

**NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MEETING: COMMITTEE ON CITY PROPERTY**  
**DATE: OCTOBER 11, 2017**  
**TIME: 7:00 P.M.**  
**PLACE: COUNCILLOR WILLIAM SALTZMAN ANTECHAMBER,**  
**ROOM 213, MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLORS JAMES OLIVEIRA, CHAIRMAN; LINDA**  
**MORAD, VICE-CHAIRPERSON; JOSEPH LOPES; STEVEN**  
**MARTINS AND KERRY WINTERSON**

**ABSENT: NO ONE**

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Councillor Oliveira called the City Property Committee Meeting to order and took attendance, everyone was present.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a COMMUNICATION, Mayor Mitchell, to City Council, submitting a Quitclaim Deed and Performance Covenants for the donation of Lots 132-27, 132-29 and 132-400 from the New Bedford Youth Soccer Association, Inc. to the City of New Bedford for recreational purposes (Ref'd 7/20/17) was received and placed on file by Councillor Morad and seconded by Councillor Lopes. (1)

Mary Rapoza, Director of Parks, Recreation and Beaches was present and addressed the Committee. She told the Committee that the City is in need of soccer fields, and this would be an addition to its inventory. The fields would be maintained by the New Bedford Youth Soccer Association; they would have first use rights to the property and other youth organizations would also have access to the fields. However, it would be the New Bedford Youth Soccer Association that would oversee the lot usage.

Shannon Shreve from the Solicitor's Office addressed the Committee. He told the Committee it was a heck of a deal for the city. His office looked at the agreement and found it to be in order. The proposed land usage agreement would allow the NBYSA management over the property for thirty (30) years; but the property would be deeded to the city.

Councillor Winteron asked if there were any environmental concerns about the property and he was told no.

Councillor Morad expressed her support of the need for more youth soccer fields in the city, but asked who was to develop the fields. She was told by Jerry Houston, 906 Lucy Street, New Bedford, that in the past meetings with former DPI Commissioners Labelle and Arruda they would build the fields and NBYSA would maintain them.

Brad Markey of 1521 Acushnet Avenue, New Bedford, along with Dave Vieira, President of the NBYSA, recalled hearing the same conversations.

Councillor Lopes asked if NBYSA has a Grant to build the fields. He was told they had a Grant originally, of nearly \$100,000, but it had to be used for artificial turf and they could not afford to do artificial turf so they had to forfeit the Grant.

NBYSA was asked how the scheduling would take place. They explained NBYSA would have first dibs on the property for scheduling then would assign the use of the fields for other organizations. The permitting for the property had been done already; but that NBYSA did not have the funds to build the fields.

Councillor Morad asked about the cost estimates to build the fields. No one had hard figures to present but NBYSA said approximately \$1,000,000. Councillor Morad then asked where the money to build the fields was going to come from. Again, NBYSA said that they were told that DPI would build the fields.

Councillor Martins agreed that the city needed new fields, but feared the city at this time cannot afford to build them, especially if the price tag was coming on the backs of the taxpayers, when the money could be used elsewhere. He said that when Riverside Park had to replace the Astroturf on their soccer field it cost the tax payers \$500,000 because there wasn't any Grant money to be found. Councillor Martins said he was not confident that the Administration had secured a Grant for this project.

The Committee asked Mary Rapoza if the Recreation Department knew of a Grant that would be applicable to this program. She stated she was not aware of any Grants to be applied to this project.

Councillor Oliveira expressed his concern that the city did not do their due diligence when agreeing to fund this project, not knowing where the money was going to come from.

Councillor Lopes asked if the state had been approached for funding and was told no. He stated that NBYSA should reach out to Representative Koczera to look for state funding as well.

The general concern from the Committee was that the city did not have the money to pay to build the fields and that while DPI would be able to do the work, they should not have committed their resources without knowing where the funding was to come from.

The Committee during their discussion felt it would be better to table the matter and have the Acting DPI Commissioner attend the next meeting and explain how former Commissioner Arruda had figured out how they were to pay for the fields. They also felt that State Representative Koczera should be approached by the NBYSA to seek out state funding as well.

Councillor Morad also suggested that City Council Attorney David Gerwatowski should read the Contract written to see if he had any questions or concerns that Council should address.

On motion by Councillor Lopes and seconded by Councillor Winterson, the Committee VOTED: To table this matter to November 27, 2017 at 7 p.m. and that the DPI Commissioner be invited to this meeting. This motion passed on a voice vote.

Councillor Lopes made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Winterson.

This meeting adjourned @ 7:33 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Denis Lawrence, Jr.,  
Clerk of Committees