

Study Session  
Council Chambers  
August 14, 2007

Mayor Jones welcomed Ben Graf to the Study Session.

Ben Graf, President of the Yakima Valley Pepsi Pak, reported that Bob and Mike Archer plan to build bleachers and a concession stand at Wood Field and spend about \$50,000 to dress up the entrance to the park. He stated the Archers would like the City to replace the temporary fencing on the north side of the field, and that they have received bids from \$7,200-7,800 for that work. He noted the Archers are passionate about the field, and after the recent tournament, the state director told the Archers he would like to have future state tournaments and even a regional tournament here. Mr. Graf noted for a regional tournament, lights would be a premium. He stated the Archers want to lock the field down when it's not in use. Mr. Graf said it is his belief that these changes are more for appearance than anything else.

Mayor Jones asked if the bleachers will be permanent.

Mr. Graf responded they will, and he wants to make sure they are safe. He noted that RAS construction will build them. He recommended the City go to the Archers and ask them to project a five-year plan for Wood Field.

City Supervisor Frank Sweet recommended a having a Council committee look at those plans first and then bring information back to the whole Council.

Ben Graf suggested that fall to early winter is best time for work at the Field. He said he will make sure the money for the project is there.

Mayor Jones asked if they plan to build additional bleachers.

Mr. Graf responded that there is generally more than enough seating.

Councilman Schmid stated he doesn't think there will be a problem having adequate seating because teams come and go during a tournament.

Mr. Graf stated one of the big donors wanted a capital improvement project.

Councilman Schmid noted that what they're planning will provide more than adequate seating. He said it's important to determine priorities before moving ahead.

Mr. Graf said he wants to make sure there are not big costs to the City.

Mayor Jones asked if the Peppers also play there.

Mr. Graf said most of the Peppers are Selah kids.

Mayor Jones said it would be nice if they could play there as well.

The City Supervisor noted the City started this year to get schedules from local teams and then to go out to find tournaments. He explained that Wood Field is not Archers' field; it's the City's field, and the City should promote it more.

Mr. Graf stated the City has staff in place to take care of the field. He noted the Peppers are under the Pak umbrella.

Mayor Jones noted American Legion players pay a significant amount to participate.

Mr. Graf stated it costs kids about \$1,000 a year to play American Legion ball; the result being it opens the scout's eyes. He said scouts would rather watch Legion than high school games.

Councilman Overby asked what the objection is to a permanent fence.

Mr. Sweet noted some people have problems with locking people out, believing City parks should be open to the public at all times.

Mr. Graf stated kids would misuse it if there is not supervision, and repairs are expensive.

Councilman Schmidt noted when it's locked off, whoever wants to be there must schedule and the activity must be supervised.

Mayor Jones stated the fence would block play area off from access for children.

Councilman Schmid stated there's a gate that goes into the toy area.

Mayor Jones suggested Council members need to go down there and walk through it.

Councilman Schmid said if they put in the permanent fencing, there will still be access.

Councilwoman Nichols noted she also has problems with closing the field off because all citizens pay taxes and should have access.

The City Supervisor stated the more teams we have playing on that field, the fewer problems there will be.

Mayor Jones thanked Ben Graf for attending the Study Session and sharing information.