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MINUTES

**Seymour High School Athletic Field Committee Meeting Thursday, March 12, 2015
@ 7:00 p.m. Seymour Middle School Library**

Members Present: Sean Walsh, Jay Hatfield, Jack Liedke (7:33 p.m.), Tim Sadick, Paul Sponheimer, Ed Strumello, Theresa Conroy, Paul Roy (Alt.), Nicole Klarides-Ditria

Members Not Present: Bill Paecht

Others Present: Joseph Perrucci, Tom Lennon, Mike Thompson, Jamie Yakushewich, John Johnson, Ken Pereiras, Austen Searles, Mary Harding, Stefanie Ellsworth, Cameron Szuch, Austin Fraser, Urman Singh, Julian Falcioni, James Freund, Rick Belden, Asst. Superintendent of Schools, Wayne Natzel, Jennifer Magri, Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools, Fred Stanek, Jim Galligan, Nafis & Young, Bill Aniskovich, WBA Group

ITEM #1: Call meeting to order.

Meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

ITEM #2: Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone saluted the flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM #3: Public Comment

A Call was made for public comment.

Austin Fraser, Member of Seymour High School Class of 2015 made a statement requesting to graduate on DeBarber Field as the class has developed an identity with the field through attending sporting events and other school functions. He stated that his class feels that it is being taken away from them and to not change the location of graduation for this reason.

Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools wished to share that they are appreciative of the fact that we will have the opportunity to have turf field in Seymour but she has met with Austin and has had correspondence with parents indicating that they feel very strongly that they hold graduation on the field. On April 6, 2015 at the Board of Education meeting, this issue will be on the agenda for the board to determine the date of graduation.

Fred Stanek, Member of Board of Education wished to reiterate what Superintendent of Schools has stated and also that the Board will be discussing this matter on April 6, 2015 whether or not the Board of Education is willing to relinquish the use of the field for graduation. They want to work with the Athletic Field Committee and would like to hear what the timeframe is for the project.

Public comment was then closed.

ITEM #4:

Approve minutes from February 19, 2015 meeting.

Motion to approve minutes from February 19, 2015 meeting.

Motion: Jay Hatfield Second: Theresa Conroy

Vote: 6 – Yes 0 – No 1 – Abstain, Nicole Klarides-Ditria

A Motion to seat Paul Roy as alternate member for this evening's meeting.

Sean Walsh Second: Tim Sadick

Motion: Vote: 6–Yes 0 No 0–Abstain

ITEM #5: Discussion with High School Coaches

High School Coaches were invited to the meeting so the committee could hear their thoughts, positive or negative on the new turf field. The field will be for all sports: soccer, football, pop warner, travel soccer, track and field and the town as a community will be using it as much as they possibly can and enjoying that field.

Coach Tom Lennon spoke first spoke from the football program's perspective and feels when completed it will be one of the premier locations in the league. To be able to use the field year round is great.

From the Track and Field aspect, what he'd like to see if possible is if a third runway could be created. As it is, the two pits can't be used at the same time. It's too congested to go in both directions. Both pits are currently utilized during meets, but really only to try and save overuse of one side versus the other. Having what he feels is one of the premier facilities in the league, and to be able to host most meets would be a huge advantage to be able to run both boys and girls long jump at the same time as well as boys and girls triple jump. That is a big hold up in league meets. Engineer Jim Galligan is willing to take a look at the proposed third runway to see if it is feasible. Coach Lennon showed the committee a catalog he had brought with different styles of pits, sand catchers and covers. Bill Aniskovich indicated that the third pit may be limited in length due to the set up of the proposed field space.

Coach Lennon spoke about Gesek Field's throwing area. Mike Thompson inquired if any drainage could be installed. Mr. Thompson also asked if the shot put circle was staying the way it is or if it would be redone because official meets cannot be held on those surfaces because they're painted surfaces. Coach Lennon proposed possible alternatives to the shot put circle. Mr. Galligan asked if the throwing field was big enough as it is. The coaches replied that if the back were to be cleared out it would be. Regarding the discus area, Coach Lennon would like to see a dual discus and hammer circle that essentially go back to back that uses one cage. Hammer is seven feet, discus is eight feet. It was also discussed that javelin and discus should be in different

locations. Mr. Thomson stated that if he had five more feet into the hill it would be enough.

Soccer coach Joseph Perrucci's stated his main concern was the line going through the endzone and had questions of where the pole for the uprights goes into the ground. Mr. Aniskovich stated it would be eight feet back from the end line of the football field. The committee needs to decide if it will turn or stay. Mr. Perrucci does not mind the eight foot drop, as it would allow for a roll in goal or carry in goal right on the end line of the football field. Mr. Aniskovich stated what he typically does is pull the soccer field in three feet on each side and end up with 364 feet. Mr. Perrucci stated either a dual purpose goal and end zone upright so the nets can be taken down and then put back up and they're right on the end zone. Mr. Gillian stated the only concern they've heard from the industry is if you have the face of the soccer goal directly in the face of the crossbar, there are times when there is a kick and it can't be determined which the ball hit. Mr. Perrucci doesn't have a concern as long as he has a 360 yard field and he doesn't have to worry about a line going through an end zone. He also wants a field width of 70 yards minimum and at least four to six feet at the corners. The coaching boxes from the center of the field is ten yards in either direction and then a twenty yard coaching box. Depth doesn't matter.

Mr. Perrucci was asked about colors. Mr. Perrucci stated that in Torrington, the area surrounding the soccer field is all black and that often times you see the white and you want to stop playing on the white and takes a long time to adjust to get out to outside lines, but if there is a different color to the outside of the field there will be a barrier they could get used to and disregard the white. Mr. Walsh asked if by reducing the width would it affect the youth leagues. Mr. Perrucci does not believe it will.

Mr. Lennon restated that if it were possible to fit javelin and discus at the same time and next to each other safely that would be ideal.

Mr. Freund stated he liked the idea of having the color on the outside of the soccer field slightly different just to differentiate because sometimes its difficult for the ref's to see.

Item number five is closed.

ITEM#6: Discussion with engineer regarding project timeline.

Mr. Aniskovich presented his slideshow on project details.

Mr. Galligan added his comments to the slideshow.

Regarding the topic of spectators being able to stand at the top by the press box, Mr Galligan wants the committee to tell him how to set it up. One of the problems he ran into in trying to get the top of the bleachers to be able to sit flush with the ground is that that part of the bleacher has to sit on concrete, a wall, if it is going to be on the ground. He isn't able to put steel on the ground. What he tried to do is have the ground run straight into the bleachers in the back but it wasn't possible due to the reinforcement of the bleachers. The back of the bleacher is about 12 -18 inches above the ground and there are protections in place to that nothing falls in or under the bleachers. It was the best he could fashion to be able to get people to stand in the back and not having

somebody standing in front of them and not have to spend between \$10,000 -\$20,000 to build a retaining wall in the case of having the bleachers sit flush to the ground. He asked the committee for input.

Mr. Sadick commented that standing in the back and watching a game is a social thing for a lot of spectators that don't want to sit.

Mr. Sponheimer also stated that there are sometimes as many people standing in the back overlooking the field as there are sitting on the present bleachers. There is a certain grouping that just enjoys standing and milling around and have the ability to go from one place to another without getting up from a seat.

There are 1,500 seats on the home side, 400-500 seats on the visitor's side. There are 16 wheelchair seats.

Visitor bleachers have not been addressed yet. Mr. Aniskovich will have them as a bid alternate and move the existing bleachers and replace them with standing bleachers which is placed on a pad.

Mr. Galligan proposed increase the depth of the stone on the field and have the grade of the bottom part of the excavation be steeper than the steel so the ground under the turf has a pitch so the expensive herringbone drain system will not be needed. Surface drains will be cut off and capped and connect the under drain to the riser. Inside the track no drains will be seen. It will be all drained through the rubberized material and through the stone material and into the collector pipes and to the existing drain system.

Mr. Galligan discussed the rubberized curbs which has a cost savings versus concrete curb is around \$30,000. The curb does not need a drain inside due to the stone zone that can hold approximately five inches of rain. Other benefits are if a runner falls and hits their head on it, they are hitting rubber and not concrete.

Mr. Galligan wants to know what the committee wants with regards to the D Zone. Full turf, paved, rubberized? Committee thinks that at this point they would prefer the turf.

Coaches were asked their opinion on the logo and they are happy with it. Kids were asked what they felt about the logo.

Mr. Sponheimer asked Mr. Belden if he recalled when public works first came out with the paw and was there a discrepancy with a patent issue. Mr. Roy also recalled some kind of copyright infringement with a University. Mr. Belden feels due diligence may be beneficial before spending any money on the field and finding out the logo would have to come off.

Mr. Galligan asked about the rubberized curb and the committee feels it is worth it.

Mr. Aniskovich asked about the goal posts and if the coaches preferred eight or six and a half feet. The coaches said eight feet if you move the lines back.

Mr. Aniskovich asked about lettering on the track as "Wildcats". Mr. Perrucci does not want it in the end zone. Lettering in the end zone can be as much as \$20,000 for each end zone. Logo in the center is about \$8,000. Track lettering will be included in the number and lines on the track, however.

Since the committee wasn't ready to decide on the lettering Mr. Galligan said he can bid it as blank and they can decide later.

Mr. Galligan is investigating as to whether any parts of the project are eligible for access to the state co-op. Turf is not eligible but grandstands are. They are confirming the conditions associated with that and should have the answer to that very soon. The benefit of the co-op is that it saves about a month of time. Bleachers are the longest lead-time because each piece of the bleacher has to be fabricated, measured and cut. Assembly is easy compared to fabrication. The co-op is a previous bid by a group and there is a co-op for bleachers and they are hopeful it can be used to save about a month on the bidding process.

Mr. Freund commented that where the Wildcat lettering is proposed on the plan is where the cheerleaders perform during football games and you wouldn't be able to see the Wildcats but suggested putting it by the out of bounds line on the soccer field and the blue track that would be visible during football games and soccer games and during graduations.

Mr. Hatfield asked Mr. Belden if he had information on the turf being available through the co-op. Mr. Hatfield asked Mr. Belden to forward what he has to Mr. Galligan.

Item number six was closed. No actions were taken.

ITEM #7: Discussion and take possible action on project timeline.

Mr. Galligan stated that the bleachers are a critical element in the timeline. Being able to find out whether they are available via co-op will save a month. Depending on whether graduation is moved has everything to do with the timeline. If graduation is moved to the other field then he can have some contractors start in June and have a lot of work completed by the end of the summer. If he is told that graduation has to be on the football field then nothing starts until the day after graduation and it becomes a congested time schedule and will run into September, unknown how far out until they bid.

They need to know if the co-op will work with the bleachers and the date and location of graduation. He will have the answers to the co-op by next Thursdays meeting.

Mr. Lennon asked Mr. Galligan to confirm that he didn't plan to touch anything until June at the earliest. Mr. Galligan does not want to tie himself to a final schedule until he knows about graduation. Mr. Lennon stated that they've already moved their meets from April and home track season ends May 11. Mr. Galligan did not know the season ended by May 11 and that's why he asked them to move their meets.

Two timelines are needed. One with graduation on June 17, he would start the next day, and one without graduation he could start May 12. If spring sports were moved he could

start as soon as May 1. Mr. Sadick noted that the earlier the bids get in the better financial position they could be in due to other schools that also want this done at the same time. It could potentially be more expensive starting after graduation.

Christine Syriac restated that the Board of Education will make the decision regarding graduation on April 6 but the decision whether or not to change spring sports lies with administration and she was not even aware of this until this afternoon. It will be an administration decision in regard whether or not the meets are switched.

Mr. Sponheimer asked if graduation went on, could the bleachers be on site and be started June 18. Mr. Galligan responded that would be the goal but is unsure if the bleacher material can be fabricated and on site by then.

Mr. Freund stated that graduation is the culmination of twelve plus years for a kid and is the highest academic recognition that takes place in Seymour and to change that for athletics, he finds disturbing.

Item number seven is closed. No actions were taken.

ITEM#8: Discussion and take possible action on appointment of recording secretary.

A Motion to Add Angela Chernesky as New Recording Secretary

**Motion: Jay Hatfield Second: Ed Strumello
Vote:9–Yes 0 No 0–Abstain**

ITEM#9: Committee Comments.

Paul Roy: It is a lot to digest and would like to see the project started as soon as possible. Likes the idea of the co-op.

Paul Sponheimer: No Comment

Jack Liedke: No Comment

Jay Hatfield: No Comment

Ed Strumello: No Comment

Tim Sadick: No Comment

Sean Walsh: Clarified that he is not against graduation at all. He feels there are more things the town can do with \$1.9 million other than an AstroTurf field. That being said, he is giving this project 100% but something has to be foregone for something. If you want this, there has to be a give and take. He agrees that graduation is hugely important and the field in general impacts a very low amount of the population and that is why he feels the money would be better doing something like paving the roads. He isn't trying to take anything away from graduation.

Theresa Conroy: Thanked everyone for coming tonight and for their comments because their input is important.

Nicole Klarides-Ditria: Thanked the high school students that came out. She understands what it means to graduate on that field but the complex is for the community, it's not just for one sport. Hopefully as many people as possible in the town utilize the field. One of the things proposed was moving graduation from the field where it is now over to Sponheimer Field which is the field next to the concession stand. So,

that way, students would stay on campus, still be outside, and bleachers could be brought in. That is an option the committee thought would be pleasing if the Board of Ed agreed with that as well, This way everyone would be happy still being outside and on campus but two seconds from where it is currently held. For the coaches, their input is greatly appreciated. To all the staff and Board of Ed, thank you for attending.

No other comments.

ITEM #10: Adjournment

A Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 p.m. Motion: Ed Strumello

Second: Jay Hatfield Vote:9–Yes 0 No 0–Abstain

Respectfully Submitted, Angela Chernesky