MINUTES OF THE HARMON FIELD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
Tuesday, September 5, 2023

Chairman Nelon called the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors meeting to order at 5:30 PM at the Tryon Town Hall, McCown Room.

Board Members Present: Chairman Stephen Nelon; Vice Chairman Warren Watson (arrived late at 5:32 pm); Secretary-Treasurer Miguel Santibanez (arrived late at 5:32 pm); Rick Covil; and Jamie Dunn

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Jim Fatland, Tryon Town Manager; Greg McCool, Tryon Public Works Director; and Meg Rogers, Town Secretary/Cashier

Amendment of Meeting Agenda
Town Manager Fatland asked that a closed session for personnel pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) be added to the end of the meeting agenda. Amendment of the agenda was approved by the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors.

Approve Minutes from August 1, 2023 meeting
The Minutes from the Harmon Field Board's August 1, 2023 regular meeting were reviewed. Covil made a motion to approve the Minutes from the regular meeting on August 1, 2022 as presented. Dunn seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 3 to 0.

Approve Financial Reports for August 2023
The August 2023 Harmon Field financial report was presented by Fatland. According to the report, Harmon Field had received $118,729.85 (25.33%) of its annual budgeted revenues for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 and had spent $41,692.01 (8.89%) of annual budgeted expenditures for FY 2023-2024 leaving a fund balance of $193,259.57 as of August 31, 2023. Fatland briefly reviewed budget amendments that were reflected in the report. The amendments included revenues and capital outlay for the paving at Harmon Field for which partial funding had been approved by Polk County Board of Commissioners and remaining funding from the Town of Tryon.

Dunn made a motion to approve the financial report for August 2023 as presented. Santibanez seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Half-Marathon Event-November 18, 2023 Discussion
Allan Purtill, spokesperson for the Thermal Belt Outreach annual half-marathon event, distributed a handout about the event to the Board members. The 2023 half-marathon would be the 11th year of this event that benefits Thermal Belt Outreach, a non-profit which supports Polk County citizens directly. Because of the recent flooding, bridge failures and road closures affecting the usual event route, Purtill stated that the event

organizers requested approval to hold the race at Harmon Field on November 18, 2023 and to temporarily close the road inside Harmon Field from the park main entrance at Harmon Field Drive to the oval track between 8 am to noon, to accommodate the new finish line in front of the picnic table gazebo (open-sided picnic shed) and space for sponsor-vendor/information booths in parking spaces near the children's playground adjacent to the finish line. Thermal Belt Outreach would not be charging any fees for the booth spaces and requested permission for these vendor booths to be allowed with no additional fees during the event. Law enforcement and public safety staff would be involved to safely direct traffic along the event route and at the major intersections used by the runners to leave and return to Harmon Field. Fatland stated that the Harmon Field paving project was expected to be done in October and should be finished prior to this November 18, 2023 event. Dunn made a motion to approve the requests of Thermal Belt Outreach's Tryon Half-Marathon Plan to use Harmon Field facilities on November 18, 2023. Covil seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Update on Paving Access Roads

Town Manager Fatland updated the Board on the repaving of the Harmon Field access roads and gym parking lot. Polk County had approved providing half the funding for the paving and the Town of Tryon would fund the remaining half. Tryon Arts & Crafts School had submitted a grant application to the Polk County Community Foundation for funding to pave their portion of the parking lot behind their building and grant awards would be announced in October 2023. Fatland stated that Tryon Public Works would temporarily fill in potholes in Harmon Field's paved areas as possible while waiting on grant funding decisions. Paving work would begin in October after the grant award notifications.

Concession Stand Shade Structure Discussion

A representative from Champion Construction had been asked to come to the meeting to provide a quote on a shade structure for the concession stand, but the representative did not come. Demetrios Kahermanes, operator of the Harmon Field concession stand, expressed concerns regarding lost business due to lack of shade and rumors of fewer Polk County Recreation baseball program games at Harmon Field during the upcoming season. Kahermanes expressed frustration that a decision on his request for a shade structure had been repeatedly postponed since he submitted his original request almost a year ago. Chairman Nelon told Kahermanes that such requests would now go through Town Manager Fatland or Public Works Director/Interim Harmon Field Superintendent McCool. The Board told Kahermanes that they supported creating a shaded dining area near the concession stand. The Harmon Field Board of Supervisors approved for picnic tables to be placed under the existing trees across the driveway from the front of the concession stand for use by customers until a final decision was made regarding the patio shade structure details. Measures to divert pedestrian traffic away for the concession stand's external hood for safety were discussed briefly.

Equestrian Facility Update

Dunn reported that three more horse shows were scheduled at Harmon Field for 2023. Dunn would meet with Interim Harmon Field Superintendent McCool regarding what was needed to get the facility ready for the upcoming shows.

Rental Updates

McCool reported that rental payments were up to date.

Park Superintendent's Report

Town Manager Fatland and Interim Park Superintendent McCool reported:

- McCool did walk around Harmon Field to identify work that needed to be done.
- Preparations for 2-day horseshow on September 30 included clearing all grass from the two front show rings and the schooling area.
- Maintenance shed-bare plywood areas had been painted
- All porches were pressure washed
- A new refrigerator was purchased for the cabin
- Wooden tables in the open-sided shelter would be moved into the screened shelter for protections from rain and new metal picnic tables would be purchased to put in the open-sided shelter that would resist rain damage
- Large vines were removed from large trees at Harmon Field using Tryon Public Works bucket truck
- Want to mulch area around ball fields
- Putting green had deteriorated because of lack of maintenance-quotes would be solicited to restore it
- At the concession stand, three rotted post had been replaced, a metal railing was needed to prevent pedestrian access to the area under the hood, and a ramp would improve bathroom access.
- Any grading work around Harmon Field needed to be done before the paving of the driveways and parking areas.
- Small concession stand at the track needed cleaning and some repairs
- Addition of access gate to small dog part of dog park near the putting green was recommended
- All four drinking fountains at Harmon Field were now operational
- The paved walking trail needed to be carefully checked and any areas that needed paving repairs identified to be fixed during the paving project
- Reports of unauthorized motorized vehicle traffic across Harmon Field from the tomato fields to bypass the damaged bridge detour were discussed and measures to block access and prevent continuing violation were suggested.
- Quote had been solicited for the gym room remodel project, but the contractor had not yet responded. Options to improve gym roof drainage and prevent damage to foundation were discussed briefly.
- Gym had been sprayed for wasp infestation

- Scheduling playground safety inspection at least once per year was recommended. Warranty on playground equipment should be reviewed for coverage to repair damaged equipment. Need for special mulch was mentioned.
- Gazebo swing had been repaired
- Harmon Field staff was working on a detailed maintenance schedule with annual, monthly, weekly and daily tasks specified
- Two grills had been ordered for Harmon Field and McCool would check on delivery.
- McCool would contact NC Department of Natural Resources regarding extent of allowed cutting along the Pacolet River banks that had been repaired by the state grant project.

The Harmon Field Board asked that copies of the vendor and inspector reports be relayed to the Board members for review.

Local resident and life-long park user Ann Sellers stated that she visited Harmon Field twice on most days and Harmon Field was a wonderful park. Sellers told the Board she liked and supported the former Harmon Field employees who had resigned and was concerned about public response to the resignations.

Update on Open Air Gym

Town Manager Jim Fatland updated the Board on the gym room renovation plans. The space would include a kitchen, tables & chairs storage area, screened porch and classroom space to be leased to Tryon Arts & Crafts School. Both the Town of Tryon and Tryon Arts & Crafts School had submitted applications to the Polk County Community Foundation for grant funding for the project and Fatland was optimistic. Grant interviews were scheduled on September 14, 2023 with grant awards to be announced in October.

Fatland told the Board that staff would look into the roof drainage issues and the problems with the hinged wall between the storage room and the playing area.

Other

Community Center Building & Community Gardens Restoration – Fatland told the Board that the Harmon Field Pickleball Group's grant writer Debra Torrance had approached the Dogwood Trust for funding, but was told that recreation projects did not qualify. However, the Dogwood Trust suggested to Torrance that projects like a community center or a community garden could qualify. Torrance relayed that to Fatland for consideration. Fatland suggested that the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors form a subcommittee to develop a plan to renovate the community center building and reestablish a community garden which would report to the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors regularly. The Tryon Board of Commissioners authorized Fatland to have an architect look at the deteriorating Harmon Field community center building to see what needed to be done to restore it. The walls and foundation of the building were in good shape. Fatland hoped that public hearings could be held to get the public excited

about working on the community center building for future use and to restore the community gardens adjacent to the building.

Citizen Comments from Edward Loescher – Mr. Loescher stated he was an avid walker and loved Harmon Field. He had noted that horseshows were a big thing with a lot of people involved. Loescher asked about Harmon Field's revenues from the horse shows and other sources. He was told that the Harmon Field Tax District tax revenues were a primary source of operating funds supplemented with facility rental revenues. The tax rate was set by the Polk County Commissioners and had not been increased in many years. Harmon Field operated on a tight budget. Polk County had agreed to give Harmon Field partial funding to repave the Harmon Field access roads and parking lots this year, but would not approve a tax rate increase at this time. Loescher stated he owned a large parcel in the Harmon Field Tax District and was happy to pay the Harmon Field tax to support the park. Loescher was concerned about the recent staff resignations and wanted to be assured that the Town of Tryon and Harmon Field had someone who was licensed to safely apply the pesticides and herbicides used at Harmon Field. Fatland told Loescher that the Town of Tryon' employee Phillip Miller was licensed for those applications.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, October 3, 2023, 5:30 pm at Tryon Town Hall, McCown Council Meeting Room. A special meeting to discuss the Harmon Field Dog Park was scheduled for Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at 5:30 pm at the Harmon Field Cabin.

Motion to Enter Closed Session for Personnel pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6)

Covil made a motion to enter closed session for personnel pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6). Motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0 to enter closed session at 6:25 PM.

Submitted By:

Miguel Santibanez
Secretary-Treasurer

Approved:

Stephen Nelon
Chairman