

## **Southern Lehigh Turf Committee Meeting Notes 4.22.14**

Present: Harry Johnston, Rick Dreeves, Mark Evan, Bill Lycett, Bill Hayes. Todd Bergey, Kate Miller, Leah Christman, James Lindsay

Mr. Lycett explained why he asked the committee to be formed. How might we raise funds privately to create a turf facility? This may not be in the stadium- we need to determine a location. He explained that the track may limit space and we may need to do something else.

With our current Board, it is not felt that a turf field is the best investment of district revenue. Mr. Lycett explained sponsorship policy.

- How can we raise money privately?
- Should we create a foundation similar to SLEF?
- Turf is the first priority.
- Maybe families can contribute \$500- \$1000 over time

Mr. Lycett asked Kate Miller, Southern Lehigh Athletic Coordinator to explain what has been done to date.

In 2007-08 there was an initial meeting at MS w/ 30 people. Football paid for a conceptual design. Funding was discussed and on who would use the field. Things fell apart at that point.

Mr. Hayes- noted that any field would be the district's property and all teams would be assigned as with other facilities. There can be no entitlement.

Mrs. Miller offered to share drawings. Field Turf visited and took an image of space and limitations on space.

Leah Christman- suggested working through SLEF- they are already formed, there would be no additional cost, and their mission would allow. Kim Halloran is the current President. She cautioned that SLEF understand the turf committee is not expecting them to do the work, since they are already stretched with their current activities.

Rick Dreeves mentioned Field Hockey- might not get maximum space. Bill Hayes asked why so few people came to the meeting tonight? Mr. Lycett explained that some email got bounced back, but that it is a little concerning.

Mr. Dreeves asked how much money was needed. Mr. Lycett noted \$800,000 just for the field. Additional costs would include monthly grooming and additional needs

There was discussion on rumors that Olympus offered a field and the district rejected the offer. There was further discussion on the policies on sponsorship.

Mr. Lycett led a discussion of professional fundraising and possibilities for hiring someone.

Mr. Lindsay mentioned that he believes Upper Perkiomen is making money on their turf field. They put revenue in an account to renew the next field. Mr. Lindsay feels their experiences would be a great asset to us and that sports camps could raise money.

Mr. Hayes questioned revenue-making capacity with the competition with other schools that have turf.

Mr. Lycett noted that we want a field large enough to do districts and be able to rent out to others. This would provide practice in all weather.

Mrs. Miller asked if youth groups pay in Upper Perk? Mr. Lindsay responded "yes with a discount".

Mr. Johnston questioned what is happening at Hopewell regarding the new school and Mr. Lycett noted there would be no impact to this.

Mr. Lycett feels the faster the turf can get built, the better- so current students can benefit. Mr. Evans noted that low attendance at this meeting does not mean a lack of interest. Football has a booster meeting tonight.

Mr. Bergey explained that we must identify total costs and shared requirements from township with zoning, retention basins, conservation district /environmental studies, restrooms, lights, seating, etc.

There was a discussion on how the size drives the location. The current stadium could be least expensive because other facilities already exist.

At other schools, kids are on the track. Mr. Dreeves noted that he prefers it be located somewhere else.

Mr. Lycett mentioned looking at MS with small temporary bleachers, bathrooms, and a snack stand. This adds \$500,000. Mr. Hayes mentioned that we would not get districts to come with small bleachers.

Mr. Lycett was concerned that we may not get much corporate sponsorship.

Mr. Johnson noted that having Board members advocating is very positive.

Mr. Hayes explained that as Board member, he does not support using school funds. Mr. Johnson noted that turf is a 'nice' to have, but not a 'need' to have.

Mr. Dreeves asked if students would be involved in fundraising. This is a topic that needs to be discussed.

Lycett- does not anticipate students involved. Will need community members to finance and some corporate. No tax dollars other than maintenance costs.

Mr. Lycett agreed to research SLEF involvement, Altoona SD and other school projects sponsored by education foundations.

Mr. Johnston asked what the timeframe would be- possibility for fall 2015? Mr. Lycett noted that this was an aggressive goal, but possible.

Mrs. Miller suggested that the committee should get Booster leaders involved.

Mr. Hayes asked if the bad experience in past turn people off? Mr. Bergey does not think so- and noted that people worked behind scenes and against each other so it will be critical to get everyone on the same page.

Mr. Lycett-asked that everyone contact him for emails and if there are any problems.

Can we put a dome over the field?

Mr. Johnston mentioned that the community pool raised \$1 million fast, but they had no alternative. This is a 'want', not a need and that the alternative is not so bad.

Mr. Bergey recommend hiring professional fundraiser or it may die.

There was discussion regarding what Northern Lehigh did recently with turf.

Mr. Dreeves asked what is the life expectancy of the track? Mr. Lycett noted it would cost \$ 3.4 million to replace both.

Goals- Mr. Lycett will investigate working with SLEF and how other foundations have raised money, possibly Altoona or Chambersburg? Will also consider hiring professional fundraiser.

No next meeting yet set.

Adjourned about 9:15 PM