

TOWN OF OXFORD

S.B. Church Memorial Town Hall
486 Oxford Road, Oxford, Connecticut 06478-1298
Phone: (203) 888-2543 Fax: (203) 888-2136

MINUTES of OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL DIAMOND PROJECT Committee Meeting

May 1, 2014

A meeting of the Town of Oxford, Oxford High School Diamond Project Committee (the "Committee") was held at Town Hall in Oxford, CT on May 1, 2014. Jim Michaud, Paolo Dell'Oso, Greg Baktis, Vickie Mahoney, Francis Keithline, Ken Chudoba, Jim O'Connell Jr, Dan Kudej, John Gramesty, and Greg Kaether constituting Members of the Committee, participated. Absent from the meeting was Brian Hourigan (Liaison). In attendance by invitation was George Baktis. Mr. Michaud served as Chairman and Mr. Greg Baktis served as Secretary of the meeting. The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:30 p.m. ET.

1. **Notice of Meeting or Waiver.** It was noted that 10 of 11 Committee members were in attendance and a meeting quorum was present.
2. **Election of Officers.** The Committee upon motion duly seconded, unanimously approved the nomination of Greg Kaether as Vice Chairman. Mr. Kaether accepted his nomination.
3. **Recommendations by Chairman.** The Committee upon motion and duly seconded, unanimously approved a:
 - i. Recommendation to the members to appoint George Baktis to the Committee to serve as the construction advisor to the Committee subject to approval by the First Selectman. A recommendation has been made to Selectman Temple by Mr Michaud on 4/29/14 and awaiting a confirmation,
 - ii. Recommendation to the members to appoint Greg Kaether as Vice Chairman of the Committee,
 - iii. Recommendation to the members to cease adding additional members to the Committee at this time so business matters can be

conducted with consistent continuity going forward now that the Organizational Meeting of April 17 has been conducted. Should the Committee deem that it lacks the expertise to exercise prudent judgment in an area that would preclude it from achieving its goal in the future, recommendations should be made to the Chairman for consideration,

- iv. Recommendation to establish a partnership with the Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) to assist in the execution of the project. Resources may be made available to assist in project construction as part of a student's academic program. Mr. Michaud has contacted Ray Mencio, Education Consultant with CTHSS to explore how their program and the goals of this project can be achieved.
- v. Recommendation to seek the advice of the First Selectman to meet with the High School administrators. All members agreed the plan needs to be developed to point where the safety concerns can be elaborated and discussed in a comprehensive manner. Further the town is willing to address those needs by making an investment at the facilities which has been contemplated on several occasions but not included in the final funding.

4. **New Business Matters.** The members discussed safety concerns that have been observed or brought to their attention at the Oxford High School Baseball and Softball fields for which the following items were identified:

Field Locations. The fields, being side by side, routinely experience foul balls in field of play which is a hazard to the athletes, fans and game officials. In fact, there were 5 foul balls from baseball during the April 26th home games where softball play was interrupted and a fan was struck in the shoulder by one of the balls. In addition, when both squads have games that are being played simultaneously and the JV squads are also practicing in the batting cages and surrounding area, errant throws and balls being hit in the cages or via soft toss pose a threat to those in the area which becomes very congested.

Irrigation/Field of play. Currently the grass surfaces of both fields are very uneven and bumpy. Over the past several years it has not been uncommon for a ball to be rolling on the ground and then hit a bump and bounce directly over a fielder's head, or even worse hit a player in the

body or head. Improving the quality of the grass surfaces through adding a proper irrigation system would reduce the number of these instances, making the complex much safer for the athletes

Dugouts. Currently both fields have a fenced in space with benches to house teams during practices and games. The space is an appropriate size but provides no shelter from the elements. This is especially concerning during a thunderstorm, when teams are required to walk all the way into Oxford High School to wait the CIAC mandated thirty minutes to resume play. Having proper dugouts would protect players from rain as well as provide shade during very hot days, thus reducing the risks of athletes overheating.

Due to the close proximity of the fields there are many foul balls that are hit from the baseball field and fall in the vicinity of the softball dugout of field of play. Since the softball players, fans or umpires are not looking for these foul balls they are unable to avoid them in some instances. The same can be said for foul balls from the softball field to the baseball field. Having the players in a dugout would eliminate this safety risk.

Fencing. Currently at four feet high, the outfield baseball field fences do not provide enough protection for a player colliding with the fence as he is chasing down a deep fly ball. At the current height, a player's midsection or possibly head could collide with top of the fence. Extending the fences to six feet high would significantly reduce the likelihood of a player's midsection or head making contact with the top of the fence. In addition to raising the height of the fences, installing a plastic fence cap along all outfield fence sections would further increase safety. The softball outfield are 250 feet from home plate. NFHS high school softball rule books suggest fences should be between 190 and 215 feet. This would bring the field up to regulation specifications.

Lighting. Adding permanent lights would ensure that as night time falls games are coming to an end, going into extra innings or poor weather conditions exist, lighting can be provided to ensure that athlete, umpire and fan are seeing the ball appropriately.

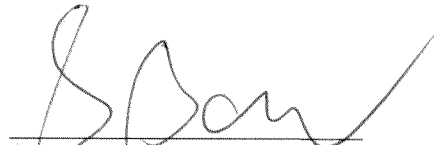
Restrooms. The schools restrooms are not in close proximity to the fields or available for use in the summer months when the field is being used for town recreation games. This poses a problem for the athletes, umpires and attendees.


Covered Structure. There is no covered structured for athlete and other participants when weather conditions warrant a stoppage in play. With heightened security, the school is not an option during non-school hours, week-ends or summer months. The current shed is not adequate for these purposes.

Chairman requested John Gramesty to obtain the most recent athletic field site plans from the Town Clerk and/or Engineer.

Chairman requested Greg Kaether to seek out the assistance of the professional(s) used to update the Town's Babe Ruth fields by doing a walk-through of the fields and provide input to this committee on how one might address the safety concerns identified in a cost effective manner.

5. **Public Comment.** None.
6. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:35 p.m. ET.


Greg Baktis, Secretary

14 MAY -8 PM 12:28
TOWN OF OXFORD, CT

TOWN CLERK