

**Advisory Committee on Joint Use of Recreational Property
MINUTES**

Ludwick Community Center, Assembly Room

864 Santa Rosa Street

Tuesday, September 25, 2007 12:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Cochran called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Chair Nancy Cochran, Vice Chair Terry Conner; Committee Members Rick May, Colin Jones, and Michael Parolini

ABSENT: Lisa Monreal

STAFF: City of San Luis Obispo: Linda Fitzgerald, Recreation Manager; Marti Reynolds, Supervising Admin Asst.

Chair Cochran called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

1. Public Comment

Dan Ainsworth addressed the Committee members stating his dismay at the conduct of the committee and City staff. Feels putting the SLO Rattlers into the stadium last year caused a mess. Felt his email last month requesting more than three minutes to speak at the last meeting was ignored. Also feels the committee must not have a “concept of math” in reference to number of days of play allowed for each team. Counting the City’s need for two to three days to maintain the field does not allow the 35 home game days the SLO Blues need to make a living as long as those 35 days are split with the Rattlers. The SLO Rattlers are now treated equally after the mediation process. Economically unfeasible to share stadium, can’t support 7 days/week of professional baseball.

2. Consideration of Minutes

MOTION: (Conner/Parolini) Approve the August 28, 2007 minutes.

Approved 5 yes: 0 no: 1 absent (Monreal)

3. September 2007 Facility Use Grant Cycle

Action: Should the JUC determine that the application meets the criteria for funding; staff recommends that a maximum of \$900 be allocated to Central Coast Baseball for their grant request.

Recreation Manager Fitzgerald explained the grant cycle program to the Committee members and explained the difference between for-profit and non-profit fees. The funding request from Central Coast Baseball League is for \$8,676.00 which exceeds the annual allocation for the grant program. Due to its for-profit status, Central Coast Baseball League is charged a higher rate by the School District than non-profit groups.

As there is only \$6,915.16 available this year in grant funds (including extra from SLO Soccer Club's September 2006 grant balance), she warned that if the Committee used all of the grant fund now, they won't have leftover for March requests, in which more are received than in September. (Last year \$4,500 was awarded Men's Baseball, the total grant allocation for 06-07 was \$11,595).

The Committee members discussed other typical grant requests such as Girl's Softball (\$1,000-2,100 in previous years) and SLO Soccer which may ask for August 2008 tournament funds (\$6,300 last year) in the March 2008 grant cycle. There may be more money available in March if SLO Soccer doesn't use the full \$6,300 allocation from last year.

Vice Chair Conner requested more input from Mr. Ainsworth and asked if he had tried to establish non-profit status before. Mr. Ainsworth explained he had looked into it, but it would mean more expenses including increased umpire fees and federal and state payroll taxes. Currently there are no overhead or administrative costs to their team. The only financial impact operating under their current for-profit status is that Men's Baseball spends their funding on the higher fees for them to use Morro Bay High School.

Recreation Manager Fitzgerald will inquire about a break in fees if filing under a non-profit status with the School District at the request of Vice Chair Conner.

Mr. Ainsworth requested and was granted a comment period regarding the staff report. Said he was aware the "request exceeds allocation" and wouldn't have to request funding if there were only one team using the stadium. In September, he played 13 days this current year. Will pay a massive increase because of hourly rates to the City's Stadium fees. Said he could raise team fees but is limited to what he can raise the fees on. Responded to Chair Cochran's question on fees stating last year was the last time they raised fees (from \$2,450 to \$3,000 a team) but that raising fees still didn't cover corresponding hike in costs, such as umpires, gas, etc.. Mr. Ainsworth also pointed out that Cuesta field has no lighting and Paso Robles, Arroyo Grande, and Atascadero's fields are completely full in June due to use by Babe Ruth Baseball. There are no other alternatives for his team as they need lights for weeknight games. Has no choice but to ask for funding to play at Morro Bay, which he would rather not do. Stated the SLO Rattlers and SLO Blues are not options for funding as they are operating their own businesses. That they are fine to deal with, it's the situation that's untenable.

Committee Member Jones discussed the season timing and the possibility of extending the season two weeks. Currently Men's Baseball is playing at Cuesta as Sinsheimer Stadium closed two weeks ago.

Recreation Manager Fitzgerald explained that Parks Maintenance needs the current window to grow grass in that time frame so the field will be ready by January when the stadium opens again. That any requested change would involve the presence of the Public Works Director and Parks Maintenance Supervisor who make the decision on the maintenance schedule.

Committee Member Jones then asked that Parks and Recreation address Public Works with that question as it seems reasonable to him to add a week or two to extend the season to October if it would relieve congestion in July and not ruin the field.

Recreation Manager Fitzgerald added that it's difficult when more than one department is involved in management, that there are issues across the board at other fields as well as far as timing and the ability to maintain the fields as needed. Parks Maintenance has a small window to perform herbicide, pesticide, rodenticide, fertilizer and seeding activities that even a two week delay may mean missing the rainy season necessary for seeding. Because of the chemicals used or processes involved, these functions must be done when no one is occupying the stadium during the season. Also noted that Parks Maintenance may have asked for two to three days a month for maintenance during the next season, but would have to see what was actually granted.

Committee Member May agreed this to be a subject we should follow through on at a further date and to return to the agenda.

Recreation Manager Fitzgerald stated in the past the Stadium uses began in mid-January when Cal Poly was using the stadium, but it may not need to be open that early now.

Mr. Ainsworth said his season starts in January only because the field is open – doesn't need to start at that time.

Vice Chair Conner stated it seems we would have an extra month then in October to accommodate our users and continue maintenance in January. He also made the point that these issues would not be a concern if synthetic turf were installed at the site.

Chair Cochran asked if the Committee was being premature in the grant process if there was going to be an RFP to determine stadium use in June 2008 to which Commissioner May responded the actions today are merely to allocate the funds now. A future request in March can be received by Mr. Ainsworth for July funding.

MOTION: (Jones/Conner) Recommend, in light of associated costs, that \$1,800 be allocated to Central Coast Baseball for their grant request.

Approved 5 yes: 0 no: 1 absent (Monreal)

4. Update on San Luis Obispo Baseball Stadium Report to Council

Recreation Manager Fitzgerald gave background information regarding the Parks and Recreation Commission's actions regarding SLO Baseball Stadium uses for 2008. Recommendation to City Council to concur with the JUC on items 1-5 and recommend food and beverage plan rather than separate RFP criteria for item 6. After receiving comments from both the SLO Blues and SLO Rattlers at the PRC meeting, it was apparent they wish to control their own concessions. All that is being asked of the Committee members today is action to appoint a committee member to the subcommittee.

- 1) Receive updates on the outcome of the Parks & Recreation Commission's actions regarding the SLO Baseball Stadium uses for 2008 and the proposed recommendations to be forwarded to the City Council for consideration on October 2;
- 2) Review the criteria to be set forth in the Request for Proposal for the 2008 Stadium Use by the Blues and Rattlers;
- 3) Review the timeline for the RFP process;
- 4) Appoint one member of the JUC to sit on the selection review committee to be comprised of City staff, members from the JUC and PRC, and possibly one member from the community.

MOTION: (May/Conner) Appoint Michael Parolini to sit on the selection review committee and appoint Nancy Cochran to serve as alternate.

Approved 5 yes: 0 no: 1 absent (Monreal)

Committee Member Conner expressed his continued unhappiness in the terminology in the stadium report and how strongly he feels that the group who presents the best RFP should be the group who gets the stadium in a non-shared situation. Notwithstanding what Mr. Ainsworth has presented today would take a lot of grief off the field and allow other established users to have the dates they will be comfortable with.

Recreation Manager Fitzgerald reiterated that Council has the recommendations of the Committee already and that it is too late to change their actions.

Vice Chair Conner wished to reiterate his earlier statement and have known his objections to a shared RFP which he finds absurd.

Committee Member Jones agreed and also feels the stadium should have only one semi-pro team.

Vice Chair Conner added 3a through 3h are criteria we are asking each semi-pro team to address and his feeling is, if there is an RFP, the team with the best answers to those criteria get the use of the stadium.

Chair Cochran pointed out the wording says "will review RFP and past performance" to which Recreation Manager Fitzgerald explained the SLO Blues and the SLO Rattlers both have agreements with the City. The City wants to know what the plan is for handling concessions, fans and parking as there have been issues in the past with managing these areas.

Committee Member Parolini discussed negotiations that would be involved. He indicated that going to a single exclusive user could remove a long-time user from the facility.

Vice Chair Conner added that after November 8, the Joint Use Committee can determine if want to forward one recommendation or two to the City Council. His feelings would be that the group forward one RFP, that being the one with the best answers that best meets the criteria.

Recreation Manager Fitzgerald reminded the Committee that this was not the recommendation they sent to Council, but that the Council could make their own recommendation.

Commissioner Conner stated he didn't feel they had made an objective decision at the last meeting, that he felt rushed at the last meeting to make a decision and that after serious consideration in the last month he has changed his mind which at the committee level he feels they have a right to do.

Recreation Manager Fitzgerald informed the Committee they could create a red file item to Council noting opposition by some Joint Use Committee members; however the initial staff report is finished and cannot be changed.

Committee Member May expressed he still believes in use of the stadium by both teams.

Vice Chair Conner commented on the issue of comparing past experience, and that the SLO Blues would lend more credence in the last few months than in the last few years.

Committee Member Parolini theorized that since the Rattlers haven't been here long enough to compare, it would not be quite fair to pair one year versus the 15 years of growing pains of the other team. Perhaps the comparison then could be of just the last year for both teams.

Recreation Manager Fitzgerald responded that each item will be weighted, that if the group decides to weigh past performance higher than other components, it will be up to the selection group and the Director.

Vice Chair Conner stated it was his personal opinion the new team came in this year because they didn't like what the existing team was doing and felt they could do better. The Committee allowed this to happen and doesn't feel they should have.

Recreation Manager Fitzgerald inquired if the situation was different than any other types of organizations as they establish themselves in the community such as Girl's Softball and Little League when they asked for field space that was in competition with Youth Baseball. That everyone has growing pains. The City tries to accommodate everyone in the best way but we have reached a situation with the stadium where we can't. Assumes the weighting system may determine who gets more games than others.

Committee Members May and Cochran wouldn't mind looking at it but believes it is too late.

Committee Member May stated he will vote against a motion of this nature and that if it passes he will personally discuss it with the Council.

MOTION: (Jones/Conner) Amend Item #3, eliminating the word “shared” and to read “Endorse the concept of a Request for Proposal inviting the Blues and the Rattlers to bid for exclusive use of SLO Baseball Stadium for the 2008 semi-professional collegiate baseball season;” *Note: see attached memo dated September 27, 2007 to Joint Use Committee.*

Failed: 2 yes: 3 no: 1 absent (Monreal)

Committee Member May recommended the discussion of this meeting be part of the minutes and passed on to the review committee.

Recreation Manager Fitzgerald stated she would forward a Red File memo to Council with the Joint Use Committee’s discussion.

Vice Chair Conner stated as they were advised at the advisory body training last week to be aware of conflicts of interest.

5. Staff Reports

No staff report.

6. Additional Items

Vice Chair Conner requested his agendas be sent by regular mail as well as email. Recreation Manager Fitzgerald said all are sent the same way to be consistent but that she will send him hard copies in the future.

Commissioner Jones passed out copies of a signed petition supporting lighting at the Sinsheimer Park tennis courts. Would like staff to update the committee at the next meeting. Recreation Manager Fitzgerald explained there unfortunately is nothing in the works at this time for lighting the Sinsheimer tennis courts. Lighting could be added to the Capital Improvement List for the next budget cycle. If the Committee supports it, it can be added to Council goal list next year. Added that the 2nd court at Islay is approved and funded.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 1:27 p.m. to the October 23, 2007 Joint Use Committee Meeting at 12:00 p.m. at the Ludwick Community Center.