

TOWN OF WINCHETSER
FIELD MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
MAY 29, 2013
RECORD

Chris Nelson, Recreation Director called the meeting to order at 7:04pm in a classroom at the Mystic Elementary School/Recreation Department. Present were Committee Members: Jay Gill, Chris Linskey, Patrick Gill, and Charlie Stackhouse. Also, present were members from Winchester Youth Soccer and Sachem Youth Baseball and Softball, Drew Schneller, Alex Blumsack, Peter Scapirchio, Lex DiMatteo, Mike McGeehan, Joop Grevelink, Ben Paul, Richard Micheinze. Chairman Bob Nutile, Field Management Committee Members, Selectman Jim Johnson, Brian Carroll and Michael Creane arrived shortly after the meeting had been called to order and Selectman Forrest Fontana was absent.

OPENING:

MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC. SEEING NONE MOVED TO NEXT ITEM.

That the Field Management Committee approve the Winchester Youth Soccer petition to reduce the Spring Permit Fee for Youth Soccer to match the second highest Permit Fee (Youth Baseball and Softball) amounting \$6048.

Discussion: Youth Soccer states they are the largest youth organization and receive the least amount of field space for the spring. They have already paid \$10000 for the fall. They feel that if the field fees are based on head count then space allocation should be on head count. Also, the field allocation is inequitable. Having to pay the fee and not getting the same percentage of fields is blatantly unfair. Youth Soccer would be paying over double what the next youth group pays and receives less space in the spring season.

Jay Gill questioned if there is an issue with field space then why do fields remain open on days Youth Soccer is scheduled? Gill explains that over his two week investigation Mullen Field remains open on Mondays and Fridays and Muraco Field remains open as well. Gill also stated there were times on Saturday and Sundays Fields remained opened when Youth Soccer was scheduled. Gill also asked if the issue affects games or practices and do more than one team practice on a fields? Mr. Gill also asked why not practice on Saturdays and Sundays after or before games.

Mr. Stackhouse responded to questions. They do not practice on Saturdays or Sundays because it is game days and having practice and games increases the chance of injuries to the players. Also, Youth Soccer

has two teams share fields for practices. The issue is with field availability is the need for additional 11 v 11 field space. If youth soccer moves a 11 v 11 practice to a new field it will disrupt other soccer practices such as 8 v 8 or 6 v 6 teams. Mr. Stackhouse stated that with Youth Soccer spending \$20,000 on Medford Turf is allowing Youth Soccer to have the required space. Field issue is not during the weekend for games.

Patrick Gill asked what teams are using Medford turf? He also stated the Youth Lacrosse has 50 kids playing on each field at Skillings, Is it the Sagem F.C. teams that are being effected with the field issue. Mr. Gill also stated he felt that the issue is the elite type of soccer teams are causing the problem.

Jay Gill also stated that over the years the school enrollment has increased, youth sport participants have increase and we have not added any field space. Mr. Gill asked for the youth groups to limit the teams.

James Johnson suggested we work as a committee to build a new field in town.

Michael Creane - Need to look at adding inventory for next year and adding lights to the turf.

Chris Nelson asked because weekend games and Monday and Friday there is no issue, is the only issue field space on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday? Nelson stated he understood that youth groups use parent volunteers and scheduling with volunteers can be difficult.

Mr Stackhouse explained that one of the issues is the Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday field availability. Lynch, Mullen and MacDonald Field are used by SYBS and Skillings Field by Boys Lacrosse. This leaves Youth Soccer will fields unfit for 11 v 11.

Drew Schneller suggested establishing a draft for field use.

James Johnson stated that if the issue is Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, then a compromise needs to happen. Field space should rotate week to week or possibly half way through the season.

Chris Linskey asked the committee to think about the parents and the fees and other projects coming. When the High School is being constructed Skillings will be off line. There is no thought or funding in bring the field back on line. How with we pay for Skillings? He did agree with alternating weeks or days for field allocation with different teams.

Chris Linskey left meeting at 8:00pm

Ben Paul stated It's a perception of fairness with scheduling. Town needs to find a better way that is fair to everyone.

Brian Carroll informed the committee that the Kowlton turf schedule is on a Google Dock which is available to everyone to see.

Mr. Stackhouse suggested that scheduling for both grass and turf be done by one person. Youth Soccer would use the turf if they could get guaranteed time. They are constantly getting bumped or starting late because of High School Sports. Charlie also suggested that the High School Athletes pay the \$7 per head fee like the youth groups.

*Motion: James Johnson - That Winchester High School Athletes playing on fields (grass and turf) pay \$7 per player from Sports Fees. Field Management Committee will make proposal to the School Committee. – James Johnson

Mr. Brian Carroll – seconded

Vote – 7 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstained

Motion Passed.

Mr. Gill asked how Medford schedules the turf. Mr. Stackhouse informed the committee Medford blocks out the schedule. It is created well in advance. In March Youth Soccer already has space for April, May and June. This is not the case in Winchester. In Winchester they have a few dates but most of the time they receive notification on Wednesday about available time on the weekend. Lack of communication is another issue.

Mr. Gill agreed about the communication. He stated during his field investigation when the fields that were scheduled remained vacant, no youth group contacted the town to give the time back.

*Motion: James Johnson – The Recreation Director and High School Athletic Director work together to schedule up to 50% of turf field time to Youth Groups for Spring Season.

Mr. Charles Stackhouse – seconded

Vote - Unanimous

Motion Passed.

Chris Nelson stated that the Field Scheduling and Field allocation has more to do with Agenda Item II Review of the Field Policy. He stated that the Field Permit Fees that were created by this committee and approved by the Board of Selectman and vote in at Spring Town Meeting 2012, were established for Field Maintenance not allocation or scheduling. He also stated during the creation of these permit fees the committee stated a review will take place after the first year to make changes to the policy and/or fees.

Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Stackhouse how much did he want to pay? Looking for a waiver for how much.

Mr. Stackhouse informed the committee that Youth Soccer should be give a waiver for the amount that the second highest Permit Payer. SYBS pays \$6048.

Mr. Nelson stated he felt like a precedence had been set when Winchester Pop Warner requested a waiver in the Fall because the Field they practice on was offline and they had to pay to rent lights for their practices in the fall. Pop Warner paid full amount plus an additional \$8000.00 for their practices. Field Committee voted no on Pop Warner waiver.

*Motion Charles Stackhouse - That the Field Management Committee approve the Winchester Youth Soccer waiver to reduce the Spring Permit Fee for Youth Soccer to match the second highest Permit Fee (Youth Baseball and Softball) amounting \$6048.

James Johnson - seconded

Vote – 8 opposed, 1 in favor

Motion Failed

*Motion Jay Gill – to adjourn.

Patrick Gill – seconded

Vote – Unanimous

Motion Passed