Keizer Little League Park Long Range Planning Task Force
Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, January 15, 2020, 6:00 pm
Keizer Civic Center

1. Call to Order
2. Appearance of Interested Citizens
3. Approval of Minutes –November 21, 2019
4. Discussion – Review of Maintenance, Operations and Finance Requirements for KLL Park and Options for KLL Park Oversight and Management
5. Recommendations from Task Force to Council
6. Adjourn

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CALL TO ORDER ~ Vice Chair Lawyer called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Attendance was taken as follows:

Present:  
Mayor Cathy Clark, Chair (6:09)  
Matt Lawyer, Vice Chair  
Dan Kohler, Councilor  
Bo Lane, McNary Youth Baseball  
Rob Tavares, McNary Youth Baseball  
Ryan Siegel, Keizer Little League  
Shane Diarmit, Keizer Little League  
James Hutches, Citizen

Absent:  
Marlene Parsons, Councilor

Also Present:  
Jeff Davis  
Dan Hughes  
Jerry Sutton  
Chris Eppley, City Manager

Staff Present:  
Todd Walling  
Kyle Quiring  
Chad Lawson  
Debbie Lockhart, Deputy City Recorder

APPEARANCE OF INTERESTED CITIZENS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Dan Kohler moved for approval of the September 2019 Minutes. James Hutches seconded. Motion passed as follows: Lawyer, Lane, Kohler, Diarmit, Siegel and Tavares in favor with Hutches abstaining, Parsons absent and Clark absent at time of vote.

REPORT AND DISCUSSION – Review of Maintenance, Operations and Finance Requirements for KLL Park: Matt Lawyer brought the task force up to date noting that the goal is to bring together elements of what would become a plan for the complex; specifically: maintenance, operations and concessions procedures. Items in the packet summarize all the maintenance needs and operations issues. These were determined through working closely with both organizations.

Mayor Clark noted that this is a long range plan which tries to set the stage for ongoing maintenance, scheduling and improvements for continuity and predictability. She asked task force members to review it and make sure that what is needed to operate the facility successfully had been captured.

City Manager Chris Eppley provided information on how the park was first acquired. Discussion followed regarding grants. It was noted that programmatic grants would be solicited by individual organizations, the City would be involved in the physical aspects of the facility and the land.

Review of the documents followed:
MAINTENANCE: Following discussion task force members indicated that it appeared that all maintenance issues had been captured in the document.

SCHEDULING: Lengthy discussion followed regarding scheduling with discussion taking place regarding reduced rates for participating organizations, non-profit vs. for-profit rates, tournaments, volunteer participation, city-operated ball parks, developing a unique model for Keizer. Mayor Clark indicated that she would come back with an additional draft compiled with information gleaned from this meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS: Discussion took place regarding the cost of having a website and who would shoulder that cost.

REVENUE AND FINANCE: Task Force discussed volunteer hours, community participation, attracting organizations that give grants related to volunteer hours, tournaments and the benefit they are to the community. The possibility of a tournament organization taking over the operation of the park but giving priority for slots to the two Keizer organizations was discussed. This appeared to be doable since the Keizer organizations were willing to have their games during the week so that the tournaments could be held on weekends. The conversation then evolved to the possibility of a more long term solution, i.e. a 20-year ground lease similar to what is in place with the Heritage Center. It was noted that a tournament organization could serve as the ‘parent organization’ which has been discussed. Discussion followed regarding how the three organizations could partner to put together a response to a request for proposals.

Mayor Clark asked task force members to review the handouts and add goals and objectives of their own for the long range operation of the facility. These would be included in the request for proposals for a long-term ground lease. Goals should encompass what needs to be in place for the complex.

Each member of the task force then voiced their support and concerns regarding the work that had been done to date including the ‘parent organization’ concept, partnering with an outside entity to manage the complex, and the changes in baseball.

Matt Lawyer pointed out that the process has evolved and changed. It has been a struggle but now the relationship has culminated into a good plan/framework of how this could move forward. He voiced support for the lease option noting that perhaps it will become something new as a function of tournament ball in Keizer, a chance to come together. He urged that both organizations come together with a strong proposal that includes all needs, desires and expectations and that a third party be included.

NEXT STEPS: Draft recommendations from Task Force to Council to discuss at next meeting: Set goals for the facility. The two organizations need to tell the City what they are prepared to do in preparation for the request for proposals. The next meeting will be a summation of the plan of the two organizations, whether it be a long term lease or a 5-year plan.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Next Meeting: January 15, 2020

Minutes approved: ____________
Hello Task Force Members,
We have had great discussions over this last year about the origins, importance, needs and future of the KLL Park. Through these discussions, we have learned what it takes to operate, maintain and utilize the facility for baseball and softball programs. And we have learned that the success of the programs has led to the need for us to look at options to ensure sustained facility maintenance and operations that would share the burden of this work in an equitable and cost efficient manner.
We each entered the work of this task force with a specific set of experiences, expectations and perspectives. By listening to each other, we have had the opportunity to gain broader understanding of each other’s points of view. We also used this time to also test out ideas that we had to see if they work in today’s world.
At my request, Chris has prepared a memo that is attached to this email that summarizes the options to put in a long range plan into action. These options would allow for the maintenance, operations and funding that we all discussed. As the owner of the park facility, the city has the ultimate obligation to ensure it, like all public facilities, is operated and maintained in a safe, accessible and equitable manner.
Please read the attached memo and come prepared to discuss a recommendation to Council for a preferred option for the long range operation of the KLL Park.
Thank you all for your service on this task force and willingness to help set the course for the future.
Best regards,

Cathy Clark, Mayor
clarkc@keizer.org
TO: LITTLE LEAGUE TASK FORCE  
FROM: CHRISTOPHER C. EPPLEY  
CITY MANAGER  
SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL  

BACKGROUND  

The Little League Task Force has been meeting now for over a year with the intent of finding a method for providing for perpetual upkeep, maintenance, and enhancement of the Little League Park, and to ensure that use of the fields and the cost of field usage is provided for through a fair and equitable manner.

The Task Force has explored a number of options including:

- Continuing the status quo RFP process for short-term management agreements with local youth baseball groups.
- Entering into a long-term ground lease with any qualified entity.
- Unifying the two main youth baseball groups into a single affiliation and the City potentially divesting itself of the property into the ownership of that new group.

After much discussion, it appears that there are three primary and realistic options that should ultimately be forwarded to the City Council for their consideration. These include:

1. Continue the status quo of conducting RFPs for short-term management agreements to manage the park and facilities. The pros of this alternative include that it is a known quantity for all parties. The cons of this alternative are that it does ensure continued upkeep and maintenance of the facilities and does not solve existing tensions between user groups.

2. Enter into a long-term ground lease for the park property with a qualified operator through an RFP or RFQ process. The lease would stipulate specific deliverables including upkeep and maintenance items and also the intent for Keizer based not-for-profit youth sports groups to receive preferential pricing and scheduling privileges. The pros of this alternative are that it would likely solve the issue of ongoing maintenance; would potentially provide revenues for improvements and enhancements to the park; and would provide a stable management structure into the future. The cons of this alternative include potential loss of control by the City over use and upkeep of the complex; potential loss of local control over the
complex; and potential loss of identity of the complex as a local baseball park in exchange for becoming a regional tournament park with less focus on local youth baseball groups.

3. The City takes over the management of the complex. The pros of this alternative are that the City would retain control of the complex and could guarantee that the focus of the park remain as a facility primarily for local youth baseball groups; potential for entering into rental agreements with outside tournament providers to produce revenues for operations, maintenance and enhancements to the complex; and stable governance of field usage and rates. The cons of this alternative are that it would likely not be the least costly alternative due to the relatively high cost of government labor and benefits; field rates could increase significantly under this model; and it may take two or three seasons for the City to learn how to efficiently do this type of business, requiring patience from users.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Task Force review these options and move them on to the City Council for their review and ultimate decision making.