



## Memorandum

- TO: Sussex County Council The Honorable Michael H. Vincent, President The Honorable George B. Cole, Vice President The Honorable Robert B. Arlett The Honorable Irwin G. Burton III The Honorable Samuel R. Wilson Jr.
- FROM: Todd F. Lawson County Administrator

## RE: SUSSEX SPORTS CENTER FOUNDATION PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

DATE: September 22, 2017

During Tuesday's meeting, the Council is scheduled to hear a presentation from the Sussex Sports Center Foundation ("Foundation"). The Foundation is seeking the County's support with its pursuit of constructing a sports facility for County residents and visitors use.

A proposal with specific information is attached along with letters of support and petitions with signatures.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

TFL/nc

Attachments



## **Project Background**

This project was conceived in 2016 by an informal group of people ("the Leadership Committee') from Sussex County who had a common desire to create an athletic center in Sussex County which will be open to the public for recreation for the young and the" not so young". The park will have playing fields for soccer, lacrosse, field hockey and informal touch football games, walking trails, pickle ball courts and playground equipment. Sussex County lacks a recreation center on this scale despite the fact there is growing demand from a rapidly growing population of both young families and recent retirees. The plan is to locate the facility towards the middle of the county so youth sports clubs and the citizens throughout the county would have a convenient place to exercise, socialize, practice, hold games and host tournaments with clubs from the mid-Atlantic region. However, unlike the new DE Turf complex in Kent County which primarily focuses on hosting large tournaments, our Sussex County facility will focus on providing a variety of amenities for the recreational use of Sussex County residents and visitors of all ages.

The center will have eight regulation sized soccer/lacrosse fields, paved parking for approximately 350 cars, restroom facilities, easy access from one of the county's major roads and other recreational amenities. One of our leadership group owns significant acreage on the east side of Georgetown, just north of Route 9 on Sandhill Road and he is willing to donate sufficient acreage (70 acres) to accommodate our plans (see preliminary site plans attached).

Recent discussions with Georgetown officials, advocates for a walking trail, proponents of a regulation cross country course (3.1 miles) and a local pickle ball group convinced us to expand our original vision of the sports center. We will still build 8 soccer/lacrosse fields but will add 10-12 pickle ball courts and redesign the walking trail to also serve as a cross county course for high school and middle school competitions. We have also decided to add playground equipment in a safe and visible area for the younger children and grandchildren.

In order to meet the apparent demand for the various uses of the sports center, we have added plans to provide excess parking, a traffic circle for food trucks to park and to serve refreshments and a picnic pavilion for shade and protection from increment weather.

The members of the Leadership Committee are:

Bobby Horsey	Tim Willard	Darren Short	Preston Schell
Zac Crouch	Joe Schell	Steve Burke	Bill West
Tony Sposato	Gene Dvornick	Brian Pettyjohn	Steve Bastianelli

## **Non-Profit Foundation**

We have created a non-profit foundation (the "Foundation") and will establish a board of directors to take full responsibility for the construction, funding, operation, and maintenance of the SussexSportsCenter. Many of the people listed above will be the initial board members with the officers being Steve Burke, Bobby Horsey and Joe Schell. We hope to add others to the board from western and southern parts of Sussex County.

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## **Public Support**

As we investigated the need and the public support for a sports and recreation center in Sussex County, we were very encouraged by the responses from Sussex County organizations and individuals to whom we spoke .We talked with the Henlopen Soccer Club (1,300 boys and girls), First State Pickle Ball Club (419 members in Sussex County), Tim Bamforth of Beacon Middle School and president of the Seashore Strlders (several hundred recreational runners), the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce, the founder of the Atlantic Lacrosse Club and representatives of several of the Hispanic soccer organizations in Georgetown. All were supportive of our plans. See the letters of support attached.

## **Project Costs**

The estimated cost to build the Sports Center as of August 29,2017 is \$4,000,000, including a contingency reserve of \$350,000 (see Exhibit 1). In recent weeks, we have added 10-12 pickle ball courts, additional trails for the crosscountry runners and walkers, and playground equipment. Some of the larger expenditures are now estimated to be less expensive by approximately \$500,000 so we are leaving the capital cost budget unchanged from our previous estimate shared with to the County Council in July.

To fund the project, we believe a public-private partnership is appropriate given that this facility is to be open to the public at no charge. We plan to raise approximately \$2,200,000 from the private sector (foundations, businesses and individuals) which does not include the value of the land being donated. The public sector (county, state and Georgetown) led by Sussex County will be asked to contribute \$1,800,000 (see Exhibit 2). With the value of the land estimated at \$400,000, the private sector will lead the fundraising by contributing 59% of the total and the public sector will be contributing 41% of the total. Thus far, we have spent \$43,880 from private donors on permitting, legal, accounting and engineering services.

## **Project Timeline and Projected Operating Performance**

If we start construction later this year as planned, the construction of the Sussex Sports Center will be completed in the latter part of 2018 or early 2019. Like any start-up venture, we expect the facility will operate at a loss for the first 2 or 3 years. Assuming more usage by youth sports clubs, Hispanic soccer clubs, summer sports camps, and a few tournaments and special events, and once more people become aware of its location and recreational, assets, we expect to operate at a small profit on or before its fourth year of operation.

Our revenue to pay for the annual staffing and maintenance expenses will come from(1) fees charged to clubs who wish to contract for the usage of a number of our fields on specific days and times for practice and games, for the pickle ball courts for club member play on certain days and times, for schools who wish to have cross-county meets on selected dates, (2) several tournaments during the year, (3) scheduled events for picnics, outdoor receptions, etc. when the park will be closed to the public for a period of time and (4) summer sports camps. We will charge modest fees for these events in exchange for closing the entire center or a portion thereof in exchange for guaranteed usage of the facilities at the specified times. There are significant ancillary benefits to Sussex County and Georgetown specifically when tournament teams come for two or three days as the participants and their families stay in local hotels, eat meals at local establishments, and shop in the local stores.

### **Project Proposal**

We are requesting a grant from the Sussex County Council of up to \$1,500,000. To encourage Sussex County Council to enter into a partnership with the private sector as represented by the Sussex Sports Center Foundation, the Foundation would invest the initial \$1,500,000 to pay for the early construction activities. Then, in early 2018, the Foundation will draw down the next \$1,500,000 from the County grant to fund continuing construction. At that point, all additional funds needed to complete the project and to cover any cost overruns would come from other public sector donors (State of Delaware and Georgetown) and the Foundation.

Unlike the recently completed DE Turf complex in Kent County, we have no intention of borrowing money to build this project as debt financing would saddle the Sports center with interest and principal repayments, making positive operating results in future years more challenging.

With the financial participation of Sussex County, our Foundation is willing to build, operate and own the sports center for many years into the future as a <u>public facility</u>. However, if Sussex County wishes to take ownership and operating responsibility the sports center within the first five years of its operation, the Foundation will relinquish or turnover ownership to the County for a payment of \$1.00.

The agreement to provide financial support by the Sussex County Council as requested is a very important prerequisite to our fundraising from the State of Delaware and the Town of Georgetown and the private sector (private foundations, businesses and individuals). While the private sector will provide the majority of the funds required, the leadership of the Sussex County Council at this early stage will provide the momentum for a very successful project.

September, 2017

# Capital Cost Budget as of September, 2017

# Uses of Funds

>	Land prep, grading and SWM ponds	\$800,000	
A	Sand, Seeding and grow in	130,000	
A	Paving entry road and 350 parking places	500,000	
A	Irrigation system including well and pump	375,000	
4	Construction of turn lanes on Sandhill Rd	275,000	
A	Construction of picnic pavilion with slab	50,000	
A	Entry gate, fencing and netting	250,000	
2	Land at Route 9 intersection	250,000	
A	Landscaping, pond fountains	150,000	
2	Sewer lines and fresh water lines	25,000	
2	Sports equipment (goals) and storage shed	75,000	
2	Walking trail, and foot bridges	225,000	

Total Uses of Funds	\$4,000,000
Contingency/Operating Reserve	350,000
Sub Total	\$3,650,000
Fees to gov't agencies	<u>35,000</u>
Engineering and misc. services	110,000
Playground Equipment	50,000
Pickle Ball Courts	\$ 350,000

## Capital Cost Budget as of September, 2017

# Sources of Funds

Private Sector Donations-59%

<ul><li>Value of Land (57 acres, a non-cash donation)</li></ul>	\$400,000	
Private Foundations	300,000	
Sussex County Businesses	900,000	
Families and Individuals	<u>1,000,000</u> \$2,600,000	
Public Sector Contributions-41%		
Sussex County	1,500,000	
State of Delaware	275,000	
Town of Georgetown	<u>25,000</u> <u>\$1,800,000</u>	
Total Sources	\$4,400,000	
Total Cash Sources	\$ 4,000,000	

# 2019 Operating Budget as of September, 2017

# Anticipated Revenue

	Total Revenue in first year	\$ 186,000
4	Summer Camps (3)	6,000
A	Events (4)	20,000
>	Tournaments (2)	60,000
A	Club fees for scheduled practice and game times	\$100,000

## **Anticipated Expenses**

A	Compensation for contract workers *Operations and maintenance manager-half time	\$ 35,000
	*Groundskeeper- full time	40,000
>	Grass cutting contract	60,000
>	Waste disposal contract	10,000
>	Rental contract for portable toilets	10,000
>	Top dressing and over-seeding in Spring	53,000
>	Electric bills	15,000
>	Insurance	10,000
>	Supplies	10,000
	Total Expenses in first year	\$243,000
	First year deficit	\$57,000

# 2022 Operating budget as of September, 2017

# Anticipated Revenue

Þ	Club fees for scheduled practice and game times	\$150,000
Þ	Tournaments (5)	150,000
Þ	Events (7)	35,000
A	Summer camps (6)	12,000

# Total Revenue in fourth year

# Anticipated Expenses

>	Compensation for contract workers	
	*Operations and maintenance manager-half time	\$40,000
	*Groundskeepers (2)	90,000
>	Grass cutting contract	66,000
>	Waste disposal contract	12,000
>	Rental contract for portable toilets	17,000
>	Top dressing and over-seeding in Spring	60,000
>	Electric bills	18,000
>	Insurance	12,000
>	Supplies	12,000
Т	otal Expenses in fourth year	\$327,000

Fourth year surplus

\$20,000

\$347,000





# LETTERS OF SUPPORT



DELAWARE GENERAL ASSEMBLY STATE OF DELAWARE 411 LEGISLATIVE AVENUE DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

September12, 2017

Sussex County Council 2 The Circle Georgetown Georgetown, DE 19947

Dear Esteemed Council,

Over the last decade, there have been calls from many who have requested additional recreational opportunities. These are not only newcomers to our area, but also families, retirees and visitors to our beautiful county. The proposed Sussex Sports Center in Georgetown will address this need.

The Sussex Sports Center differs from Sports at the Beach and the new Delaware Turf Complex in Kent County, as it does not focus on just one sport. Additionally, the center will appeal to all ages, having several types of playing fields ranging from lacrosse to pickleball. The addition of a walking trail and playground will be attractive to Sussex Countians for its variety of uses.

We applaud the Leadership Committee on the time and effort they have committed to this project; a project that will benefit the health and wellness of all Sussex Countians. The initiative displayed by these leaders shows tremendous dedication to those we serve daily. We support their endeavors and encourage the County Council to give the Sussex Sports Center its utmost consideration.

With our kindest regards,

Brian G. Pettyjohn State Senator, 19<sup>th</sup> District District

Paniel R Short State Representative, 39<sup>th</sup> District District

Horvey R. Kenton Harvey R. Kenton

State Representative, 36<sup>th</sup> District District

Ernesto B. Lopez State Senator, 6<sup>th</sup> District

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<sup>72</sup> David L. Wilson State Representative, 35<sup>th</sup> District

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Timothy D. Dukes State Representative, 40<sup>th</sup> District

Peter C. Schwartzkopf

State Representative, 14<sup>th</sup>

uth Briggs King

State Representative, 37th

Ronald E. Gray State Representative, 38<sup>th</sup>

# **Henlopen Soccer Club**

Member Delaware Youth Soccer Association P.O. Box 384, Nassau, Delaware 19969 www.henlopensoccerclub.org August 15, 2017

Re: Letter of Support for the Sussex Sports Center project



Dear Sussex County Council:

The Board of the Henlopen Soccer Club respectfully submits this letter to you, the Sussex County Council, in support of the proposed Sussex Sports Center located in Georgetown. Our Club recently needed to vacate its previous home in Milton at HOB Elementary due to the School's expansion after nearly 10 years at that location. Since that time, the Club has been operating its recreational and travel programs in multiple locations due to a general lack of adequate facilities for our children to play. This issue creates a number of challenges for the Club parents and players and weakens our ability to provide the players and their families the experience we feel we owe them. There is no opportunity within our geography that offers the unique benefits associated with the proposed Sports Center. Some key benefits we find in this proposal are a more central location attracting more members, well maintained facilities that reduce injury, an inviting parklike setting that offers safe places for families to play or exercise while practices or Recreational programs are running. This complex will also help facilitate large events like tournaments which attract commerce to the surrounding area and help build the reputation of the Club which will have a halo effect on expanding our membership and attracting coaching talent.

Our Club has a membership of approximately 1300 players annually and the membership is almost entirely comprised of Sussex County residents. We are diverse with an estimated average of 20%-25% Hispanic membership and 8% African America. We fund raise and receive charitable contributions to provide financial assistance where needed to ensure that every child that wants to participate is able.

Additional information regarding the Club Is below:

- Henlopen Soccer Club is a 501 C3 and Is largely comprised of volunteers-paying coaches and limited service providers
- The Club usually operates cash neutral on an annual basis and relies upon charitable contributions and grants to subsidize players in need of financial assistance.
- Approximately 75 players to include recreational and travel receive some form of financial assistance on an annual basis
- The Club was formed in 1996

Our Club board (all county residents) has unanimously approved our intent to make this Sports Center our new home and believe this Is a unique opportunity for the Club, the County and other clubs in the area that will benefit in a similar fashion. Please help us support this project. Thank you for your consideration. We remain available to provide more information or to speak live should it improve the probability of your support.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Parker President, Henlopen Soccer Club

Jason Moshler

**Board Member** 

TUDA lamie Loudes

Board Member

Treasurer, Henlopen Soccer Club

44 **Dennis Vieira** 

**Board Member** 

Chris Nichols Board Member

Darren Short Board Member

**David Hutt Board Member** 

Erik Hochrein

ohn Robinson

Board Member

BINSwontek Board Member

# Seashore Striders

Lewes, DE 19969; tim@seashorestrider.com; 302.542.4536

Re: Support for the Sussex Sports Center

Dear Sussex County Council:

This letter is sent from the Seashore Striders to the Sussex County Council in support of the proposed Sussex Sports Center to be located in Georgetown. The Seashore Strider Board of Directors fully supports this project and the positive outcomes the project will bring to Sussex County and the sport of running in the community.

Our club ranges from 90-120 members throughout the year, however our charitable events touch thousands of runners and walkers in Sussex County- always looking for a safe place to walk and jog. This project will put Georgetown and Sussex County in the forefront as jar as cross country, trail running, and walking for exercise. We strongly agree that this facility will be used by so many...children, adults, elderly, teams from elementary to travel to college teams across Delmarva.

The Seashore Strider board (all county residents) fully supports and want to help this project a reality for the residents of Sussex County to call their home. The Sports Center is greatly needed in our area and the benefits would be amazingly great for so many residents to enjoy. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Timothy S. Bamforth President, Seashore Striders

Dr. Lee Masser V.President Seashore Striders

Monique B. Bamforth Secretary Seashore Striders Richard Tikiob Board of Directors

Dave Frederick Board of Directors

Bruce Springer Board of Directors Rosanna Castillo Board of Directors

Derek Shockro Board of Directors XC

Dan MacElrevey Board of Directors XC



## La Super Liga de Delmarva

The Super League of Delmarva P.O. BOX 458 Georgetown, DE 19947 (302) 258-4009 (302) 236-4400 Email: delmarvasoccer@gmail.com

September 18, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the League, we want to officially support the Sussex Sports Center project. Our league has been in existence for over 10 years. We have over 30 teams which include male, female and also a children academy with approximately 75 kids. The games are played every Sunday for a period of 21 weeks plus playoffs.

We have a great support from the community not only locally but from neighbor states such as Maryland, Washington, New Jersey just to name a few. We have over close to 100 expectators support the league weekly as well as local vendors. We truly believe that this project will not only be beneficial for the community but also for the children of tomorrow. The complex will provide families with options to do fun activities as whole while promoting a healthy lifestyle.

Respectfully Submitted,

M

Sixto O. Nunez Manager Board Super Family League of Delmarva Cell: (302) 258-4009 gersonguox@gmail.com

cc. Mario Robles, Gerson Guox

ELITE INDOOR SPORT LLC 32360 DUPONT BLVD DAGSBORO DE 19939 EMAIL: <u>eliteindoorsports921@gmail.com</u> (302)3572756



Dear Sussex County Council:

A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE SUSSEX SPORTS CENTER

My name is Homero Hernandez, owner and operator of Elite Indoor Sports. Sussex County has been my home since 1994, graduating from Sussex Central High School in 2009, playing varsity soccer 4 years straight and competing in competitive and recreational sports since then. As a player and coach we have not had a park or facility in Sussex county for people in the community to participate in recreational or competitive soccer.

Sussex Sports Center is a project that my community and business need for people of all ages to have a safe family oriented place to go and enjoy soccer and other sports. That's why Elite Indoor Sports LLC and all our players support the proposed Sports Center in Georgetown DE. My adult league contacts of 26 teams about 312 players in one Sunday. A smaller league of 8 wo nen teams on a single Saturday. During the week, we have an estimated 300 players of all ages who participate in recreational soccer. My facility has leagues from November to February. The rest of the year (8 month) we do not have an adequate facility to participate in outdoor soccer. A rough estimate of 800 players leave Elite Indoor Sports supports the Sussex Sports Center in Georgetown, and hopes to participate with them in the near future.

Sincerely,

Elite Indoor Sports LLC

Pickleball Club

Pickleball is the Fastest Growing Sport in the Nation and in Sussex County Delaware!

#### A Letter to the Sussex County Council:

#### September 1, 2017

#### First State Pickleball Club Inc supports the Sussex Sports Center

The First State Pickleball Club Inc. currently has 420 members who enjoy playing plckleball and we expect the numbers of plckleball players to continue to grow as the number of retirees move into the county. In addition, we are confident that there are twice that number who are not members based on records kept at Sport at the Beach when people play at their indoor facility. There are only 10 permanent pickleball courts that are available only when the J.M. Clayton Elementary School Is not in session. Almost all of the facilities where pickleball is played in this county is not conducive for playing because they are not designed for pickleball. Our support for the Sussex Sports Center is 100% because pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the County and in Sussex County.

FSPC has documented the numerous health benefits of pickleball to the citizens of Sussex County. Examples include weight loss, elimination of diabetes medication, increased social interaction, reduced blood pressure and increase in mental acuity. The average player is 65 years old but pickleball appeals to both young and old, as well as being the only multi-generational sport. Pickleball offers great exercise without being too risky, particularly for older players, weight loss opportunity that is fun as compared to going to the gym, or long, lonely walks or runs. The great social feature of pickleball is important to all of the existing and new residents in our County. Pickleball is actually a deal maker for those choosing a place to live and that makes Sussex County an even more appealing place to live. So many people move here not knowing many people but pickleball offers an instant community.

Having a first-class facility open to the public (residents and vacationers), is good for the real estate market, for the hospitality industry, but most importantly the welfare of the Citizens of Sussex County. We believe an investment by the County in the Sussex Sports Center with some of our tax dollars will be a very positive sign that the County Council recognizes the growing need for recreational facilities for its growing population. This opportunity put forth by the Sussex Sports Center Foundation, with the majority of funds coming from the individuals and business of Sussex County, to build and operate the Sussex Sports Center with numerous athletic amenities is too good to forego and very positive and public statement by the County Council of its awareness and actions to provide for the needs of an active healthy community.

The First State Pickleball Club Inc. membership wants your support in getting active recreation into our County.

Sincelely,

athy Case

President

Dudley Suder

Member-at-Large

Artie Holdgerson Vice President

Treasurer

Kevin Casey

Georgia Bilger

Member -at-Large

naker **Bunny Maher** 

Susan Nancarrow

Secretary

AND SIGNED

Member-at-Large

P.O. Box 276 Millsboro • DE 19966 • e-mail: admin@flrststatepickleball.com • www.firststatepickleball.org

FSPC Mission Statement: We strive to promote the development of the sport of pickleball through participation, training and good sportsmanship



Pickleball is the Fastest Growing Sport in the Nation and in Sussex County Delaware!

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The First State Pickleball Club Inc. membership wants your support in getting active recreation into our County.

Sincerely,

Kathy Casey President Artie Holdgerson Vice President Kevin Casey Treasurer Susan Nancarrow

Susan Nancarrow Secretary

Dudley Sluder Member-at-Large Georgia Billger Member -at-Large Bunny Maher Member-at-Large

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Pickleball is the Fastest Growing Sport in the Nation and in Sussex County Delaware!



9-14-17 Mr. Schill attached are signatures from FSP Comembers and non-members who as Bichlidsall gay as. There are 399 signatures here that only reflect a small number of actual Stayers across Sussey County, We could probably double that number if time Jumittel. as the Prisident of FSPC and a USAPA ambassadir on Sussen County, our goal is to grow the guililibre commenting and we are committed to achine that mission. thy Casa

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