

CITY OF DEER PARK  
EAST SAN AUGUSTINE STREET  
DEER PARK, TEXAS 77536

CC 76-  
P&RC-

Minutes of

A JOINT WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL AND THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF DEER PARK HELD AT CITY HALL, 710 EAST SAN AUGUSTINE, DEER PARK, TEXAS ON OCTOBER 09, 2017, AT 5:40 P.M. WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS PRESENT:

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

JERRY MOUTON, JR	MAYOR
SHERRY GARRISON	COUNCILWOMAN
THANE HARRISON	COUNCILMAN
TOMMY GINN	COUNCILMAN
BILL PATTERSON	COUNCILMAN
RON MARTIN	COUNCILMAN

DEER PARK PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION PRESENT:

GLEND A JO KEIFER	CHAIRMAN
ERIC RIPLEY	MEMBER
GEORGETTE FORD	MEMBER
TJ HAIGHT	MEMBER
SHERRY REDWINE	MEMBER

OTHER CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

JAY STOKES	CITY MANAGER
GARY JACKSON	ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
JIM FOX	CITY ATTORNEY
SHANNON BENNETT	CITY SECRETARY

1. CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Mouton called the Joint Workshop Meeting to order on behalf of the City Council and Chairman Glenda Jo Keifer called the meeting to order on behalf of the Deer Park Parks and Recreation Commission at 5:40 p.m.

2. DISCUSSION OF ISSUES RELATING TO SPORTS ORGANIZATION UTILIZATION AGREEMENTS – City Manager James Stokes briefly introduced the item being discussed. “We are excited to have this discussion; it has been needed and pending for some time. We hope to be very informational to the City Council. We want to present to you the history of a sports agreement and the questions that may arise about the agreements. This is just the beginning of a discussion that we may not finish tonight, but hopefully we will move on a path forward. Let us educate you about sports agreements and then figure out where to go from here. I believe lots of things will evolve out of this discussion.”

Parks & Recreation Director, Charlie Sandberg, gave an overview of what a Sports Utilization Agreement is. “An agreement is used to establish a mutual understanding and working relationship between various organizations and the City. The purpose is to ensure that athletic facilities owned and /or operated by the City of Deer Park, are utilized efficiently and safely. Mr. Sandberg presented some information of the history prior to 2009. The agreements did not allow select teams to utilize the facilities. The agreements were vague and the responsibilities were not established at that time. In 2011 and 2013, reviewing the agreements began, to help provide clarification. There was a vetted process done to get a better understanding. Select teams were now allowed to utilize fields with restrictions. In-lieu statements and fee structures were established and organizations were invited to meet monthly to go line by line through the agreement.

Mayor Mouton asked, “When were the fees established?”

Mr. Sandberg replied, “We worked on the fees in 2011 and 2013.”

Mr. Sandberg continued discussion of the agreements and the process of presenting the agreements to the Parks and Recreation Commission and the City Council beginning in the year 2013. Minor revision and changes were reviewed and implemented during the following years. An extensive process to review the potential conflicts in the structure of the agreements began in 2016. This was so, to take a look at what would be best for the youth organizations within the community and the City of Deer Park.

Councilman Patterson asked, “Is this what we have now?”

Mr. Sandberg answered, “Yes.”

Councilwoman Garrison asked, “Why were select teams allowed?”

Assistant Parks & Recreation Director Jacob Zuniga responded, “During 2009 and 2011 there was an increased demand for select teams. The contract itself was in question. When Mr. Swigert came in 2011, we sat down with each organization and went through line by line of the agreement. It was during those meetings that the demand and need for select team usage

was brought to our attention. Ultimately, they were given permission to use the fields, but it was with restrictions. It was put upon the leagues to regulate the usage of the select teams.”

Councilwoman Garrison asked, “So it wasn’t a matter that there was not enough space? At that time there was space available?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Yes.”

Councilman Patterson asked, “Is it true that Pony League allows in their structure, select teams to participate in the Pony League Organization?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Yes.”

Councilman Patterson asked, “Are some of these organizations beginning to allow select teams to enter their post season tournaments and playoffs and advance on to the organized World Series?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Yes, that is a correct statement.”

Councilman Martin asked, “Is softball the same structure as Pony League?”

Parks and Recreation Board Member, Eric Ripley responded, “Softball is totally separate. We have our league teams that participate in all stars. The select teams do not participate in league teams, they are totally different.

Councilwoman Garrison asked, “Each organization has a select team?”

Mr. Ripley answered, “Yes.”

Parks and Recreation Board Member, TJ Haight commented, “The select teams are allowed to participate all the way up to World Series on a separate bracket level. The traditional teams taken from the recreation league is on a separate level. Those two brackets come together to play in the championship.”

Councilman Patterson asked, “Do they play in the same World Series?”

Mr. Haight responded, “Yes.”

Councilman Patterson asked, “Ultimately, a recreational league could meet a select team in the World Series Championship?”

Mr. Haight responded, “Yes, they do every year.”

Councilman Patterson asked, "Is there a recognition of these select teams?"

Mr. Haight responded, "Yes, as far as the Pony League goes.

Councilman Patterson asked, "They are not going to go away?"

Mr. Haight responded, "No they are not."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Do they play your normal league scenarios?"

Mr. Haight responded, "Currently they do not go through Pony League Organization here in Deer Park. They will go to tournaments every year and have to establish a twelve game minimum to qualify for post season play. That is when we host those post season tournaments in Deer Park."

Chairman Glenda Jo Keifer commented, "Years ago, over the years the definition of select has really changed. At one time, they were coming from out of town, try outs and having paid coaches. Now, from the league, many of our select teams consist of Deer Park kids that want to play at a higher level of more serious ball. So, that's why the definition is a little different because it is now the kids of Deer Park.

Councilman Martin commented, "That is probably consistent with all the sports, not just baseball."

Mr. Ripley commented, "The softball select team does not play as part of the league, they are separated."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Where do they play?"

Mr. Ripley responded, "They have practices two days a week on our fields and they have tournaments. They are allowed to host two tournaments per season. They only play tournaments for the most part."

Mayor Mouton asked, "They do not play in a regular league and only play tournaments?"

Mr. Ripley replied, "Correct."

Councilman Harrison asked, "They can participate in the finals?"

Mr. Ripley responded "It is a different class, so they will not ever meet."

Councilman Patterson commented, "Only in the Pony League is that allowed."

Mr. Sandberg continued with an overview of the basics of the agreement structure. The agreement designates usage of limited number tax payer sports facilities outside of general public usage, it outlines right of general public to use facilities for recreational use. The agreement designates the field usage is primarily for recreational use and establishes “first rights of refusal” to contracted organization for field usage. This does not give the contracted organization “exclusive” usage of a facility. When games are going on, the organization has the right to use the facilities. When there are not any games going, the facilities are open to the public.”

Councilman Harrison asked, “The City does not have to approve that?”

Councilman Patterson commented, “Except when there are tournaments and games, the organization has the right to lock the fields to keep the public off during the games.”

Mr. Sandberg commented, “Correct, at a specific time during the day. There is an agreement of certain times when they are able to lock the fields.”

Councilman Harrison asked, “Recreational can’t open up the concession stand? They can only go out and play?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Correct. They can’t go out there and conduct a tournament or raise money.”

Councilman Martin asked, “Does that also apply to practices?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “As long as the association doesn’t say we have the fields at this time. The only restriction we ever did discuss, is that we do not allow adults on the youth fields. The fences are close and might damage them.”

Councilman Patterson asked, “Does the Pony League still use the fields for practice?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Yes, but they will provide us a schedule.”

Councilman Patterson asked, “During those scheduled practices, kids cannot come out and play on the field?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Correct, due to first rights of refusal.”

Mayor Mouton asked, “What about during the summer where there are no leagues?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “They are pretty much year round. The agreements are annual.”

Councilman Martin asked, "When the league has already gone through the World Series, do you still keep track of practices?"

Mayor Mouton asked, "Who is controlling the practices?"

Mr. Ripley responded, "The City has done a really good job of communication, as an example, the high school soccer team wanted to use the field for their end of the year kickball party. Jacob and Charlie contacted me to ask if we were using the field, I got in contact with the booster club president and organized the restroom being unlocked. So, if we are not using the fields, then it is open. They do a very good job of communicating the availability and working with us."

Councilman Martin asked, "If someone wants to use the fields, do they contact the City first?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "If it is not an organization and it is a third party, yes."

Councilman Patterson asked, "Does Pony League play Fall Ball?"

Mr. Haight responded, "Yes. July is the tournaments for the Pony League, after July ends we have about a month layoff and then we start Fall Ball registration. Teams will come there and practice recreationally."

Councilman Patterson asked, "There is a month or two that the fields are not utilized by the Pony League teams?"

Mr. Haight responded, "That is correct."

Councilman Patterson commented, "In between the Spring and the beginning of the Fall season, there is a possibility of several weeks that the no one is using the fields."

Mr. Haight responded, "I will say that select teams do come and have organized practice every night. We can not stop that."

Mayor Mouton asked, "What do you mean you can't stop it?"

Mr. Haight responded, "We can't stop it because it is open to the public."

Councilman Harrison asked, "If there is a recreational league, they have to have an agreement?"

Mr. Sandberg answered, "Correct."

Councilman Harrison asked, "They can only play recreational ball with no finals?"

Mayor Mouton asked, "Like the Adult Softball League?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "No."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "If someone wants to use the fields, do they go to the organization or do they go to the City?"

Mr. Sandberg replied, "The organization. That is the problem that we need to address. They are supposed to come to us."

Lacy Stole, Athletic/Aquatic Supervisor, commented, "It depends on the person that wants to use the field. If it is an existing team and is already affiliated with the organization, they usually go to the organization first to the scheduler. If it is somebody outside of the organization, I get all those calls. I schedule those practices by calling to see if we can use the field on a particular date. We charge our fees associated with that rental and handle those rentals as well."

City Manager Jay Stokes, commented, "Though Charlie is correct when we say we don't give a contracted organization an exclusive usage of the facility, in a lot of ways we do. In prime times, like the Spring, if I wanted to form my own team and go practice or play on a Tuesday night, I am not able to, but if I wanted to use the field in the middle of July when there isn't anything going on, then it would be easy to get it and use the field. At the prime times, in effect, they do have an exclusive use. They will have the fields obligated, even if it's for a select team. Some of the conflicts we have seen lately with both baseball and soccer has to do with that issue."

Councilman Martin asked, "Do teams publish game schedules on their sports website?"

Mayor Mouton asked, "Do you get that?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "We should, but that is an issue."

Mr. Sandberg continued with the overview of the basics of the agreements. The agreement also states guidelines for team creation primarily for the use of Deer Park residents and those attending Deer Park ISD. It addresses organization boards and required paperwork. The agreement outlines responsibilities of the sports organization and City. It also defines requirements for contract renewal and associated time line for renewal. A key element of an agreement is recognition. A recognized sports organization with the City of Deer Park is an organization that has been formally recognized by City Council as an established sports group within the City. Recognized groups are eligible to use City facilities and Deer Park ISD facilities pursuant to the facility usage agreement between the City and DPISD.

Mayor Mouton asked, "Does every organization need to be recognized?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "No."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Is the Pony League recognized?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Yes, they are."

Mayor Mouton asked, "So they use the DPISD facilities?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "They do not have to. Through us, if someone wanted to utilize the school district, they could through the mutual agreement."

Mayor Mouton asked, "If the whole point of being recognized is not so you can use City facilities, then what is it for?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "The biggest element of using our facility is because we have lights to practice in the evening. They want access to our facilities at no charge. If they are a recreational component and the Council approves the group, then you have first rights of refusal and the organization doesn't pay any fees."

Mayor Mouton commented, "You can have an agreement and not be recognized and still use our facilities. The only main emphasis of being recognized is to enter into the agreement we have with the school district which opens up to school district facilities."

Mr. Haight responded, "It mainly waives all the fees. You don't have field rental or light fees."

Mayor Mouton commented, "So it is applicable to both."

Ms. Sherry Redwine commented, "The City pays that for the league if they are recognized."

Mr. Sandberg commented, "The DPISD mutual agreement is generally between the City and the School District utilizing each other's facilities. That was not created with the Youth Organizations in mind."

Councilman Patterson commented, "My understanding of the agreement is that they outline the responsibilities of both parties. I do not think we have agreements signed with any organization that is not recognized. These signed agreements identifies what the league is going to give back to the City and also identifies what the City is going to do for the league."

Mayor Mouton asked, "So the agreements and the recognition is one an the same or two different things?"

Councilman Patterson commented, "To me it is the same, you cannot have an agreement unless you are recognized by Council."



Mr. Sandberg responded, "Correct. We recognize football, but do not have an agreement with them."

Mayor Mouton commented, "Explain that to me."

Mr. Sandberg responded, "That is a problem we need to fix."

Ms. Redwine commented, "You can be recognized without an agreement as of right now."

Mr. Sandberg continued with the overview of the key elements of an agreement and what it takes to be recognized. The organization has to be an established structure and prove the history of operations. There is an approval process done by the Parks and Recreation Commission and is then recommended to City Council to approve in order to be recognized. Required supporting documentation for an agreement were also discussed. Current copy of board approved organization constitution and bylaws, proof of insurance, list of current officers and Board of Directors, proposed annual calendar of events, copies of all receipts for any current agreement's contribution must be provided to determine the total funds contributed to the facilities in lieu of payment for current agreement. If requesting, written contribution request in-lieu of payment.

Mr. Sandberg commented, "I had a third soccer organization and the first thing I did to vet it was asked if they had a Board of Directors or bylaws, the organization did not. There was no structure, no insurance. I didn't move forward to take it to the Parks Commission for their recommendation because the organization did not meet the simple requirements that we generally asked for."

Assistant Parks and Recreation Director, Jacob Zuniga commented, "This organization just came in and said they wanted to start a youth league. They wanted the fields for six months, however, we did not come to a resolution, so we did not move forward."

Mr. Sandberg commented, "If that gentleman would have come back and provided all that information, I would have first discussed that with Mr. Jackson and if it was felt we needed to look into it, then they would make the request to make it to the Parks and Recreation Commission's agenda. We vet that and it goes through a process and if they recommend it to Council, we would bring to your attention. The process is extremely critical, we are very behind right now."

Mr. Sandberg continued the discussion of the approval process of an agreement. The Sports Organization Utilization agreement approval process has a term of one calendar year beginning January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>. Request for renewal must be initiated by the signing of a new agreement by the organization's president, with a copy of the annual report and associated supporting documentation prior to October 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. Seek recommendation for

approval by the Parks and Recreation Commission in November each year and approval by the City Council in December of each year.

Mayor Mouton, "Does this really happen?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Yes it does."

Mayor Mouton, "So why are we having issues in the last year with two of the organizations?"

Councilwoman Garrison commented, "They did not meet the requirements."

Parks and Recreation Board Member Georgette Bedford commented, "They didn't meet the requirements so we never approved it. "

Mayor Mouton asked, "Didn't we have some scenarios with the Pony League? Why did they take so long?"

Mr. Haight responded, "The president didn't have all the receipts required, and was missing information."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Other than that, at the end of this month, most of these will get with you"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "No, we are behind."

Assistant City Manager, Gary Jackson commented, "Last year was an exception. That process was started in the time frame it outlines. There was some definitional changes within that agreement. The definition of recreation was added and that took a lot of meetings numerous times throughout the year. We were the reason why it got off schedule because of the changing of the definition structure."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "Has it been resolved?"

Mr. Jackson responded, "No."

Mr. Stokes commented, "It was resolved to the extent that you all voted on the contract. It is unresolved to the extent to what we have historically done, in the past few years is when a lead was not in compliance, they were put on schedule and told that progress was needed to take place towards becoming fully in compliance with the agreement."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "So, now we are under the gun for another contract, but we are really not better off?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "These current contracts end in December."

Mr. Sandberg continued with the overview of the responsibilities of the Sports Organization. They are responsible for utilizing facilities efficiently and safely to enhance and enrich the interest of our youth and to promote participation in wholesome recreational activities, operate under established organizational bylaws in accordance with agreement. They are also responsible for operating concession stands and managing associated revenues, all game preparations, provide equipment needed to conduct games, reporting facility damages or dangerous conditions, providing scoreboards, trash pickup and removal and minor maintenance responsibilities. Lastly, responsible for providing league officials during all operations to manage usage and address situations which may arise.

The discussion continued of the responsibilities of the City within the agreement. The City is to provide athletic facilities to be utilized efficiently and safely to enhance and enrich the interest of our youth and promote participation in wholesome recreational activities, to ensure the Sports Organization has first right of refusal for their designated facilities, to oversee, manage and accept all capital improvement projects for athletic facilities, provide maintenance and repairs to athletic facilities, to maintain all field lighting to at least 75%, furnish trash receptacles and trash liners, clean and stock bathrooms, maintain parking areas, establish line of communication between City and Organization, provide additional facilities for meetings or registration at no cost up to 24 hours of facility usage, provide marketing opportunities in City publications and media resources.

Councilman Patterson asked, "When there are tournaments, is there a staff on duty?"

Mr. Zuniga responded, "It was me, it is still me. In the past, there have been lights that have not come on, some things would be broken and I would be called. I would delegate out staff or whoever needed to be called. We were very responsive to their needs."

Mr. Haight commented, "We had many issues come up, like sanitary system backing up. They responded very quickly."

Mr. Zuniga commented, "There are more than these items, but for the purpose of these two slides, we wanted to recognize the real major details of the City and responsibilities of the Sports Organization."

Mr. Sandberg continued discussing the current fees for the athletic facilities. There is no cost for teams to utilize athletic fields as long as they are "recreational" league sponsored activities. Select teams and outside organizations are required to pay a fee to the Sports Organization for usage of their contracted fields.

Mr. Zuniga commented, "The City will receive from the organization either the following payment schedule to be administered by the Organization or the Organization may seek

Council approval for specific projects in lieu of payment as described. However, if future budgetary strains on the City occurs, the City reserves the right to require the organization to abide by the following payment schedule for a variation thereof as directing by the City at the time of agreement renewal.”

Councilwoman Garrison asked, “Will we eventually get to the definition of recreational and non-recreational?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Yes.”

Mr. Sandberg discussed the in lieu of statement within the agreement. In lieu of payment of fees to the City, the Organization may, upon approval from City Council, make an improvement to a City of Deer Park athletic facility used by the organization. The proposal for said improvement to the facility in lieu of payment, must be submitted in writing with the formal request for renewal of this agreement as outlined in the Sport Organization Utilization Agreement.

Mr. Sandberg commented, “Generally, in lieu of statement is attached to the sports agreement and comes to Council for a vote.”

Councilwoman Garrison asked, “That’s what we see on the agenda?”

Mr. Sandberg discussed the in lieu of statement for each of the organizations. Pony Baseball generally do in lieu of option. Some examples, Spencerview Athletic Facility storage building and fences prior to renovations of 2013.

Mr. Haight commented, “There have been scoreboards that are \$9,000 apiece. Those are the major things. We write a check sometimes to the City.”

Councilman Martin asked, “Aren’t scoreboards already in the agreement?”

Mayor Mouton asked, “So it hasn’t always been there and was just added in?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “I am not too sure. It might have been a timing issue.”

Mr. Zuniga commented, “There is some kind of gray area as to what is accepted as in lieu of.”

Councilwoman Garrison asked, “Shouldn’t it be defined?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Correct.”

Recessed at 6:24 p.m. and reconvened at 6:29 p.m.

Mr. Sandberg continued the discussion of the in lieu of statement of the Girl's Softball. They have also utilized the in- lieu option. Some examples, field materials and infield groomer, grading and drainage improvements to softball infields.

Mr. Zuniga commented, "This is what I was referring to as the gray area. One year they did provide us an in-lieu of statement that had an infield groomer and several orders of an infield conditioner and some paint. The Commission chose to recognize the infield groomer as a capital item, but the materials were not because they were considered operational needs."

Mayor Mouton asked, "What was the philosophy on why the in-lieu statement and fee structure was established in 2011 and 2013?"

Mr. Zuniga responded, "It came about by select teams. One organization wanted to allow select and another did not. They came to the agreement to charge for the select team usage."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Who is they?"

Mr. Zuniga responded, "The organizations."

Mayor Mouton asked, "How was it handled before that?"

Mr. Haight responded, "Prior to that, select teams were never prevalent until 2009. They would just practice where they could find. In 2011 and 2013, they became strong. As land shrinkage came into play, and lighting became a premium, they really started concentrating on the field usage. They also wanted a place to play on the weekend for their tournaments. They do tear up the fields, they do put a lot of traffic on those fields. Let's start charging for the fields. They came up with a structure and that's where we are currently."

Councilman Patterson commented, "It elevates some of the fees that they pay and in turn provides some of the services back that we do not have to."

Mr. Haight responded, "Correct."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Did he state that correctly?"

Mr. Zuniga responded, "No sir. The select teams are regulated by the Organization. There are two options. The Organization can charge the select teams and half of the money would go to the Organization and the other half would be paid to the City. The other option is the in lieu of statement. The Organization would collect and utilize the fees and use those funds to make capital improvements to the City facilities. For example, the storage structure at Spencerview was an in lieu of option and the regrading of the Girls' Softball fields was also an inlieu of option."

Councilman Patterson asked, "If there was an in lieu of statement, and there was work needed to be done, then the City would be paid for it based of the fees we collected? In this case, they would be paying for it. Correct?"

Mayor Mouton responded, "The money is going to the leagues."

Councilman Patterson commented, "They build a building in-lieu of paying those fees and the City does not have to build the building."

Mr. Sandberg commented, "Correct."

Councilman Patterson commented, "There is a reason why the in lieu statement is in there, because it allows the Organization to contribute to the upkeep and maintenance of the fields."

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Correct."

Councilman Harrison asked, "Everything they approve has to come through the City first?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Yes."

Mr. Haight commented, "We also understand that it becomes City property."

Mr. Sandberg commented, "Many of the times we do not receive schedules from the Organizations. That is where the misinformation comes about. We do not know when they are on the fields. We continue to request the schedules, but do not get them. That causes many problems with maintenance and late night phone calls about lights because we have not received those schedules. We are supposed to send them a non-compliance letter, but we have always given them second and third chances."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "What league are we talking about? Is it all of them?"

Mr. Zuniga responded, "I believe over the course of several years, it has been interchangeable."

Councilman Patterson commented, "It has been all of them."

Mr. Sandberg commented, "Some have really improved and gotten a lot better."

Mr. Zuniga commented, "Over the years, there has been a drastic improvement of getting their schedules. There is always that one tournament that slips through that wasn't on the original schedule."

Mr. Sandberg commented, "That is when we can't properly maintain those fields and prep them for the next tournament that is coming up because we don't know it was scheduled."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Is this some of the issues on some of the Pony fields and there were concerns of the scheduling and tournament plays?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Yes."

Mr. Stokes asked, "When you get that phone call, is that for recreational play or select play?"

Mr. Sandberg responded "It's not determined on a time."

Mr. Stokes commented, "Sounds like a team that has moved to the next level and need the field prep for the next two weeks is a select team to me."

Mr. Haight commented, "It is a Pony team that will go on to the next regional section."

Mr. Stokes asked, "Pony Recreational or Pony Select?"

Mr. Haight responded, "Pony Recreational, teams in Deer Park that have progressed."

Councilman Harrison asked, "They didn't know when they originally gave the City the schedule that they would progress?"

Councilwoman Garrison commented, "So there was no way they could give the schedule."  
Councilman Harrison asked, "They are still supposed to let us know prior to?"

Mr. Sandberg commented, "That has been an issue we need to work on."

Councilman Martin, asked, "Once they know they are moving on, they are to notify but obviously they do not know if they are moving forward?"

Mr. Haight responded, "Correct."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Is it a tournament during the normal process of the League where you get to the end and there are tournaments and you move on or is this just tournament that are randomly occurring that teams just sign up for?"

Mr. Haight responded, "It is structured."

Mayor Mouton commented, "So you still should have some kind of perimeter of how that structure is going to go. To say, if we win, we will have usage for this many dates and it would only be a retro if you didn't make it through a certain weekend. Then it could be cancelled more than needing an additional week."

Mr. Haight commented, "That would be true, if we could expand that margin from the beginning and let the City know. Pony has gotten a lot better on scheduling, then sometimes they don't let us know until right before."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Isn't the time frame the same every year and if you are bidding on it, shouldn't you already schedule that with the City?"

Mr. Haight responded, "Once we know that we are going to have those tournaments and Deer Park gets them, then we usually say. I will say there is some fault on Pony of calling last minute."

Mr. Stokes asked, "Is this an All Star team?"

Mr. Haight responded, "Yes. It is the Pony All Star Team."

Mr. Stokes commented, "It's the recreational kids that play and the best ones move up and make the recreational All Star Team."

Councilman Patterson commented, "When you put the schedules together at the start of the season, you should be able to add on to the end when the tournament play is. Then you could know at that time that possibly there will be tournament plays."

Mr. Haight responded, "I agree."

Mayor Mouton, "There is an end of the year hypothetical no matter what and you should be able to work backwards and say we should reserve this and make sure it is ready to play during that time frame."

Councilman Patterson commented, "In case we do get it."

Councilman Harrison asked, "League play will always take front seat to recreational play?"

Mr. Haight commented, "Recreational will always take precedent over select as far as baseball goes."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "Shouldn't it be the same for all of them? The same for softball and the same for soccer?"

Mr. Haight commented, "I am not sure about soccer but as far as softball, it does the same thing. The residents of Deer Park that goes through a draft will get precedence over any select team."



Mr. Sandberg commented, "It is difficult to regulate the percentages and accountability in the contract. There is a lot of like percentages and that is something that has no methodology to regulate that. That is one of the errors of this contract. We push those percentages, but there is not a real good check and balance right now."

Mayor Mouton asked, "What is the theory process of why and where did this come from?"

Mr. Sandberg commented, "They were trying to push the recreational component and push the team to a certain amount of people in the organization playing recreational ball."

Councilman Patterson asked, "These people who do not live in Deer Park, they are just playing recreational ball?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Some do and some don't. The structure is differently in the Youth Organization."

Councilman Patterson asked, "What is the percentage and accountability refer to? Does it refer to the people living in Deer Park or does it refer to amount of people playing recreational ball versus select ball?"

Mayor Mouton responded, "No, it's the people playing ball versus do they live in Deer Park or are in the school district."

Mr. Zuniga commented, "For example, Girls Softball has on their registration, is your child a member of DPISD. It can be answered yes or no. That being said, that person may be a member of DPISD, however may live in Pasadena because of open enrollment."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Do you look at that as one and the same as if they are in DPISD is the same as if they live in Deer Park?"

Mr. Zuniga responded, "Correct. However, we do not have a method to verify it."

Councilman Martin asked, "So it is all self-reported."

Councilwoman Garrison commented, "They could check it if they wanted to."

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Correct."

Mayor Mouton commented, "There is a lot of discussion of these percentages and what leagues have the highest percentage and what leagues are not reporting it accurately. I have said recently, we do not technically validate every one of these. It goes by an honor system."

Mayor Mouton asked, "What is the intent of these percentages and what is the percent on the contracts?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "We were forcing their hand and telling them that they have to have certain amount of people that live in this community and play recreational ball."

Mayor Mouton asked, "What if a league does not make that number, what do we do?"

Mr. Jackson responded, "They pay a fee. That is what it boils down to. If you meet the recreational definition, which means 75% or more are Deer Park residents or attend DPISD, then you do not pay a fee because you qualify as recreational."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Based on numbers, if 60% are kids in Deer Park and in DPISD, do we make them pay another fee if they can't make up the 75%?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "This year we did not. That actually is an example that went to the Parks Commission. We gave them a year to build that up as long as there was a working process in place. So we would try to work with them."

Mayor Mouton discussed different scenarios pertaining to the percentages and the fees and asked, "What is the intent of all this?"

Parks and Recreation Board Member, Sherry Redwine responded, "To provide something for the kids that live here."

Mayor Mouton commented, "We are trying to preserve our kids having first option. If we do not meet the percentages, it still invokes more money."

Mr. Sandberg responded, "What has happened in the past, they generally work with them and give the opportunity to meet the numbers. We have never kicked a team off."

Mayor Mouton commented, "Some of that stuff is being used very loosely in regards to what the intent is. How it is being implemented and how the people are being held accountable, there is no good formula to validate this."

Councilman Patterson commented, "It seems like it only effects the Soccer Organization."

Mr. Stokes commented, "I know we can all agree on is that we do not want a league or team or group that is outside of Deer Park coming in and using our fields. We had many issues when you get into those upper age kids about 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade. What we are running into, is not pure recreational. Every little girl that wants to play in Deer Park, gets to play. They are not excluded. However, if they cannot meet 65% percent, there is not enough to have a team. So the question becomes, what do you do? Do you then say, yes, we went to you in hopes that you

would pass the Type B tax to get new fields and it did pass. So now, every little girl that wants to play, but you do not have enough to make our 75% rule, so therefore you are going to have to pay all these fees. No different than if you have a team made up of 100% of Baytown kids. To me, that has been one of the hang ups of what is fair and not fair. Once you get to upper end divisions, you have a hard time making true recreational definitions.”

Councilman Patterson commented, “All we are talking about is Soccer because the other leagues do not seem to have that problem.”

Mayor Mouton asked, “Are we trying to preserve this for Deer Park kids first?”

Councilman Patterson commented, “We do not want kids from Katy playing in our leagues. When they fill out the forms, they enter where they live. We do not have the resources to validate every kid that enters the league. If they put a Deer Park address, we should test check a few of those.”

Mr. Stokes commented, “In my mind, what was worked out was very fair. There should be some number and they told Quest to work towards that without charging the fees for now. I thought that was a fair resolution.”

Councilman Harrison commented, “For recreational teams only, in the soccer agreement it states, teams must be drafted each season with no more than 40% of team participants being able to be held by the team. Not real sure what that means.”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “I think what they are trying to say is, you can’t hold on to the entire team just in case you win the league. It could look like a select team because you are making that choice to keep all those players on the team.”

Mayor Mouton asked, “From one year to the next or in that same season?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “From one year to the next.”

Mayor Mouton asked, “If they are not redrafting, they are still able to keep 40% of their kids?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Yes.”

Councilman Harrison asked, “Underneath the caption of the definitions, at least 50% of the teams participating in the tournaments are recreational teams as defined, or the organization is hosting the advanced qualifying recreational league tournament. That whole definition is ambiguous.”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Correct. That is one of the problems.”

Mr. Sandberg continued discussion about the common areas subject to misinterpretation. Most of the topics which have been contested are Documentation, Maintenance, Select Teams, 3<sup>rd</sup> Party usage and locking the fields.

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "This is working better with baseball and softball, not with soccer?"

Mr. Haight responded, "Yes, baseball and softball have progressed very well. Soccer is getting streamlined and hopefully will get resolved."

Mr. Jackson discussed certain situations pertaining to tournament teams and the maintenance needed on the fields due to the tournament teams and their games.

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "How do you solve that problem?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Better communication and the schedules."

Mr. Zuniga commented, "Additionally, one of the issues is, the majority of the leagues maintenance is done by volunteers. They do a great job. However, sometimes the volunteers are not properly trained or they are only focused on their fields. It is just how the work is divided out. Sometimes we might have issues on one field and not on another."

Mr. Sandberg commented, "The biggest concern is when they start doing the work and there might be a lack of training, which may cause safety issues."

Mr. Sandberg continued highlighting the components under the topics of Maintenance and Select Teams within an agreement.

Ms. Keifer commented, "There is a misconception pertaining to select teams holding their own tournaments. We are really talking about a big organization like USAAA or Nations. These are people that are running the whole state of Texas that are coming here and finding the ballparks to hold the tournaments. It is not our local select teams that are getting together trying to host the tournaments, those are just daddies coaching. It is a big organization hosting the tournaments."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Do we have any organizations holding tournaments in Deer Park?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Right now, there are many huge tournaments at the Field of Dreams. What will happen is, there will be additional teams and that is when we get the call with them asking if they can use our fields at the last minute. We try to hustle to make sure there are no safety issues and to make Pony Baseball look good to be able to meet their demands."

Councilman Patterson asked, "Do they pay us to use our fields?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "They pay the organization."

Mayor Mouton asked, "In all fairness, this is just not a soccer issue?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "No".

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "How can baseball make this better? Can we just turn these people down?"

Mayor Mouton asked, "How old is that complex? How long has it been opened? We are already having issues of the field being used too much?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Absolutely."

Councilwoman Garrison commented, "I say we not use the field as much. I don't know what that is going to take, but we do not want our fields destroyed. If that makes us looks bad, I'm sorry. Maybe it makes us look like we have so many fields and we want to take care of our kids first."

Mayor Mouton commented, "Might need to be a priority set of minimum amount of play and make sure we stay within certain parameters."

Councilman Patterson asked, "Is the Minchen Field being overplayed by teams from Baseball USA or Field of Dreams?"

Mr. Haight responded, "I will say that select did have some tournaments there. The 14 months it took to build Spencerview, we had to combine our whole league on that field. The younger kids their base path is 50 feet that is in the grass. When they travel from first to second base and they slide, that grass gets torn up. I would rather the Coaches not do anything at all for those fields than let them prep the field."

Councilwoman Garrison, "Can you stop the Coaches from doing that?"

Mr. Haight responded, "Yes, I can."

Mr. Sandberg responded, "It is very difficult to regulate. It takes volunteers to come there everyday. Mr. Haight could get on them."

Mayor Mouton commented, "It is not the same person doing it for ten years. It is a different person doing it every week, or every month, or every year."

Councilman Patterson commented, “The problem is not coming from the fact that we had so many select teams, but that we consolidate play on the fields.”

Mr. Sandberg commented, “In the very beginning, when the contracts are due and we are provided a schedule, we would put in there lapse time so we can work on those fields. In the contracts, they are not supposed to play on those fields in November and December, so we can do maintenance on those fields.”

Councilwoman Garrison asked, “Have they been playing during those times?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Yes. It was mentioned to the President.”

Mr. Stokes commented, “We are talking about absolutely closing the fields for two or three months. That has got to be reconciled with what Lacy said earlier.”

Ms. Stole commented, “If we can’t get them to communicate back to us on when fields are available, ultimately they will find somewhere else to play.”

Councilman Harrison asked, “Technically, they aren’t supposed to modify anything without permission?”

Mr. Haight responded, “All those fields were built at Pony’s specifications. They have different base paths and pitching distances, so they are not supposed to do that. In this case, we had no choice but to move it in the grass because it was the only place to play for the younger kids.”

Councilman Harrison asked, “So we knew that was going to happen?”

Mr. Haight responded, “We did, but I did not envision the extent that the field got.”

Mr. Sandberg continued speaking on the 3<sup>rd</sup> party usage.

Councilman Patterson asked, “How much 3<sup>rd</sup> party usage do we have?”

Ms. Stole responded, “Every week we have people calling that want to rent a facility. Most of the time I send them to the Adult Softball Complex because that is space I can see and not have to contact anyone else. I can look at my own calendar and be able to tell if we have space or not. If we do not have space at that point, I will let them know we have space at another complex.”

Councilman Patterson asked, “How much of the 3<sup>rd</sup> party usage overflows from Baseball USA or Field of Dreams?”

Ms. Stole answered, "Honestly, I cannot answer that. I do not know that. It is not a question that I ask. The one question I do ask upfront is if they are affiliated currently with Deer Park Youth Baseball or Deer Park Girls Softball. If they are, then I know they need to go to their League President. If they are not, then I will let them know of the facilities available and how they can be accommodated. Most of the time it is at the Adult Complex, where fields are accommodating to all levels."

Councilman Patterson asked, "Are these tournaments or just single games?"

Ms. Stole responded, "It usually is a two day event. Also, a lot of practices. They will call for two hours at time. We just modified that agreement in the last year where we can accommodate more people at once. They can also rent for longer periods of time as well."

Mr. Sandberg began the discussion of the One Size Fits All theory and practice. This was considered in the original concept. The idea was to integrate a recreational component that could meet all the demands. It was learned that was not the case.

Mr. Sandberg commented, "One size does not fit all. We want to have more sports specific agreements to better accommodate explicit needs of each sports organization within the community."

Councilman Patterson asked, "We do not currently have sports specific agreements?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "There is one agreement, with the same verbiage and all read the same way. The current soccer situation that we have, there are multiple leagues requesting recognition. We have limited facilities to accommodate the demands. Most of the demands are to practice on the fields with lights. Majority of these programs now are year round."

Mr. Sandberg continued discussion of the Staff Recommendations. The items Staff recommend for consideration are sports specific agreements, flat fee for select teams to include flat fee for light usage, recreation and nonrecreation definition, require a recreational play component and recommendation for RFP for soccer.

Mr. Sandberg commented, "Three years ago, for baseball, we put out a request for a proposal. We got together and put in the agreements the components we wanted to see. We could do the same thing for soccer. We could get Council, the Commission and Staff together to come up with the specific components the soccer organization can provide to the Community. We can let them present that to us. That is my recommendation."

Councilman Patterson asked, "Are you saying it could change from year to year?"

Mayor Mouton commented, "At one time, there were three baseball leagues. The RFP was intended to unify the league that would allow all play under one umbrella. This is for soccer only."

Mr. Sandberg continued with the items Staff recommends for consideration. The football group does not have a current agreement. It is recommended to set one into place and to have Coaches go through TAAF training for code of conduct.

Mayor Mouton, "I think it should be a universal scenario that we have some kind of agreement."

Mayor Mouton commented, "Georgette made reference of the same exact scenario of soccer having an RFP to address the equation of having a unified league or one league in Deer Park and the analogy that we might need to look at that for football."

Councilman Patterson, "Who are we setting the agreements with?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "The Tigers, the Rams and the Seminoles."

Councilman Patterson asked, "So are we going to require them to play under TIFI or some other organization? Are you asking for an agreement with each team?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "We would like too, that is our recommendation. We would like for all the Coaches to go through training for Code of Conduct. We would like to include in the agreement that if you get kicked out of a game, Coaching privileges to be taken away. The City will pay for that training."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "Is all of this going to come back to us?"

Mayor Mouton commented, "We are going to try to end the meeting tonight with some kind of an objective."

Mr. Stokes commented, "There is not really an ability, in a rare circumstance, in the City to override the league. An example, the Fireballs were kicked off the field after they were promised they were able to use. A select team used that field instead. By definition, they are not a recognized organization. One could argue, it was very beneficial for a league to kick the Fireballs off because in place, there was an organization paying to use the fields, which makes money for the league and offsets the recreational cost. I think, morally and ethically, that was not the right thing to do. Just as the school district has said to us, in our agreement, if they ever need use of a school facility, the City will not take precedence over the school. I think in every one of our agreements, there should be an insert that if we ever need or want to use a City



facility and the City wants to put its foot down, in a rare circumstance, we should be able to do that. The Fireballs brought attention to that.”

Mayor Mouton commented, “The City should reserve the right in any scenario. The City should always have the final right. Right now, there is much discussion in regards to the rights in an agreement.”

Ms. Bedford commented, “That was a different situation. It was a new guy and he didn’t know. It got taken care. It wasn’t something we were being mean about.”

Mayor Mouton commented, “That should have never have happened.”

Mr. Haight responded, “For the record, I agree.”

Mayor Mouton commented, “I would like to hear some thoughts of some of these areas of misinterpretations.”

Ms. Keifer commented, “I don’t know if the City wants to get into running all these sports organizations. I do understand why the football leagues came to you to be recognized, so they wouldn’t have to pay the high fees. Or the school district would charge them since it is a school facility. For soccer, if I live in Baytown, I don’t want to come every single night of the week to Deer Park just for my child to play in a recreational league. Most people are going to stay where they live. For some reason, interest in soccer has gone down in Deer Park. Years ago, we used to cover every field in Deer Park with soccer on Labor Day. There wasn’t a piece of land anywhere not having a soccer game. I understand they are trying to build that back up. We haven’t had a strong recreational soccer league in a long time. I understand why the other team was trying to gear that, and understand high school coaches, of course, wanting any help they can get and to make it affordable.”

Mayor Mouton commented, “I appreciate that point. I have had some personal issues in regards to being in the middle of this equation and asking do they really want government defining these detailed scenarios. Is it basically trying to clear up disagreements or one using a certain clause in the agreement to their advantage? I caution some, that we should be careful how far we go, especially from this side of the bench. I personally do not want to be in the business of Pony Baseball. I think it is a better run situation when parents and volunteers are involved and they are doing what is best for the kids. Again, this goes back to my statement of the percentage. We should adhere to some kind of premise of an intent, more than what percentage and if you are not complying with the contract. Then someone will verbally use it against you that you are not complying with the contract. We have had statements like that. Who is enforcing that?”

Mr. Haight commented, "I think this meeting is a good. Things have been vague, at best, in the past. I am looking forward to seeing what comes out of all of this. On the misinterpretations, I do believe communication is a factor. If there was more of a structured way of scheduling and the communication between the leagues and the City that would definitely solve about 40% of the problems."

Mayor Mouton asked, "In your words, tell me how we can make it better?"

Mr. Haight responded, "Baseball is a structured season. We have a website with all the games listed. At any time, anyone can pull it up to see it, and is usually updated to keep parents informed. In the beginning of the year, when we put these contracts together, we do not know how many teams we have until February, depending on registration. Then we could start putting how many teams to be able to put together the schedules of how many fields and how many nights to conduct baseball. With that, we should be able to give that schedule to the City. Documentation needs to be put in place and adhered to. Maintenance, league versus City, I think once you iron out the first part, it might be softer. Capital projects and the timing of the capital projects will iron itself out once we put together the list of in lieu of. Our frustration is locking the fields. We mark the fields, we rake the fields and we are ready to play games on those fields. Those are the people that will be playing that night recreationally. Then a select team will want to practice on the field and we have to re rake it and re chalk it. What currently happens is, a select team use those fields every night and do not pay any fees. There are teams that do pay. There is traffic on the fields no matter what and there have literally been fist fights on who has the field that night. We are trying to iron that out and you all can help us iron that out too. The select teams are probably the biggest hurdle as far as who gets the field when. A flat fee for lights would destroy most of baseball, if we had to pay that fee. It would make it to where we financially couldn't pay that fee. We try to keep the registration fees low as possible. There are some things to iron out as far as what is going to be charged to the league and what is not."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Is a fee the answer to the issue? What is the issue?"

Mr. Haight responded, "When select teams come in and pay the organization, there is no tracking of what is given to the City."

Mayor Mouton asked, "So is control the issue over fees?"

Mr. Haight responded, "Yes, control of the fields."

Mayor Mouton commented, "Based on what I understand, the fees structure was put in place more for control versus generating revenue. That point was already made. Do we need these fees to maintain the fields? I do not think the fees make it back to our general fund and we

have a budget that covers the maintenance for the fees. It really isn't the fees that are important, it's about control."

Mr. Haight responded, "Correct. The fees that are currently in the contract, they are the best prices in town. Like you say, it is about control of the field. Otherwise, it is going to get overrun by teams just coming in there on their own because it is a public park."

Mayor Mouton commented, "Let's narrow it down to three or four points."

Mr. Sandberg responded with some questions to Council on what they would like to see in the agreements.

Mayor Mouton responded, "Let's discuss the recreational component and what is the intent?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "The recreational component, we felt, would bring in more kids in this community because we felt that the select teams were coming from the outside. There was opportunity for more kids to play. The important thing is to get the most number of kids participating and utilizing our fields."

Mr. Stokes commented, "You could keep a competitive balance within your pool."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Someone define what is "recreational" and what is not?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Recreational does not require you try out for teams or have a process of a draft. Our youth programs are run that way."

Ms. Stole commented, "In recreation basketball, we tell our parents and our coaches that it is done by a blind draft. It does not matter how many years they have played, how experienced or the skill level. All we do is take the birthday and your age as of September 1<sup>st</sup> of that year, then you are qualified into an age division, 8U, 10U and 12U, girls or boys. A blind draft means I get a list of names and ages, I do not know who is who. I do it because I do not have child in the program and I don't coach a team in the program."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Do coaches come in and draft off of that board?"

Ms. Stole responded, "The coach gets to keep his own kid and the Assistant Coach gets to keep his kids as well. So every team currently starts with two kids and that is guaranteed. Then the Head Coach gets to pick two additional players through a snake draft. The Coach comes in and picks a number. We take those numbers and those coaches get to choose a kid off the draft list, which includes every kid registered by the deadline. Again, there are no tryouts or a skills test. It is a balance of competitiveness and recreation. My goal is that every kid gets to play no matter the skill level. Parks and Recreation also has an underlining goal of standing by recreation as opposed to competition."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Does the City really want to be defining what is recreational and what is not recreational?"

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "Why can't we make them all recreational?"

Ms. Keifer commented, "I think as long as we are offering something for the citizens of Deer Park, as a parent, we always had the option that if they want to play in the league or they have better skills and want to pursue something more competitive. At least Deer Park has always offered league play in baseball and softball."

Mayor Mouton asked, "League play is more specific to recreational play?"

Ms. Redwine commented, "As a teacher, our kids love the City Basketball Program. I love that it is recreational. The elementary age and junior high age school kids too. They learned a lot and it was parent driven. It is good. It is for the City. It is an awesome program. I am also for select ball. I think we all know, back in our day you lived for high school sports. Now times are changing, it is not just recreational for every kid. I think what is available for some of them is what is best for them. I think they should be able to have that avenue. I also think we ought to provide that opportunity for select ball for some kids if they want to play."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "What are we going to do about soccer? This whole thing started because of soccer."

Mayor Mouton asked, "What is recreational and is the new league complying?"

Ms. Ford responded, "Anyone can sign up, you pay the fee and get selected to be on a team."

Ms. Stole commented, "The TAAF Organization is what we mirror in basketball. A lot of recreational components would consist of parent or volunteer coaches, not paid. The select teams usually a trainer or a coach that is not a volunteer parent or coach. The other component being that every child gets to play regardless of their skill. One thing different from Pony Baseball is we only do that draft pick with two kids. The other remaining six players of that team made up of ten players, is drafting by me by a number pulled out of a hat. I do not know who is who and neither do the coaches. The coaches know they are going to get four players which is more than half of their starting squad and they are going to do the best they can do with that."

Councilman Patterson asked, "Is that how you want to make Pony League?"

Ms. Stole responded, "No."

Councilman Patterson commented, "To me, Pony League is recreational. They have rules that every kid has to play."

Ms. Stole responded, "They do have parent coaches, a draft process and not paying extra for trainers coming through. From what I read, that does constitute as a recreational league."

Councilman Martin asked, "Sounds like there are multiple definitions of recreation, so why should we have to define that?"

Mayor Mouton asked, "Do we have to define that with every league and do we have to put it in the contract to make sure they comply with what we think it ought to be? Or should we input some kind of component that we are preserving the integrity of every kid that wants to play in Deer Park can play and leave it up to the leagues to define what that is?"

Mr. Haight responded, "I think the recreational component needs to be added, so every kid can play in Deer Park that signs up."

Councilman Patterson commented, "Recreational League and Select League needs to be separate."

Ms. Redwine commented, "Let me say this about Select teams, Spikes and Seminole Coaches are not paid. No one is paid on those two teams."

Mayor Mouton asked, "The only team referred to getting paid is Soccer. If people wanted to put their kids in select and the coaches were getting paid but the parents are willing to pay an amount of money shouldn't they be able to? Do we want to define that?"

Ms. Redwine responded, "No."

Councilman Martin asked, "Are there any leagues now, that if a Deer Park person signed up, were told no?"

Ms. Redwine commented, "Even the two soccer leagues now, you pick the one you want to play for and just pay the fees."

Councilman Martin, "Why do we need a component that says it is recreational."

Ms. Ford commented, "Our Mission Statement says that."

Mr. Sandberg commented, "I know if I was a High School Coach and I was looking at the Youth Leagues in the Deer Park Community, I would want as many kids in resources to be able to tap into when they come into High School. If you separate them, all the recreation kids are gone and you will only have a select few. I think we are stronger when we group them all together in play."

Councilman Patterson commented, "I thought that is what we did. If I want to put my child in that select team, which would be fine, but if they should be able to play in the recreational league if they want. I do not understand why we can't have agreements for both."

Mr. Haight commented, "I want it to be in the forefront that all Deer Park kids play that sign up."

Mr. Stokes asked, "I think we have to some way define it. You don't define it and then you say no one pays any fees, what are we going to do with all these select teams that want to use the fields?"

Mayor Mouton commented, "Most of the select play right now is in baseball."

Mayor Mouton asked, "What is the basis of the scenario, in soccer, when you get above a certain age and there is not a recreational league?"

Mr. Stokes responded, "In Soccer, when you get above a certain age, there are not enough kids to form a recreational pool."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Does that mean we want to define them as select and we want to charge them extra to play?"

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "The Coaches are being paid for the select team in soccer?"

Mayor Mouton responded, "The Quest League, they are. There might even be some component that the coaches in the new league being paid, maybe not as much."

Mr. Sandberg commented, "Currently in the contract, if they are being paid, it is considered select."

Mayor Mouton commented, "Then it invokes an additional cost factor."

Ms. Kiefer commented, "It does not cost more to the City, just to the parents."

Councilman Martin commented, "Some select teams do pay the coach and other select team just happen to have a great coach with a son on the team and you don't pay them."

Councilman Harrison asked, "Is Quest select or recreational?"

Mr. Stokes responded, "Quest is principally fifth grade and down. Four year olds through fourth or fifth grade and for the most part, they are recreational. They are not paid coaches and every kid gets to play. Once you get above 5<sup>th</sup> grade into the middle school age, they do not have the number of kids wanting to play. The only choice is to pay \$200.00 a month to be on a select travel team."

Mayor Mouton, commented, "Right now it cost more to play under the current understanding."

Mr. Stokes commented, "There are other recreational definitions about what percentage you play at home versus away. There are other components besides the percentages in Deer Park and paying coaches. There are four or five other main components. Like my daughter's team, that is barely 60% of Deer Park kids, they have to go somewhere else to play. That is another component of the current recreational definition."

Ms. Kiefer commented, "It happens in other sports too. As they get older, they are not playing recreational league. If the parents have chosen to pay for the select team or travel ball, there is no cost for the City, the parents are paying the fees."

Mr. Stokes commented, "My son is on the soccer league, for example, they play the better kids. They can do whatever they want and are not subject to City agreement. They play in Rosenberg and it is low cost and everyone gets to play somewhere, but the better ones get to play. It really is no different than my daughter's team except for the fees. That is a blurred definition. Everyone thinks of the new league as recreational because all the kids do get to play, but they do group the top kids and then they go somewhere else, is that still recreational or not?"

Councilman Martin asked, "When the soccer league formed, was that always planned?"

Mr. Stokes responded, "That was the way it was described to Gary, Charlie and I in May."

Ms. Keifer commented, "You as the parent, have that choice to make if you want to pay the bill or not."

Mr. Stokes commented, "I am just saying they would not meet our current definition."

Mayor Mouton asked, "How are we going to come up with an answer or come up with the best practices or come up with some options where we can sit down and have a follow up debate at some point? I know we have talked about it for a while, the truth is I just want every kid in Deer Park that wants to play to have an opportunity to play. I think it needs to fair but in the same instance I don't feel we should necessarily define some of these things. If the parents want to pay and put them in certain programs, I don't know if we should charge them extra just because they don't fit a recreational component if that is the only option they have available."

Ms. Ford commented, "In baseball, we probably have 20 high school kids play on 40 select teams that cannot use our fields. We have to somehow figure out how to prioritize and who do we pick to use our fields."

Mayor Mouton commented, "I couldn't agree more. It goes back to the field usage. I know right we are trying to build complexes, none of this is going to be totally solved, but in a year

or two these complexes will be done. We are going to have to set parameters of how much play we want, reserve the majority of that usage for Deer Park kids. It does not matter what you call it, I just want Deer Park kids to play, because this is Deer Park tax dollars. How do we get to that and be fair and equitable where we don't have so many disagreements. I do not want the City to be setting fees. I think controlling the lights should be more important than adding a fee that makes it unaffordable. When the bay structure of how we run this government is paying for the lights, that is what the taxpayers want."

Mr. Stokes gave suggestions of different options on how to handle another meeting including Council as a whole group or working as a smaller group.

Mayor Mouton commented, "I want the fairest, honest, best practices for our Community. Without any political debate or arguments."

Councilman Patterson commented, "We have a Parks Commission and a Staff that have studied this. I would look to them to come back with what they propose based on what their recommendations are addressing recreational, select and usage of fields."

Mr. Sandberg commented, "I would also like to recommend you all consider the RFP on the soccer groups."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Have we done an RFP before?"

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Yes, with baseball."

Mayor Mouton commented, "This whole landscape of sports and activities is evolving so fast. Let's get to the cutting edge of where we need to be and all agree we may not get it perfect in the next year and might take a couple of shots."

Mr. Stokes commented, "I agree wholeheartedly with what Charlie said of the RFP, but let's be realistic of the time frame. In an ideal world, at the end of October, they are seeing agreements and making recommendations for you to adopt in December to go into effect January 1<sup>st</sup>. There is no way that we are going to be able to totally decide what we want agreements to look like. Once we get that figured out, move on to whoever is going to manage soccer and then go through a fair process, we can get after it. It is not going to be done by January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Councilman Patterson asked, "Can we make a decision to operate on the existing agreements until we get this figured out? I don't want to worry about putting out agreements and coming up in two months. Let's just live with what we have until we figure out what we want to do."

Mayor Mouton commented, "If we have some issues in these particular agreements that are sports specific, do we have to leave them in there and make them bones of contention? Can we



remove some and simplify and agree on some of them now knowing that this is going to be a never ending evolving process that we are going to have to update as needed. I don't want to complicate it because we are already hitting deadlines. I do not want it to be the middle of next summer and half of these leagues are still arguing and it leaving an open political debate in our Community. We need these agreements to be set in stone. It is a mutual understanding more so than it is suing someone if we do not like everything. That gives up some short term and long term scenarios. We need to get these contracts done which means if we do not have time to change them, we can just get them sent in and get some agreements in place to get all this done before the end of the year, just to simplify it."

Mr. Stokes asked, "Are you saying to tell them you are going to have it the next calendar year?"

Mayor Mouton responded, "We are not going to have all this done by the end of this year."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "What about the usage? Can that be corrected within the current contract?"

Mayor Mouton commented, "It might fix itself for baseball. Some of these complexes are going off line and we are about to stick them in the Adult League. Until we get the soccer complex done, the debate going on in the Community right now is that we do not have enough green space. Fortunately, just in the last few weeks, the school district has stepped up in making sure that their needs are met for at least the next year and a half."

Councilwoman Garrison commented, "I am talking about one point that was made earlier of the Select teams using the fields so much and that being part of the problem. Of course, I know that is something you will be able to address and maybe we can't do anything about it right now but it will need to be addressed."

Councilman Patterson asked, "Select teams are here using our fields and if they have not come through the Organization to use the fields, then they should be kicked off the fields. That is how I feel."

Mr. Haight responded, "I agree wholeheartedly, but it is hard when you can't lock the field and it is a public park."

Councilman Patterson asked, "Are these select teams from Deer Park or out of the area?"

Mr. Haight responded, "There are many from Deer Park, but you never really know where they are from."

Mayor Mouton asked, "What are some of our objectives?"

Mr. Stokes commented, "I would say it go to the Parks and Recreation Commission to start working on recommendations on revised agreements with Staff. I don't know if they will be able to get this done by January 1<sup>st</sup> or not. It is a lot of work with the holidays. Assuming that will go a few months into the new year and then the whole soccer RFP issue too. I would ration then, not January 1<sup>st</sup> and giving everyone another year while this is being studied. Maybe it could lapse over until it is figured out."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Can we work with a short list of items that can be dealt with between now and January 1<sup>st</sup>?"

Mr. Stokes responded, "They need to have a signed agreement and you have to have it all worked out."

Mayor Mouton asked, "So what are we proposing to do?"

Councilman Patterson asked, "We do have signed agreements now. Is there any way to let those agreements continue with modifications if need be to specific problem areas that are occurring right now?"

Mr. Stokes commented, "Getting to those specific problem areas while also covering the wholistic changes that we talked about today."

Mayor Mouton commented, "I don't think it should be, it might take six months to a year to work out."

Councilman Patterson commented, "From your conversation, I didn't think you understood that."

Mr. Stokes commented, "I thought what you were saying because it is not going to be done, go ahead and sign a brand new agreement."

Mayor Mouton asked, "Would you extend the current one or sign a new one?"

Mr. Stokes responded, "When you say extend, do you mean just let the current one keep going until they change or sign new ones?"

Mayor Mouton asked, "How could we do it if we don't handle it that way?"

Mr. Sandberg commented, "We could, go with the current agreements and add an addendum for the contract and we can continue to go on. The only thing that won't be cleaned up is the RFP for soccer because there are two groups. The one thing that will come out of this is that it will be more sports specific."

Mayor Mouton commented, “For the record, I really appreciate your work. There has been a lot of things that have been said, but I think we are doing a lot of good here. Let’s work on these issues to make it better for the Community and for the future of the kids. I appreciate Council’s work on this tonight knowing we have a lot more work. The end results is we will have some really nice complexes in the next few years and sports agreements to match them.”

3. ADJOURN – Mayor Mouton adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

---

Shannon Bennett, TRMC  
City Secretary

---

Jerry Mouton  
Mayor

---

Glenda Jo Keifer, Chairman  
Parks & Recreation Commission