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MEMORANDUM

TO: Eileen M. Donoghue, City Manager *EMD*

FROM: Diane N. Tradd, Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

DATE: June 9, 2020

SUBJECT: UPDATE TO COUNCIL MOTIONS AND REQUESTS MADE BY MAYOR LEAHY, COUNCILOR MERCIER AND COUNCILOR ROURKE, RELATIVE TO THE RESTORATION AND IMPROVEMENTS OF CAWLEY STADIUM

DPD and DPW have continued to discuss the necessary facility improvements at Cawley Stadium, and have researched possible funding opportunities. DPW has submitted capital funding requests specifically for Cawley Stadium in the upcoming budget, and have plans for future requests to develop a holistic facilities prioritization and improvements plan. To date, the City has not identified any grant funding sources that will cover costs associated with replacement of the artificial turf; state grants no longer cover turf replacement, but state PARC grant funding could potentially be available for future improvements to the complex.

As discussions related to the needs at Cawley Stadium have continued, staff began to prioritize the items needing the most immediate attention. DPD and DPW determined a professional assessment of the turf conditions was critical to assess existing conditions and to inform decisions about future use of the field. Huntress Associates, a landscape architecture and land planning firm, recently assessed the field turf conditions and it is in their professional opinion the field “has reached the end of its useful life.” Based on this recent assessment, the field can no longer be used for sports until it is replaced. This assessment elevates the criticality of the turf replacement project at Cawley, which is why it was submitted as a critical need in the City’s FY21 Capital Budget.

Huntress has recommended a full turf replacement, with a new resilient underlayment and some additional drainage for the football field. They also recommend an overspray and maintenance cycle for the track surface, and replacement of the long jump landing pits. This work is considered best practice for maintenance on track facilities such as ours. The City is in the process of contracting for

the full design of a new artificial turf at the stadium and the additional track work using existing open space funding. We are working on a very aggressive schedule to have the field designed, and installed prior to the beginning of the 2020 football season for Lowell High School. We are hopeful we can meet this schedule, and Huntress Associates has informed us that not only is this schedule possible, but also beneficial to bid the project at this time.

Huntress has provided the city an initial cost estimate of \$661,310 for design services and construction. DPD, DPW and Parks staff have reviewed the scope of work provided by Huntress and believe it is necessary to move forward with the entirety of the scope as suggested. The turf field conditions are no longer safe for continued use. The work on the track, while not a health and safety issue, is a maintenance issue, the track will deteriorate further if this type of ongoing maintenance is deferred much longer.

This turf replacement project is the first of many facility improvement needs at Cawley Stadium. The City will be seeking opportunities for future PARC grant funding opportunities and other funding sources to complete a comprehensive master improvement plan and prioritization plan of the Cawley Stadium site.

DNT/ns

cc: Christine Clancy, Commissioner of Public Works
Shannon Cohan, Superintendent of Parks
Yovani Baez-Rose, Design Planner