Date: November 26, 2018
Time: 2:30 pm
Location: Holliday 1st Floor Conference Room; 620 SE Madison

Attendance
Committee Members Present: Tony Emerson, Aaron Mays, Michael Lesser
City Staff Present: Nick Hawkins, Interim Finance Director; Mary Feighny,
Deputy City Attorney

1) Call to Order
Councilmember Emerson called the meeting to order.

2) Approve Minutes from October 4, 2018 meeting
Councilmember Mays made a motion to approve the minutes.
Councilmember Lesser seconded the motion. The minutes were approved 3:0.

3) Discussion: Sunflower Soccer Association Fund Resolution
Councilmember Emerson asked for a representative from Sunflower Soccer Association (SSA) to address the committee. Andrew Fletcher addressed the committee. The topic of sustainability was discussed at the October 4, 2018 meeting. Mr. Fletcher feels as though SSA has shown by their recent records that they are sustainable. Two major programs have been implemented. Mini Kickers program for 3-4 year old children with a goal to keep them with the complex in various programs. There were 600 children who participated in the Fall of 2018. The second major program is the Topeka Soccer Club which merged most of the competitive programs to now administer through SSA. The revenue increase was approximately $100,000. Revenue increase in 2018 was approximately $24,000 after losses and expenditures. The goal for the current year is $30,000. The business plan is already in place, however not down on paper. Mr. Fletcher has met with Washburn Business School to assist with making the plan look nice. In his opinion, Mr. Fletcher feels there will be an increase in programming, revenue, and thus enhanced sustainability. Mr. Fletcher noted that SSA is the only small association that is seeing an increase in small tournaments in the area. Mr. Fletcher is asking the committee for funding to assist with the big projects to
increase the sustainability. This funding will be able to improve the fields and other areas in need quickly which would help to grow the programs on an even faster track than they are already on.

Councilmember Emerson inquired about the business plan that was provided to the committee. Mr. Fletcher noted that it is, however Washburn will assist with cleaning up the language. Councilmember Emerson noted that he would like to see a long-term sustainability projection listed.

Councilmember Emerson inquired about “crowning” fields and not being able to utilize them immediately. Mr. Fletcher noted that the reason for only doing two fields a year is to allow the grass to grow and those fields would not be allowed to be played on for a year once the process is completed. However, if the money was provided, SSA would be able to accommodate crowning 4 fields each year.

Councilmember Emerson inquired about the definition of championship caliber fields. Mr. Fletcher noted that those fields would only be used for games. Currently, the fields are used for practice as well as games. There are smaller private Christian high schools who utilize the complex for their games, and they play about 20 games a season. Mr. Fletcher elaborated that he would ideally like to have those fields kept only for game use. In addition to the quality of the championship caliber fields being better, Mr. Fletcher would like to have nicer bleachers, and possibly even lights. Councilmember Emerson inquired if these fields would be what was listed on the plan as turf fields. Mr. Fletcher noted that turf would not necessarily be needed to achieve the championship caliber quality. These fields would cost an estimated $23,000 each. Grading, maintenance, seed, and irrigate the two fields. Mr. Fletcher clarified that there would be no difference to the fields, current fields would be used, however those two designated fields would be off limits for practices.

Council member Lesser inquired about additional costs for bleachers and possibly lights for the championship quality fields.

Councilmember Mays inquired about the cost estimates for lighting improvements for the fields. Mr. Fletcher noted that that he had not gotten those estimates.

Councilmember Lesser inquired about the Foundation and making sure that information was included. Mr. Fletcher confirmed it would be.

Councilmember Lesser made a motion to hold off making any decisions until a formal business plan from SSA has been presented to the
committee. Councilmember Mays seconded the motion to postpone the decision. The motion was approved 3:0. Councilmember Emerson inquired with Mr. Fletcher as to what the timeline might look like for when a formal plan may be obtained. Mr. Fletcher noted that he would expect it within a month.

Councilmember Emerson inquired with Mary Feighny, Deputy City Attorney, as to changing the resolution. Mary Feighny noted that a new resolution would be required, but that the wording could be made as specific as the committee would like. Councilmember Lesser inquired if the committee could hypothetically approve re-crowning two fields and have that written into the new resolution. Mary Feighny confirmed.

Councilmember Lesser encouraged Mr. Fletcher to look at having someone, who is more inclined with a financial mindset, come alongside and help with putting the goals of the Association onto paper with the financial and funding elements included.

Kurt Young, Topeka Lodging Association addressed the committee and noted that if an effort was going to be made to improve the business plan, that a measure be taken to address improving the effort to bring in outside travelers who will stay the weekend and get “heads on the beds”.

4) Other Items Before the Committee
No other items.

5) Adjournment
Councilmember Emerson adjourned the meeting.

The video of this meeting can be viewed at: https://youtu.be/_SDEyYCke3A