

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

Dear Mayor Massingill and City Council Members,

My name is Niccole Maurici, and I have resided at 4906 Timberline Drive since relocating here in 2017 and I have been a Park Commission member since 2019. In my years of serving on this commission, I have never known of a City Council Member to put an item on the City Council Meeting agenda that 1.) contradicts current policy, 2.) negates the work the Park Commission, 3.) puts an item on the agenda because of a request by another City Council Member and 4.) discriminates against one particular approved commercial vendor, i9 Sports.

On October 18, 2023, City Council Member Kevin Glasheen included item 14 on the City Council Meeting agenda: Discussion and possible action regarding the policy of leasing fields 3,4, and 5 and fields 1 and 2 to I9 Sports.

Here is the video link from the discussion during the October 18, 2023 City Council Meeting:
<https://www.rollingwoodtx.gov/citycouncil/page/city-council-meeting-140>

At 1:49:42 Glasheen made a motion to direct City Staff when leasing to i9 to use fields 1-2 instead of fields 3-5.

During discussion, Council Member Alec Robinson acknowledged the work that Park Commission has done relating to this item and suggested the Park Commission have the chance to comment. That discussion fell on deaf ears. The fact that Glasheen included this specific item in last month's agenda without mentioning it to the Park Commission is unfortunate.

The motion passed 4-1 with Council Members Glasheen, Phil McDuffee, Sara Brown and Sara Hudson voting in favor, and Alec Robinson voting against.

The motion states that i9 will have to go to City Council to ask for relief if they want to use Hatley fields 3-4-5. It is my understanding that the only way for the Owner of i9 Sports to get relief is to submit an item for the City Council monthly agenda, attend the monthly City Council Meeting(s) and hope that City Council grants the Owner's relief request. This process reverts to previous policy and procedure, making it time consuming for the Owner, City Staff and City Council.

Since 2020, the Park Commission has worked tirelessly to help streamline the commercial vendor application process, the approved vendor process and created a universal rental rate structure that is fair and equitable to all commercial users of the park.

During the Park Commission meeting on November 6, 2023, Glasheen admitted to the Park Commission that Council Member Phil McDuffee is the one who suggested to him to put this item on the October 18, 2023 City Council Meeting agenda. When asked why McDuffee didn't put it on the agenda himself, Glasheen gave no explanation.

Please see the following concerns and considerations regarding Glasheen putting this item on the agenda:

1. Agenda Item 14 policy proposed by Glasheen and passed by Glasheen, McDuffee, Brown and Hudson discriminates against i9 Sports. No other approved commercial vendor must follow this policy and direction.
2. Agenda Item 14 policy proposed by Glasheen and passed by Glasheen, McDuffee, Brown and Hudson discriminates against youth organized sports.
3. The park deed specifically states: The use of fields for associations which are primarily for youth within the Eanes Independent School District shall be given priority.
4. Agenda Item 14 policy proposed by Glasheen and passed by Glasheen, McDuffee, Brown and Hudson makes for the Owner of i9 Sports to have a difficult time in planning his camps, and running his business.
5. The majority, if not all i9 Sports participants are EISD residents and many are Rollingwood residents and with this new policy are treated differently.
6. For this camp, the Owner of i9 Sports has asked for 1 hour per week to use Hatley fields 3-4-5.
7. On an annual basis, i9 Sports requests less than 1% of annual hours to use Hatley Fields 3-4-5.
8. Repeatedly, i9 Sports has been interfered with when setting up for their camps. To my knowledge, City representatives may not interfere with a City lease agreement. In addition to interfering with their day of camp, i9 Sports has received phone calls either before or during their camp(s) asking them to relocate.
 - a. June 2020 – Park Commission Chair Phil McDuffee moved i9 Sports from Hatley 3-5 to Hatley 1-2.
 - b. December 2021 – Council Member Phil McDuffee moved i9 Sports from Hatley 3-5 to Hatley 1-2.
 - c. June 2022 – Council Member McDuffee moved i9 Sports from Hatley 3-5 to Hatley 1-2.
 - d. October 2023 – Council Member Glasheen made a motion to restrict i9 Sports from using Hatley Fields 3, 4, 5.

I ask that City representatives work diligently to preserve the longstanding relationship Rollingwood has with the Owner of i9 Sports, its participants, and its organization. Our city does not need to be known as one that discriminates against or has a different set of standards for i9 Sports, its participants, or its organization.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

All the best,
Niccole Maurici
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