MINUTES OF THE HARMON FIELD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
Tuesday, May 7, 2024

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 May 7, 2024: Chairman Stephen Nelon; Vice Chairman Warren Watson; Rick Covil; and Jamie Dunn

Board Members Absent May 7, 2024: Secretary-Treasurer Miguel Santibanez

Staff Present: Jim Fatland, Tryon Town Manager; Brad Gordon, Harmon Field Superintendent; and Meg Rogers, Town Secretary/Cashier

Harmon Field Master Plan Public Input Session #4

A public input session was opened at 5:30 pm with approximately 15 people in attendance. Fatland provided a short summary of Harmon Field improvements recommended by staff and suggestions provided in previous public input sessions. The Town of Tryon and Harmon Field staff were working with landscape designer Mark Byington on an updated master plan for Harmon Field and with grant expert Debra Torrence on finding funding sources for implementing the updated master plan. Mark Byington was present and went over the proposed improvements which included as many of the items suggested at the three prior input sessions as possible. Byington answered questions about the draft of the updated master plan that was on display at the meeting. Byington stated that the goal of the updated master plan was to improve flexibility of use for the entire park. It was noted that community garden and accessibility projects had high grant ranking value.

Fatland reported that the 9-hole disc golf course at Harmon Field was checked by a professional disc golf course expert who reported that the course at Harmon Field was not professional grade and was unsafe due to blind areas where pedestrians could be struck unintentionally. The expert recommended getting a professional design done for an 18-hole disc-golf course at a more open location such as Ziglar Field. The neighborhood surrounding Ziglar Field represented by the Eastside Citizens Advisory Committee was okay with relocation of disc golf to Ziglar Field. A safe well-designed 18-hole disc golf course at Ziglar Field could benefit the community as a site for fund-raiser tournaments in the future.

Fatland reported that he had met with County Manager Pittman to discuss a list of Harmon Field improvement projects that the County would be interested in funding in the coming year. With the high demand for pickleball courts in Polk County, it was suggested that resurfacing the Harmon Field tennis courts and marking them for two tennis courts and four pickleball courts might be supported by the County with partial funding to address immediate demand until funding for a stand-alone pickleball court facility could be secured in the future.

Chairman Nelon solicited public input:

- Andy Glasscock asked if the open-air gym could be used for pickleball. Covil responded that Harmon Field had received grant funding for the gym to be used for basketball specifically and the facility was used by local youth a lot. Fatland agreed that the gym should be available for the kids to play basketball.
- Steve King stated that the tennis courts had been resurfaced 10 years ago to add the FlexCourt® over the cracked asphalt. The FlexCourt® surface had a 20-year warranty. Some players loved the surface and some hated it. The FlexCourt® surface did become very slippery when wet. Park Superintendent Gordon stated that he had an estimate of $240,000 to repave the existing Harmon Field tennis courts.
- Nick Fisher suggested that the best compromise for faster implementation would be rehabilitating the existing tennis courts with two courts as bi-use for tennis (2 courts) or pickleball (4 courts) and two courts for tennis exclusively. Fisher requested that the resurfacing/repaving of the existing tennis courts include a thick waterproof polyethylene coating on top of the asphalt to protect and prolong the life of the new courts. Fisher did not like the current FlexCourt® surface.
- Warren Watson asked about availability of funds for lighting. Fatland stated that lighting to increase accessibility would qualify for grant funding.
- Jamie Dunn asked about LED lighting to reduce light pollution and electricity required. Lighting equipment options such as "dark sky" lights were discussed briefly. Good lighting for paths around the gym for events was recommended.
- Andy Glasscock asked if the lighting on the pathways would be motion activated to reduce light pollution. Timers were a more cost-effective alternative to motion-activated technology. Use of "dark sky" LED fixtures to reduce light contamination and electricity needed were recommended. Byington stated that the new pathway lights proposed would be "dark sky", LED lights with timers on relatively short light poles. Gordon stated that new timers had been installed at the tennis courts and were being planned for the soccer field and basketball courts at the open-air gym.
- Jamie Dunn and Rick Covil opposed moving the dog park across the river. According to staff, Harmon Field was in violation of the NC Parks & Recreation Trust Fund grant contract which designated the current dog park site as a baseball field for that use only. Moving the dog park and restoring the ballfield to its original use would bring Harmon Field back into compliance with the state grant requirements. With the new paving extending all the way to the bridge and with the gate into the new dog park location to be on the left just across the bridge, accessibility should not be a problem and the new area would provide more natural shade. Trees donated for the current dog park would be relocated to the new dog park site.
- Kevin Parker, owner of Greenlife Inn at Mimosa and the Tryon Coop Coffee House in Tryon stated his concerns on the reduced number of horseshows at Harmon Field and the recent cancellation of a July horseshow. Parker reported that horseshows moving away from Harmon Field caused a huge negative impact on his businesses. Local economic impact from trainers, judges,

competitors at weekend horseshows for 7 to 9 weekends per year as well as business traffic generated by Foothills Equestrian Nature Center (FENCE) horseshows was significant and important to Tryon. Dunn explained that the July horseshow group originally held their event in South Carolina and moved to Harmon Field then decided to return to South Carolina. Dunn confirmed that the October horseshow would be held at Harmon Field and three 3-day horseshows were confirmed for 2025 at Harmon Field. The Harmon Field Board Members supported continuing equestrian sports at Harmon Field.

- Fisher was concerned that pursuing grant funding for equestrian projects might negatively impact funding for pickleball. Fatland explained that equestrian projects would be funded by profits generated by the equestrian facility operations at Harmon Field and donations from local equestrian enthusiasts. Bundling the funded equestrian projects with unfunded Harmon Field projects (like pickleball) in a large-scope grant application for multi-use projects would help fulfill local match requirements of those grants.

There being no others wishing to provide input, Chairman Nelon closed the public input session at 5:40 pm.

Approve Foothills Humane Society Request that their October Car Show Event be classified as a festival

Paula Spinale of Foothills Humane Society (FHS) presented a request for that their car show fundraiser event scheduled for October 20, 2024 at Harmon Field be classified as a festival so they could include multiple food trucks to provide food and beverages for the attendees. Their first annual event the previous year used the Harmon Field concession stand operator, Manzolina's to provide food for participants, as directed by the Harmon Field Board in 2023, and Manzolina's was not able to provide sufficient food and beverages for the crowd. Nelon was concerned about violating the exclusivity terms of the concession stand lease. Including the word "festival" in the event name would help define the event. Fatland told the Board that the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors had the authority to designate an event as a festival. Watson wanted clarification on what defined a festival and wanted to postpone a decision on the request to allow the Board to review the Manzolina's lease restrictions. Spinale stated that if the FHS fundraiser was not allowed to include multiple food trucks, they would have to move their event to another venue. Fatland informed the Board that Manzolina's concession stand lease had not yet been signed. Spinale was asked to rename the FHS event to include the word "Festival". Covil made a motion to approve designating the FHS Car Show Festival on October 20,2024 as a festival with food trucks allowed. Dunn seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0. Spinale was informed that all food trucks operating at Harmon Field would have to have a valid Town of Tryon annual food truck permit and pay a rental fee to Harmon field of $25 per day without electricity or $30 per day with electricity. Cars and pets were not permitted on the soccer fields. Spinale thanked the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors.

Approve Minutes from April 2, 2024 regular meeting

The Minutes from the April 2, 2024 regular meeting of the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors were reviewed. Watson made a motion to approve the Minutes from the regular meeting on April 2, 2024 as presented. Dunn seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Approve Financial Reports for April 2024

The April 2024 Harmon Field financial report was presented by Fatland. According to the report, Harmon Field had received $462,964.26 (79.43% of its amended annual budgeted revenues for Fiscal Year 2023-2024). Total Operating Expenditures were $263,300.48 (81.64% of amended annual budgeted expenditures for FY 2023-2024) and Capital Expenditures totaled $199,697.84 (76.69% of amended annual budgeted expenditures for FY 2023-2024). Total Expenditures were $462,998.32 (79.43% of amended annual budgeted expenditures for FY 2023-2024).

Fatland noted that Harmon Field tax revenues showed nearly 96% collected so far. Rental usage revenue and horseshow revenues were good. Donations and organizational grants had been received from Rotary Club of Tryon, Polk County Community Foundation and the Dallara Foundation. Operating expenditures were at 81.64% as of the 10th month of the fiscal year which was good. Capital outlay expenditures for the fiscal year had been spent except for the remaining cost of the gym room renovation project.

Dunn made a motion to approve the Harmon Field financial report for April 2024 as presented. Watson seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Harmon Field FY 2024-2025 Budget

Tryon Town Manager Jim Fatland reported that he had submitted the proposed Harmon Field FY 2024-2025 Budget approved at the April 2, 2024 Harmon Field Board of Supervisors meeting to the County. Polk County Manager Marche Pittman shared that, in lieu of a 2-cent tax increase, the County would be more receptive to a 1-cent tax increase this year and a 1-cent tax increase the following year. Fatland agreed to share the County's comments at the next regularly scheduled Harmon Field Board of Supervisors meeting in May. County Manager Pittman indicated that the Polk County Commissioners enjoyed the good public response to their contribution to the Harmon Field repaving project and would be open to supporting Harmon Field projects in the coming year. Currently all tax revenues and rental revenues were going to pay for operating costs at Harmon Field. All equestrian profits were going back to maintenance and repairs at the equestrian facility. Moving disc golf to Ziglar Field could provide an opportunity to hold disc golf fund raisers in partnership with Polk County to benefit Harmon Field. Fatland assured the Board that Polk County staff and commissioners understood that Harmon Field was used by county-wide residents. Current demand for more pickleball courts in Polk County could encourage Polk County to provide funding for pickleball courts at Harmon Field. Pittman and YMCA representatives could be very helpful in getting funding. Covil was concerned that Polk County would not provide additional funding for Harmon Field if a tax rate increase was approved for FY 2024-

2025. Fatland stated that Harmon Field needed to assure maintenance needs for current facilities before applying for grants for additional facilities. Watson stated that grant funded facilities would require ongoing maintenance funding into the future. Harmon Field did not need to build facilities it could not afford to maintain. Watson asked if Harmon Field could expect future funding from the Town of Tryon for Harmon Field projects. The Board members appreciated Town Manager Fatland's efforts and his attendance at Harmon Field Board meetings as liaison between the Board and the Town government. Watson asked if there was a backup plan if Polk County refused to provide additional funding for tennis/pickleball courts in FY 2024-2025. Dunn was concerned that the citizens requesting pickleball courts had not been effective at fundraising for their project. Equestrian projects at Harmon Field had been funded by aggressive fundraising efforts. Steve King stated that a group of tennis players did fundraising for four years to provide funding for Harmon Field's tennis court improvements ten years ago. Gordon offered to contact Nick Fisher regarding the recommendation that pickleball players needed to do active fundraising for their project.

Covil made a motion to put a limit on how much could be spent by Harmon Field staff without Harmon Field Board of Supervisors approval. Fatland stated that the Town of Tryon had a financial policy that required an approved purchase order for any expenditure greater than $1,500. This policy applied to expenditures handled by the Town of Tryon for Harmon Field. Covil reported that the statutes of the Harmon Field Tax District and Bylaws of the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors stated that the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors controlled how tax money was spent at Harmon Field. Fatland suggested that the Board could have an attorney review the Bylaws to see if approval of expenditures could be delegated. Currently the Harmon Field Board adopted an annual budget, reviewed monthly financial statements, received a professionally audit report each year. The Harmon Field fund was included in the Town of Tryon's annual financial reporting. Watson stated that the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors approval of the annual budget was authorization for the funds to be spent according to that approved budget.

Harmon Field Superintendent Gordon explained the process for any Harmon Field expenditure exceeding $1,500. For expenditures exceeding $1,500, he contacted the Town Manager and Town Clerk to request a PO. After reviewing the Harmon Field budget, approval would be given or withheld by senior staff if the requested expenditure did not exceed the budgeted amount. If the requested funding would exceed the amount budgeted for that expense, a budget amendment had to be approved by the Town of Tryon Board of Commissioners and the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors before the expenditure could be approved.

Limitations and interpretation of the Harmon Field tax district statutes and the Harmon Field Bylaws were discussed at length. Fatland stated that requiring a vote on every dollar spent would not be feasible for staff or Board members requiring weekly check approval meetings to pay bills for each expenditure. Covil wanted to get an attorney to review the statutes and bylaws. Watson made a motion to direct staff to have an attorney review the Harmon Field Bylaws and clarify what is allowed by them-what can

and cannot legally be done. Dunn seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Harmon Field Master Plan Update

Landscape architect Mark Byington had gone over the draft Harmon Field Master Plan update during the public input session. Fatland explained that Harmon Field needed an approved master plan to be competitive for grants. Harmon Field Board members commented on the master plan during the public input session (see above).

Equestrian Facility Update – Revised Contract Forms

Dunn reported that the recent 3-day Blue Ridge Hunter Jumper Association (BRHJA) horseshow did not make a profit but participants had a good time. Judges officiating at the show were complementary of the Harmon Field facilities. Janet Black was dissolving the BRHJA and Lewis Pack would be taking over the October 3-day horseshow at Harmon Field. Dunn recommended keeping the daily horseshow rental fee at $350 per day for 3-day shows and $550 per day for 1-day shows for the remainder of 2024. In 2025, Dunn recommended increasing the daily rate to $550 per day for all horseshows. Lewis Pack would be providing his own jumps and equipment for the shows he would be managing at Harmon Field and those jumps could be stored in the container unit at Harmon Field.

Dunn currently owned the show jumps being used at Harmon Field. She would be retrieving those jumps and taking them home. BRHJA owned some PVC jumps also stored at Harmon Field. That equipment was donated to BRHJA by Roger & Jennifer Smith. Dunn recommended that Harmon Field accept the donation of those PVC jumps from BRHJA to rent to 1-day horseshow groups for a fee of $500. The proposed donation would be put on the agenda for the June meeting of the Harmon Field Board of Supervisors. Covil supported keeping equestrian events at Harmon Field. Nelon trusted Dunn's recommendation. Dunn suggested, because Harmon Field's smaller horseshows were feeders for participants in future Tryon International Equestrian Center (TIEC) horseshow events, that Harmon Field could solicit funding from TIEC CEO Sharon Decker to benefit Harmon Field's equestrian facility. TIEC might also be willing to do a fundraising benefit for Harmon Field at TIEC. Fatland thanked Dunn for all her efforts to save the equestrian facility and events at Harmon Field. Options to reduce equestrian facility expenses and increase number of equestrian events at Harmon Field were discussed briefly.

Park Superintendent's Report

Harmon Field Park Superintendent Gordon provided a printed report.

- Staff had pressure washed all the main areas of Harmon Field
  - Main entrance rock columns
  - Concrete around the restaurant and the sidewalk from restaurant to small bathrooms
  - Small picnic sheds outside playground and large picnic shed

  - Concrete around cabin
  - Boardwalk and small bridge behind cabin
- Staff would be starting back at the barns on the week of May 13, 2024 and continuing until finished
- The end of baseball and soccer seasons were coming up and there had been talks with YMCA/Polk Rec about baseball's future in Polk County
- Staff were getting quotes on spraying the river soccer field and the two baseball fields for weeds. The soccer field in the center of the oval track needed a little work and quotes were being requested for that work. Temporary soccer fields were being set up behind the tennis courts and the "No Cars Past This Point" signs were being moved closer to the main drive to keep cars off the temporary soccer field.
- Gordon thanked Kenneth Arrowood for his hard work over the past month. Arrowood had been a great asset at Harmon Field allowing Gordon to schedule contractor meetings or vacation days with confidence that Arrowood could take care of Harmon Field. Sara Walton had also been hired for part-time help with focus on cleaning facilities, wiping down trash can lids & grills, picking weeds in beds, deep cleaning cabin and bathrooms along with small projects during the summer. Walton would be working this summer Wednesday & Thursday all day and Saturday & Sunday mornings. After school started in Fall, she would work on weekends and school holiday breaks as her school schedule allows.
- Gordon would be gone June 3-9, 2024. Kenneth Arrowood would be in charge at Harmon Field in Gordon's absence with a list of objectives to work on in the shop as well as mowing and dealing with rentals. Sara Walton would work the maximum part-time hours allowed the week Gordon was gone.
- Second 3-day horseshow of 2024 was held and seemed to go better than the first one with fewer complaints received by staff.
- The cabin, screen shed and open shed were rented almost every Saturday and Sunday which was good for operating revenue.
- The shade cover at the concession stand was put up and was doing awesome. Guttering needed to be added. Gordon thanked J10 Welding and Tryon Commissioner Bill Crowell for helping complete this project.
- Gordon was working on getting quotes and preparing spreadsheets for capital improvements that needed to be made to Harmon Field
  - Cabin exterior cleaned and re-stained
  - Open-air gym rafters painted and exterior boards replaced along with guttering
  - Equine fencing for 4 rings and round pen
  - Field house bathroom renovation
  - Parking lots and roadway striped
- Gordon spoke to The Gravel Ride event representative about the event and explained what Harmon Field and Town of Tryon needed from them in order for them to have permission to hold their 2024 event at Harmon Field. The event review committee had been extremely busy reviewing upcoming events proposed for the Town of Tryon.

- The First Annual Pacolet River cleanup was held on Saturday, April 20, 2024. Volunteers worked very hard to get all the trash they could out of the river and along the riverbanks. Gordon was in contact with Warren Eadus about doing another waterway cleanup along Vaughn Creek at Ziglar Field in the Eastside Neighborhood of Tryon. Eadus told Gordon there might be grant funding for cleanup projects at Ziglar Field as a former landfill site.
- Harmon Field staff were helping with upkeep on the sewer plant mower. All materials needed for that work would be charged to the sewer plant and left at the sewer plant so as not to mix equipment.
- Harmon Field staff pressure washed and rebuilt the railings on the Ziglar Field bridge.
- Gordon and Fatland met with Jay McCarthy about a full-size disc golf course at Ziglar Field and redoing the disc golf course at Harmon Field to a smaller amateur course (like putt-putt golf).
- Gordon and Fatland met with Chris Yang of Carolina Parks & Play LLC about ADA-compliant playground and Gordon sent Yang measurements of the area proposed for the new playground expansion.
- Harmon Field staff built new signs for the front entrances and were waiting for a date to install after getting utility locate service to mark underground utilities around the installation site and scheduling access to Town of Tryon equipment to do the installation.
- Gordon spoke with Atticus Fehl at YMCA/Polk Rec about the soccer nets YMCA/Polk Rec donated to Harmon Field that do not fit the Harmon Field soccer net frames. Gordon believed that the nets would fit frames used by Tryon Elementary School. Fehl indicated that the nets they gave Harmon Field could be donated to a program serving Polk County children such as Tryon Elementary School. Gordon asked the Harmon Field Board to approve the donation of these soccer nets to Tryon Elementary School. Gordon would be painting Tryon Elementary School's soccer frames on his own time but would need Harmon Field staff's help to put the nets on the frames for the school. Watson made a motion to approve donating the soccer nets from Polk Rec/YMCA that did not fit the Harmon Field soccer frames to Tryon Elementary School. Dunn seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

Update on Open-Air Gym

Gordon reported no major progress. Fatland reported that the County Manager wanted to participate in the dedication when the renovation is completed. The dedication would include representatives of Town of Tryon, Polk County and Polk County Community Foundation as well as a basketball clinic. Dominion Energy had offered to sponsor the dedication party.

Member Reappointments

The terms of Stephen Nelon (County Commissioners 2-year appointment), Warren Watson (County Commissioners 4-year appointment) and Jamie Dunn (Town of Tryon Commissioners 4-year appointment) would end June 30,2024. The Town of Tryon

would be filling a 4-year appointment currently held by Dunn and the alternating 2-year appointment currently held by Nelon to begin July 1, 2024. Polk County would be filling the 4-year appointment currently held by Watson. Members seeking reappointment were directed to contact the appropriate authority for appointment before June 30, 2024.

Watson indicated that he would like to be reappointed by the County Commissioners for another 4-year term. Dunn indicated she would like to be reappointed by the Town of Tryon Commissioners for another 4-year term. Nelon indicated he did not wish to be reappointed. Nelon offered to send list of potential appointees for the Town of Tryon to consider for the 2-year alternating appointment to the Town of Tryon.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, June 4, 2024, 5:30 pm at Tryon Town Hall, McCown Council Meeting Room.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned April 9, 2024 at by Chairman Nelon at 7:40 pm.

Submitted By:

Meg Rogers

Meg Rogers substituting for
Miguel Santibanez
Secretary-Treasurer

Approved:

Stephen Nelon

Stephen Nelon
Chairman