

Rochester Sports Foundation Meeting Minutes (7-29-21)

The initial meeting was called to order by President Terry via email on 7/23/21 to review and consider for approval the minutes and Statement of Activities prior to the formal in order to keep the 7/29/21 meeting time available to focus on “new business” agenda items.

The June 24th, 2021 minutes were reviewed and approved as written; *Shulman moved, Holtan seconded and it passed with Shulman, Holtan, Powers, Kauffman & Terry approving via email.* The SOA was reviewed; *Shulman moved, Holtan seconded and it passed with Shulman, Holtan, Powers, Kauffman & Terry approving via email.*

The in-person official meeting was called to order by Chris Terry at 12:02 PM on July 29th. Board members: Chris Terry, Joe Powers, Doug Holtan and Carole Shulman present. Kreg Kauffman was absent. Advisory Committee members John McGuine, Marcus Sherels, Pat Sexton, Chad Behnken, Ben Boldt, Staff member Ed Hruska and Keeley Hruska were also present.

Hruska showed two videos and a PowerPoint of site visits and other Midwest communities planning and facilities.

Sexton asked about the proximity of these facilities to the cities. Terry replied that they are building hotels and restaurants around TBK but yes – they were somewhat isolated from the general development of the city. Hruska added that this is a part of the strategy. Powers mentioned the new hotel in Coralville was connected to the arena. He also added the group leading the arena project (ArenaCo) visited many, many other arenas before they decided on their project layout. Shulman added the attention to detail, with storage, truck loading, participant areas and such was very well thought out.

Hruska asked the group to use these projects (and the data provided on what other area cities are doing) in comparison to Rochester and for them to discuss and prioritize current needs for the RSF to focus on. Terry talked about the need to refresh Mayo Field and added these facilities are not only about sports but about entertainment options and quality of life additions for the community. He added that the USHL is extremely interested in being in Rochester and had Hruska show the map – where there is no team in Minnesota. Terry went more into Mayo Field and talked about a project that would activate the riverfront with additional housing and retail space along with rebuilding the stadium. He also brought forward the developer who has tentative plans to build and fund a multi-use sports complex, similar to TBK, in the area. Terry stated he would like to see all three projects happen; Mayo Field rebuild, multi-use arena and multi-sport complex. Hruska passed around the Mayo Field proposed drawings for the group to review. Hruska also added he was contacted by an investor wanting to build a new Pickleball facility in the community – which RSF will try to assist as we can.

Terry went over funding options that are working and how they work with the group. Sexton added that money is not the issue if we can get the City/County to backstop the projects. Hruska added Legacy Sports had reached out to him to inquire about a MW development in the Rochester area. Sherels asked if these groups would want to run a few tournaments or have these facilities utilized every weekend. Hruska stated these groups want them active as much as possible. It is not just about tournaments – it is also about community usage too. Behnken liked the idea of the large multi-use sports complex for the community needs. He hears many other parents feel we are falling behind other cities. He likes the idea of the private development process. Powers stated the Park Dept should support the private effort. Boldt agreed – adding that the Park Dept has such a wide array of areas they cover so they would be supportive. Sexton asked Ben which sports are in the greatest need – maybe basketball? Boldt shared that they have no indoor complexes so he is not aware of that but outdoor fields (lacrosse, soccer, baseball) are always in need. He went over the various challenges the Park Dept now faces with programming and providing enough options for the demand. Shulman added that eSports is also an area we should be aware of. McGuine had an investor in mind that he feels would have an interest. It was agreed we are on the right path – we just need to get the right resources connected. Meeting was adjourned at 1:32 PM.

Next meeting date: August 26th, 2021