



MEETING MINUTES
LAWTON YOUTH SPORTS TRUST AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
LAWTON CITY HALL – 212 SW 9th STREET, LAWTON, OK
3rd FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2024 – 2:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL:

Chairman Henry called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM in the 3rd floor conference room of Lawton City Hall. Notice of meeting and agenda were posted on the City of Lawton website as required by law.

PRESENT: Brian Henry, Carey Monroe, Steve Coleman, Albert Johnson*, Kelly Harris**, Krista Ratliff, Mike Cowan, Hossein Moini, Randy Warren***

ABSENT:

*Johnson arrived at 2:03 PM

**Harris arrived at 2:10 PM

***Warren left at 2:42 PM

ALSO PRESENT: Kobe Humble, Deputy City Clerk; Ashton Wall, City Clerk's Office; Eric Swansen, SW Ledger; Caitlin Gatlin, Communications/Marketing Director; Tim Wilson, City Attorney's Office; Kim McConnell, Lawton Constitution; Mitchell Dooley, Parks & Rec. Deputy Director; John Wack, ESM; Matt Elliott, ESM; Mandy Johnson, Native Naturals

~Started with Business Item A.

A. Receive a presentation from Mandy Johnson with Native Naturals regarding \$600.00 player scholarship to Play On and take action as deemed necessary.

Chairman Henry stated that there is no action we must take on this item since the donation is not coming to the Authority.

He said that John Wack's group has the 501C3, Play On. The Authority now has the first donation to our general ledger under Play On for Lawton to provide scholarships to participants that may not be able to afford the

"The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48-hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."

entry fee. This is a way that people can access funds donated right here in our community, so that they can play in the league which is a fantastic deal.

Chairman Henry introduced Mandy Johnson with Native Naturals and gave a little background on the event where the scholarship was awarded.

Johnson mentioned that she owns Fierce Fitness, Lawton's only women's only training facility. She has been the host of Native Naturals, a natural body building competition, for five years. She stated that every year they choose a local charity to donate some of the funds to. This year, they decided to donate to Play On.

Chairman Henry mentioned that the donation was made during the event. He expressed his enthusiasm about this first donation aimed at facilitating the ability to let kids play who can't afford to.

Johnson expressed profound honor in being the first donor.

II. REPORTS:

A. Programs Committee – Receive a report from Moini regarding the activities of the Program Committee.

No reports, at this time.

B. Facilities Committee – Receive a report from Chairman Henry regarding the activities of the Facilities Committee.

Chairman Henry provided a report on a visit to the Young Family Athletic Center in Norman, Oklahoma. Photographs of the facility can be obtained by request at the City Clerk's office.

C. Parks & Recreation – Receive a report from the City of Lawton Parks & Rec. Division.

No reports, at this time.

D. Eastern Sports Management – Receive a report from Eastern Sports Management.

This item was discussed later in the meeting.

"The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48-hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."

E. Finance Report – Consider approving the financial statement(s) from Eastern Sports Management.

Chairman Henry reminded the Authority that financial reports for the Lawton Youth Sports Authority are conducted quarterly due to the limited level of activity.

Chairman Henry presented the financial statement from Eastern Sports Management for May 2024, which is available upon request at the City Clerk's office.

Ratliff inquired about exploring trade opportunities for league rentals, suggesting that getting Cameron to advertise at our events could be beneficial in exchange, as these events attract prospective students.

Chairman Henry expressed willingness to discuss the possibility with the President of Cameron University.

Motion by Ratliff, ***Second*** by Warren, to approve the financial statement(s) from Eastern Sports Management. **AYE:** Henry, Johnson, Moini, Monroe, Cowan, Ratliff, Warren, Coleman, Harris. **NAY:** None. ***Motion Passed unanimously.***

III. BUSINESS ITEMS:

A. Receive a presentation from Mandy Johnson with Native Naturals regarding \$600.00 player scholarship to Play On and take action as deemed necessary.

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

B. Consider approving an engagement letter with Hatch, Croke, and Associates for accounting services.

Chairman Henry noted that there is no difference compared to the agreement from the previous year. They charge a total fee per hour at a discounted rate, which is why it is preferred to handle the financials quarterly, given there are usually only two transactions per month. This frequency will change as progress is made with closing on the land, initiating building construction, and related activities.

Motion by Warren, ***Second*** by Monroe, to approve an engagement letter with Hatch, Croke, and Associates for accounting services. **AYE:** Johnson, Moini, Monroe, Cowan, Ratliff, Warren, Coleman, Harris, Henry. **NAY:** None. ***Motion Passed unanimously.***

"The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48-hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."

C. Consider amending the scope of services with Red River Lawn and Landscaping and approving a contract.

Chairman Henry apologized for the omission of this information in the packet that was distributed before the meeting.

Chairman Henry reminded the Authority that Red River Lawn and Landscaping was awarded the RFP last year to manage all mowing services for the facilities utilized. Nine requests for proposals were sent out, resulting in two proposals received, and three respondents indicating they were unable to undertake the volume of work required. Red River was \$60,000 less than the next bidder last year.

Chairman Henry mentioned that the fields look fantastic.

Chairman Henry pointed out that according to the agreement, the scope includes mowing all areas inside the fences, which is generally straightforward in most locations. However, in Ahlschlager Park, the boundaries are not as clearly defined. He conveyed that coordinating schedules for the City of Lawton's mowing crew to handle the other areas has been challenging. Red River takes pride in their work and insists on the area outside the fence to be mowed when they mow, to maintain a seamless appearance during games and events. Other areas that have been somewhat uncertain are the entrance and seating areas. As a result of these considerations, we are requesting to amend their scope of work to include mowing 15 feet outside the fence.

Chairman Henry provided further details on these areas by reviewing the photos included in the agenda packet. Copies of the photos can be obtained by requesting them from the City Clerk's Office.

Chairman Henry pointed out that this will be additional time and cost but, they will be spraying for weeds and maintaining the area around the bleachers as well. This work is separate from the contract with Lawton Termite and Pest Control, which handles weed control and fertilization.

Chairman Henry mentioned the current amount paid per year is \$41,250. With the proposed amendment, it would increase to \$52,800. This amount is still \$56,000 below the previous second bidder. Again, this includes the mowing, edging, and spraying of weeds in the seating areas.

Ratliff inquired whether the other proposal will be considered.

"The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48-hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."

Chairman Henry clarified that there is another proposal available for consideration, which includes two additional scalp mowing sessions. After discussing with Matt from ESM, it would be beneficial but not essential. Our mowing schedule runs from March 1st to November 11th, extending beyond the growing season. Therefore, Chairman Henry recommended that the Authority decline the other proposal.

Ratliff suggested that she would prefer if they included at least one scalp mowing session considering the additional \$52,000 cost.

Chairman Henry clarified that Red River already includes one scalp mowing session, whereas the other proposal included an additional two scalp mowing sessions.

Motion by Johnson, ***Second*** by Monroe, to approve amending the scope of services with Red River Lawn and Landscaping and approving a contract. **AYE:** Moini, Monroe, Cowan, Ratliff, Warren, Coleman, Harris, Henry, Johnson. **NAY:** None. ***Motion Passed unanimously.***

Chairman Henry noted that this contract will be effective starting July 1, 2024. He also mentioned that the maintenance budget has already been increased, so the funds are already allocated for this purpose.

~Went back to Item II. D

D. Eastern Sports Management – Receive a report from Eastern Sports Management.

Elliott reported that there isn't a lot of news on the programming side. We are currently fully engaged in summer league registrations, with a total of 314 registrations in baseball and softball. Last summer, we had 135 registrations, so there is a significant increase in numbers, and they are continuing to rise. He mentioned that right now, we're approaching triple the participation compared to last summer, and we expect this number to continue rising. Phone calls are still coming in, and technically, registration ends this coming Sunday. However, as usual, the end date tends to be extended due to late registrations.

Chairman Henry posed the theoretical concern that with all those extensions, we may not recognize all the income immediately on ESM's balance sheet.

Elliott confirmed, that is correct.

"The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48-hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."

Elliott mentioned that they are actively preparing for the fall league. There have been no changes to the league offerings from last fall, which include flag football, tackle football, volleyball, baseball, and softball. While there are no new updates in this regard, the focus remains on fostering growth.

Chairman Henry sought clarification on whether there are now three seasons of baseball and softball: spring, summer, and fall.

Elliott stated, exactly. It's about creating a natural transition for those interested in these sports, ensuring they have the opportunity to participate at the recreational level across all three seasons.

Elliott mentioned that on the organizational side of things, he has some good news to share. He will be getting married in September, and coinciding with that, he and his fiancée are planning to move back home to Virginia in July. He stated that this will obviously affect the organizational standpoint of where we're at in Lawton.

Elliott stated that regarding the transitional plan, they have conducted interviews, extended an offer, and it has been accepted for the general manager position. Will Miller, formerly with the Lawton Soccer Club, successfully expanded the program from about 200 participants per season to nearly 1000 participants per season. He is actively involved in the community sports scene. He has accepted the offer to become the general manager, and he is scheduled to start on June 24th.

Elliott mentioned that as this transition unfolds and moves forward, he will remain closely involved and connected to everything. He will work directly with Miller throughout the year on all programming matters, overseeing the transition, and supporting his continued development.

Wack clarified further, stating that Elliott will remain with their company. Unrelated to his upcoming marriage, there happened to be a job opening in Virginia, and Elliott will be transitioning to that position. Wack also mentioned, it remains within Elliott's job description in our company to oversee Miller here in Lawton, at least for a year or two, ensuring that his experience, knowledge, connections—particularly regarding facilities, programs, and relationships with referees—are fully transferred over.

Wack noted that fortunately, Miller is from the community, so he already knows most of the people that Elliott knows. He also noted that because

"The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48-hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."

Elliott is remaining with Eastern Sports Management, he will continue to stay connected with Lawton.

Chairman Henry pointed out that Miller was part of the group that finished as a close second in the RFP process that took place for the sports management system.

Elliott noted that concurrent with the transition, ESM will also be opening a second position on the board, which will primarily oversee programs. He emphasized his desire for Miller to be actively involved in the selection process for this position and in building his team within the area. Shortly after Miller's official onboarding, we plan to commence the process of opening and conducting interviews for the position. Elliott expressed the objective is to recruit high-quality and experienced candidates.

Wack highlighted that the rationale behind creating this second position, which was decided upon prior to the announcement of Elliott's transition, stemmed from the program's success and the increasing volume of programming, which has surpassed the current organizational structure. Wack also stated that the primary role within Play Lawton requires being on call 24/7, which compromises work-life balance for anyone in that position. Therefore, we are seeking to expand our organizational structure by adding higher-level leadership to share the responsibilities and alleviate some of the workload of the current lead.

Coleman raised the question of whether ESM is focusing on selecting local applicants for the position, rather than individuals who would need to commute regularly.

Elliott affirmed this approach, noting that he was pleasantly surprised by the significant amount of local interest when the general manager position was posted.

Wack referenced the challenge of having to establish an operational business within a two-week timeframe. He noted that Elliott was readily available and had been with the company long enough to have an understanding of its processes, procedures, and most importantly, its culture. With Elliott being here nearing two years, we benefit from someone who is not only connected to the location but also comprehensively understands all internal operations of the company. Now, with four local individuals onboard, we have the advantage of having the best in both aspects.

"The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48-hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."

Chairman Henry conveyed his enthusiasm for the direction that ESM has chosen to pursue. On behalf of the Authority, Chairman Henry expressed appreciation to Elliott for his outstanding efforts and significant role in successfully launching Play Lawton.

Elliott mentioned that from a facility standpoint, they have prepared to purchase a trailer for hauling equipment. This will significantly enhance efficiency for our maintenance crew, allowing them to move equipment more effectively without the need for multiple trips between locations to retrieve and transport items all while managing the infields.

Elliott also mentioned that plans are underway to soon begin repairing fencing at all three parks: 38th, 17th and G, and East Side Park. Currently, the fencing shows signs of rusting or bending. While some sections remain functional, others are not. The deterioration affects both the appearance, and, from a safety perspective, there is concern about the potential for people to injure themselves on the rusted material.

Chairman Henry added that while the cost was below the threshold requiring competitive bidding, Elliott still pursued a bidding process for transparency and fairness. Initially, three local fence companies showed interest. However, similar to the mowing bid process, only one company provided a bid when it came time to submit numbers. Chairman Henry expressed confidence in the local company that was chosen to carry out the project.

D. Consider authorizing the Facilities Committee to release a Request for Qualifications for Design Consulting/Owner's Representation and negotiate contract terms with applicants for approval by the Authority.

Chairman Henry mentioned that this has been in progress for some time. A draft of the scope of work was included in the agenda packet provided to Authority members. Copies can be obtained by request from the City Clerk's Office.

Chairman Henry noted that he is aware of multiple parties interested in participating in the discussion. The plan is for the Facilities Committee to engage with interested and qualified parties, following a process similar to how we managed the programming RFP/RFQ process, which is the approach we intend to take for this as well. Chairman Henry referred to it as a draft because there may be feedback from qualified applicants that could prompt additions or changes. The Facilities Committee plans to present the finalized scope of work, contract, and pricing to the authority following the completion of discussions.

"The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48-hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."

Chairman Henry emphasized that the Authority does not have a full-time employee dedicated to managing this entire process. He acknowledged the complexity involved, particularly when dealing with taxpayer dollars and the associated requirements. With that in mind, the Facilities Committee's request is for authorization of this initiative and to present it back to the Authority for final approval.

Chairman Henry highlighted several reasons behind this initiative. The 2024 CIP vote is scheduled for August 27th, and the Lawton Youth Sports Authority has a key component within the CIP. In the original 2019 CIP, there was language indicating up to \$8 million allocated for the construction of the indoor facility. In the proposal for the 2024 CIP, the language no longer includes the "up to" provision, and instead, the Lawton Youth Sports Authority would be integrated into the parks and recreation component. Chairman Henry emphasized the significance this vote would have on the Authority.

Chairman Henry mentioned that the goal is to start this process simultaneously with the CIP vote, ensuring we can begin promptly. One idea is to structure it with clear stopping points in the work and costs, so that, if necessary, we can stop without being committed to a long-term, expensive proposal. This approach would enable us to proceed smoothly without needing multiple amendments as well.

Ratliff asked when the RFQ is released, should the Authority expect them to submit a price.

Chairman Henry clarified that initially, with the RFQ, the Authority is focused solely on qualifications. The price component will be addressed later, potentially with two or three proposals from multiple qualified candidates, allowing for price comparison at that stage.

Harris noted that the Council has observed a pattern where RFPs are issued with a specified budget, but the proposals returned often exceed that budget by 2-3 times. We have discovered is that many architects are compensated based on a percentage of the total project cost. Harris advised that when we reach that stage, we need to explore separating the planning phase from the construction phase and establish a fixed fee solely for the planning work, without it being tied to the construction costs.

Chairman Henry mentioned that while it's not impossible from an architect's standpoint, one idea is to negotiate and find the right professionals who can handle both construction and design aspects

"The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48-hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."

effectively. He stated that all construction work will be competitively bid on.

Ratliff asked if Chairman Henry is indicating that this project will fall under professional services.

Chairman Henry confirmed yes. Ideally, the winner of this RFQ would negotiate prices. It may involve requesting them to include pricing in their proposal, prompting them to seek estimates from architecture firms for tasks of this nature beforehand.

Motion by Moini, ***Second*** by Harris, to authorize the Facilities Committee to release a Request for Qualifications for Design Consulting/Owner's Representation and negotiate contract terms with applicants for approval by the Authority. **AYE:** Monroe, Cowan, Ratliff, Coleman, Harris, Henry, Johnson, Moini. **NAY:** None. ***Motion Passed unanimously.***

Chairman Henry mentioned that one thing asked of Elliott by the Facilities Committee is to develop a small-scale version of a master plan outlining the uses of facilities. He stated that Ahlschlager Park is leased by the City from the county and subleased to the Authority. The current contract for this arrangement expires in 2026. The Authority has complete control over East Side Park and McMahon Fields. We have received an invitation and likely need to finalize arrangements to utilize the newly turfed fields at the high school for football games in the fall.

Chairman Henry mentioned that what Elliott has been tasked providing a map outlining current and potential future playing locations and expansion points. He stated that this raises the question of whether there is a need for an extension of the lease for Ahlschlager Park. Chairman Henry noted that Elliott could get this done by July, before his move.

Chairman Henry mentioned that the next regularly scheduled meeting is on July 11th, but he will be out of the country. He expressed his desire to be present for the presentation of the master plan created by Elliott. Therefore, he requested that Authority members check their calendars to see availability for a meeting at 2:00 PM the following week. It was decided to reschedule the meeting originally set for July 11th to July 18th at 2:00 PM.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Johnson, ***Second*** by Monroe, to adjourn the June 13, 2024, meeting. **AYE:** Cowan, Ratliff, Coleman, Harris, Henry, Johnson, Moini, Monroe. **NAY:** None. ***Motion Passed unanimously.***

"The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48-hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."

There will be no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:05 PM.

"The City of Lawton encourages participation from all of its citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The City may waive the 48-hour rule if interpreters for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation."