

Selah City Council  
Study Session  
November 28, 2006

Dick Graf presented his perspective on baseball in the City of Selah through the years. He noted he began his association as a batboy for the Upper Valley Legion, and was involved as the sport moved from the field behind the Junior High to the present field. He praised how much the Archer family has done for Selah and for Wood Field. He noted Selah Little League modeled McGonagle Park after what the Archers have done at Wood Field, expecting kids and parents to be involved. He urged the Council to find ways to keep this baseball field safe from thieves. He noted right now it is too accessible to the public, and people can just come and go as they please. He urged the Council to consider putting a fence and gate to protect the field. He reiterated his praise for the Archers and their years of hard work.

Mike Archer addressed the Council, stating he is not angry; rather he is passionate. He stated if there had been a fence around the field, perhaps two pitching machines valued at \$4,000 might not have been stolen. He stated kids' personal items have been stolen, and they've lost other items through the years. He described his passion about coaching. He stated he voted for the softball fields, supported Carlon Park, and his dad has been here since the 60's. He detailed all he, the kids, and their parents have done for Wood Field. He stated they have the best baseball program in the area, in the state. He handed out copies of letters of appreciation from former players and parents.

Councilman Schmid asked which building was broken into. Mr. Archer responded that the thieves broke into the door facing the street, right under a safety light. He stated they used a crow bar.

Bob Archer stated this is the 5<sup>th</sup> break-in they've had.

Mayor Jones stated Mr. Archer seems to be pitching for a fence and asked if a permanent one could it be placed farther toward the south of the field near the pathway. He noted he doesn't want to see the play area isolated by the fence.

Mike Archer stated so many things go on down at the field, and they just keep fixing things up. He noted someone donated a lawn mower and a Gator. He stated they pick up and dump their own garbage. He stated his perception is that the softball crowds leave their garbage of Wood Field and their own fields, and have City people picking up their garbage. He stated the baseball players pick up their own garbage, sew the nets, and fix the fences. He stated it would cost over a million dollars to rebuild that field. He credited the success of his program on their belief in teaching kids commitment and love, and commitment to community. He showed newspaper articles praising the field and his program.

He noted it's hard to approach people for help. He stated Joe Henne and Ty Jones have been supportive. He asked the Council if anybody happened to think about Wood Field when they were putting together plans for the Carlon Park softball complex (a \$million + field). He praised Frank Sweet for being 100% supportive. He stated his dad will be down at Wood Field tomorrow with a snow blower; he could call the City for help, but he doesn't. He stated he buys fertilizer and spreads it himself, and they are losing money. He said he got a donated scoreboard, and built a picnic area, and that anything they get they put to use for the community, but but he said he won't build it to have it stolen or destroyed.

He handed out a list of baseball practice discussion items. He said the American Legion wants Selah to host the state tournament in two years. He said nobody in this community has done more for a piece of land than these kids.

Councilman Allen Schmid commended Mike Archer for his passion and thanked his brother and dad for all the time they have put in. He said It bothers him, when you have places broken into. He said the City should put together a meeting of parks & rec, Little League, and GYGSA to do a 5-year plan for facilities in Selah. He noted the City only has a certain amount of money, so it's important for develop a list of needs for each facility, then prioritize them and then proceed with those plans.

Mike Archer said there was money set aside by the City for that park.

Mayor Jones noted GYGSA donated \$100,000 and Little League raised over a quarter \$million; both of those organizations put in money toward their facilities. He said the City wants to protect equipment from theft at all facilities, and if a fence will do that, then certainly we should put one up.

Mike Archer said these fields and their equipment are too valuable not to lock up.

Mayor Jones said the field used to be a recreational facility, but now it is a competitive facility that brings a lot of revenue into this City.

Mike Archer said he wants people to work together. He said he remembers when the City took care of the light bill. He stated to Joe Henne that he wants to work cooperatively with the Public Works crew. He said it's about Community Pride. He reiterated that he is not a whiner; he just wants people to jump on the bandwagon. He stated his kids are an asset to the community.

Mayor Jones stated he is a stickler on picking up garbage and considers that a matter of community pride. He said he wants to work with the Archers.

City Supervisor Frank Sweet stated probably one of the best kept secrets is Wood Field and the program there. He suggested the Archers should come in yearly to report on their activities and the condition of the fields.

Mayor Jones said he doesn't think the Council has an idea of what it costs to run program.

Mike Archer responded it costs from \$60-70,000 a year to run the Legion program.

Allen Schmid asked if the Selah Legion is going to host the 2007 tournament.

Mike Archer said he doesn't know yet, Yakima would have to buy in.

Allen Schmid recommended that Mr. Archer come in and discuss this with Mayor Jones and City Supervisor Frank Sweet.

Mayor Jones called a recess.

Bob Archer asked for three seconds. He said he'd like to see cooperation in small things. He urged everyone to work together. He said he does not want to have to brown nose to get things done.

Mayor Jones again called a recess.