is growing in popularity with the youth and young adults.

As Jane stated, the social interaction is a huge part of their club. Judy explained that they are like a family. If someone is missing, other members will call and check in with them to make sure they are alright. They take care of each other.

Doug summarized by stating that last year, at this time, pickle ball courts were added on the priority list for the county. They would like to suggest that the pickle ball courts get moved up to the first priority spot and that county park impact fees be used to help support this. He said that they hope county and city leaders can work together and that both Heber and Midway mayors have been very supportive. He offered that he, along with Ken Mickleson, would be happy to serve on a committee to help with court issues like north/south orientation, (which is preferred because of the sun), safety issues, fencing, and such. He then thanked the board for their time and said that he would be happy to answer any questions.

Mark Nelson asked about the indoor pickle ball courts at the Rec. Center. Doug responded that there are six courts there and that their club donated the nets. He said that they appreciate the facility and Amaria, and her staff, for all they do to accommodate their club.

Mike Petersen complimented the club and their organization. He said that it great to have a sport that benefits everyone and helps them to stay active. He reviewed the estimated costs and said that they seemed a little high and asked if they had any bids. Doug responded that they have not received any bids, but that he has done a lot of research to make sure the cost estimates were accurate.

Greg asked about any financial commitment from Heber City and Midway. Doug asked Mayor Johnson to address that. Mayor Johnson responded that they are willing to invest pretty heavily. Tourism is basically Midway’s only industry so she has been working with Ryan in researching this. Ryan has contacted St. George and they now have 48 courts. She said that we need to look at some of the smaller communities and see how they run their tournaments. She said that it is definitely a growing sport and, although the Heber Valley Club has about 100 members, there are many, many more players. She stated that both Heber and Midway are willing to participate with funds as it will be a benefit to our valley, but that the county needs to contribute the “lion’s share”.

Greg responded that according to the estimate numbers, we could do four additional courts and refurbish the three we have for about $150,000. He made a suggestion of Heber, Midway, and the county each contributing $50,000., and reiterated that the county is donating the land and all of the maintenance.

Danny was very supportive of an inter-local meeting to see what each of the cities and county can contribute and thinks that is a good place to start. Danny brought up the issue of the club doing some fund raising, which had been discussed last year. Doug responded that the club pay their dues of $15. each, but that there has not been any significant funds raised or anyone in the club who has been able to donate a substantial amount. They looked into grants, and Amaria was helping them, but none of those worked out.

Mary Brown, a resident of Midway, and tennis pro, commented in response to Greg’s suggestion of seven courts, that eight courts is a much better number of courts for holding tournaments. Connie Greene, also a Midway resident, made a suggestion to expand the three existing courts to four and change them to north/south orientation, then add four more courts for a total of eight.

Greg commented that he feels it is important that Tom be involved and that we look at all sources of funding. Tom responded that he does not feel that it is the group’s responsibility to raise money for the on-going maintenance of the facility. He thinks that should come from the district. As for impact fees, we would have to get Mike Davis, County Manager, involved.

Tom wanted to make sure that it was on record that the Parks & Recreation, SSD was voted on in June of 1996 and created a mill levy of up to .0004 taxable value that gave the district dollars to operate and maintain the facilities, which at the time we had one, Southfield Park. In the past as we have grown the board has come up with creative ways to add facilities and cover costs without having to raise the mill levy. Tom said that the Parks & Recreation Department contributes economic dollars significantly with their baseball tournaments, rodeo, fair, Wilderness Circuit, and so on. He commented that they have a great relationship with Midway and partner with the Zermatt and Homestead when our events bring in lots of people from out of town.

He reported that we have never raised our mill levy and have held it once. The district is going to ask for a mill levy increase this year which will allow us to keep maintaining our facilities. They are looking at cutting a few things, but any construction dollars will have to come from this board and Midway and Heber.

Tom agreed with all that had been said about pickle ball and feels it is a good thing for our community and that we have enjoyed the group at our facilities.

Spencer asked about getting some real numbers for at least the concrete and fencing. Tom responded that he will contact the person we use at the Rec. Center and get definite numbers. Greg asked if it was a concrete slab and Tom replied that it is concrete with a tennis surface.

Kendall commented that it looked like it would be possible to make four courts from our existing three and Tom said that it would be tight, but may be possible. Connie Green, agreed and had commented earlier that this could be an option especially if there was netting put up to define the court space.

Steve asked about pickle ball becoming a program and Tom responded that he definitely sees it happening in the future, as the demographics of pickle ball is changing and becoming more popular with all ages. Steve said that he would feel better about putting money into this if it were more open to the general public in a program.

Heath Coleman responded to this as he has extensive experience in programming. If Parks & Rec. offer a pickle ball program the cost would be considerably higher, due to staff, scheduling, and organizing the program. At the present time, the club is paying nothing to play at Southfield Park and a $1.00 entrance fee at the Rec. Center. Heath said that the beauty of the pickle ball club is that they are organized and running very well on their own.

Heath commented that they would love to offer a program if that is something they wanted, and as the sport grows, they would like to offer pickle ball programs for youth, as well as adults and seniors, which would raise funds and provide a public amenity. However, with an organized program you have the issue of scheduling courts. It was discussed that this was the problem we had a few years ago in regards to the tennis program. Heath said that there is a fine line with running the programs, scheduling the courts, and having courts available for open play. Kendall commented that we have many programs for the youth and he likes the idea of having programs for the seniors. Tom made mention of the fact that they have tried very hard with all of their facilities to make them multi-use facilities, for all ages, which they are.

Tom Reed, resident of Midway, commented that pickle ball is being taught in Jr. High, and it was mentioned earlier that it is also taught in some elementary schools. He also emphasized that since pickle ball demographics are older, they tend to patronize the more high-end restaurants rather than the fast food establishments, which could help improve the economics.

Mike Altieri, resident of Heber City, stated that the three courts we have in Midway are nice but the difference in the net is huge, so he definitely agrees we need more courts. He used to be the club’s training coordinator and said that he probably trained between 40 and 50 players in their teens and early 20’s. Craig Powell has also asked him to help train youth in the LDS wards, so he wanted to reiterate that the demographics are definitely changing.

Dale Beeman, resident of Daniel, shared that the last time he had been to a meeting like this was years ago when they were trying to get the bike trail from Midway to Heber. He praised the county for moving forward with that and stated what a benefit it was to our community. He stated that he feels we need to move forward with these additional courts before we have so many people playing the sport that the courts require scheduling.

After a very lengthy discussion, with a lot of public input, Danny thanked everyone for their attendance and thinks that they have a direction to go to look for funding. Mayor Johnson commented that she would like to meet with a smaller group to hammer out some details before the inter-local meeting. Mark Nelson and Steve Farrell will represent the board in this group. Danny invited the public to stay for the next agenda item.

**Tax Rate Adjustment**

Tom reported that he had met with each of the board members individually regarding the tax rate adjustment. As discussed before, in June of 1996 two questions were on the ballot: General obligation to build Southfield Park and to create a Recreation Special Service District to operate and maintain the facilities moving forward with a mill levy of .0004. This went on to the 1998 tax year. With that, we have been operating the district’s facilities and staff and driving economic development with our events and providing services to the community. Right now our mill levy is at .000241. In order to continue to maintain our current level of service he is asking for a mill levy increase. He presented three options:

1. **Increase the mill levy to .0003**, which will generate $1.685 million for an increase of about $300,000.
2. **Increase the mill levy to .00035,** which will generate $1.966 million.
3. **Increase the mill levy to .0004**, the maximum, which will generate 2.46 million and we could put money in a fund balance.

Tom stated that he is concerned about necessary on-going maintenance. Our costs are getting higher with everything we do. We’ve added facilities and staff. The Event Center was built in 2004 and the Rec. Center in 2008. The seats in the outdoor arena and the turf at the Rec. Center is going to need replaced in the near future. The floor that we put down at the Event Center had a 10 year life span and we are on year 14 now.

Tom said that he would like to have a plan with a time-line and costs to budget for future repairs. He would like an independent group such as, Louis Roberts Young, to come in and do a study on our needs. Ultimately he would like to have a ten year maintenance plan in place.

Greg asked if that once we get a fund balance if that could be used to expand and Tom responded that the fund balance would be used at the discretion of the board.

Tom explained that the average home price in Wasatch County is $413,000, taxed at 55%, so that is $227,150. taxable value. Our current rate and optional increases would be as follows:

Current rate $54.74

.0003 $68.14

.00035 $79.50

.0004 $90.86

After discussion, Danny asked the board how they felt about the increase. Steve responded that we should go to .0004 now and get the district on its own feet and be able to move forward with some of these projects that we need and be able to start a fund balance.

Greg agreed with Steve because he said that if we keep going on the way we have been we will end up in the same position the fire district was in because no one wanted to bite the bullet and do it. He did add, however, that he was a little nervous due to the other increases that are proposed.

Kendall and Mark both agreed with Greg that they would like to go to .0004, and this increase alone would be fine, but have reservations due to the other increases.

Spencer said that he prefers to only increase to .0003, at this time, and that it would be a good start. Mike agreed with Spencer in that he feels .0004 is a little excessive and should only go to .0003 this year.

Danny proposed that we increase to .0003 the first year and then every other year we hold the mill rate steady. He said that he would even possibly be in favor of going to .00035 to include the study. Spencer clarified that by going to .0003 would give the district’s budget an increase of 25%. He feels that is a big number and a good start with everything else going on this year.

Danny determined that the majority of the board was in favor to increase to at least .0003 and potentially a little higher. Danny asked the board members to visit with Tom in the next week so that a final decision could be made at the County Council meeting on October 17th. Tom needs an answer by October 24th.

**Concessionaire Discussion:**

Tom reported that through discussions with the council, he will write an RFP for all of the concessions: Event Center, outdoor arena and baseball fields. He will bring it to the November meeting for approval. Our current contract expires on December 31, 2018.

Kendall Crittenden made a motion to adjourn.

Spencer Parks 2nd the motion. Motion carries

Meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Laurie Duke