

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	April 3, 2023
Action Required:	Approve Resolution (1 reading – Public Hearing)
Presenter:	Brenda Kelley, Redevelopment Manager, Riaan Anthony, Deputy Director - Parks Division
Staff Contacts:	Brenda Kelley, Redevelopment Manager Riaan Anthony, Deputy Director - Parks Division Samuel Sanders, Jr., Deputy City Manager
Title:	Approval of Lease Agreement with Virginia Soccer Alliance, Inc. d/b/a Soccer Organization of the Charlottesville Area, Inc. (SOCA) for lease of Unity Field (1 Reading Resolution - Public Hearing)

Background

The Soccer Organization of the Charlottesville Area (SOCA) wishes to continue to lease a 1.844 acre portion of Unity Field (f/k/a Davis Field). The most recent Lease Agreement with SOCA was effective for ten (10) years, from March 1, 2013 through March 31, 2023.

The history of the field is that it was originally the football field for the private school Rock Hill Academy in the 1960s and 70s. When that school went away it became the property of a local family headed by George Coles. He leased it to SOCA for many years for the price of the taxes. SOCA also handled the upkeep of the property. When his family wanted to sell the property, the neighbors lobbied for the field to stay as open space instead of becoming an infill development of some sort (apartments, etc). SOCA and the City both investigated the potential and the City acquired the property as part of its parks system and then leased it to SOCA along similar terms to what SOCA had been leasing from the Coles family previously.

Discussion

According to the website, SOCA, a nonprofit organization, was founded in 1982. The organization was formed to provide appropriate soccer programming for the Charlottesville and Albemarle community with the goal of fostering a greater love for a sport that had little history in the area. Initially offering youth recreational soccer programming, the organization has grown through the years to become the preeminent soccer provider in this region of Virginia. With soccer programming offered for young and old, novice to advanced players, SOCA now serves over 6,000 local soccer players seasonally.

More information about SOCA and the programs they provide can be found here: <https://www.socaspot.org/about/>

City staff provides the following information relative to this lease approval request:

Portion of Unity Field leased: approximately 1.844 acres
Current Assessed Value of the 1.844-acre portion: \$548,600
Current Lease Rate: \$10,000/annually

The general terms of the Lease Agreement are:

Lease period: 5 years, with option for five additional one year terms
(ultimately if option exercised, expires March 31, 2033)

Lease rate: \$12,000/annually, with no more than 2% annual increase

Use of property:

- for the purposes of conducting youth recreational sports activities
- only used during the following hours: 7am – 9pm EDT; 7am – 6pm EST
- no parking of vehicles or vehicular access within the Leased area
- no promotion of commercial businesses, except with prior written consent of the City
- no conducting business or raising funds, except with prior written consent of the City
- no admission fee shall be charged
- Lessee has exclusive right to formal use of the leased property
- When not in active use by the Lessee, the public shall have the right to use the property
- Lessee is responsible for safety and supervision while participating in events, programs and activities

Lessee Responsibilities: responsible for all costs associated with the ongoing maintenance, operation and repair of the Leased Property; placing trash in approved receptacles and removing trash from the site on at least a weekly basis; maintenance of all turf and forested areas; Lessee accepts Leased Property “as-is”

Alignment with City Council's Vision and Strategic Plan

This lease aligns with City Council's “Green City” vision and contributes to Goal 2 of the Strategic Plan: Be a safe, equitable, thriving and beautiful community; and objective 2.5: to provide natural and historic resources stewardship; 5.2: Build collaborative partnerships; 5.3: Promote community engagement.

Community Engagement

This Lease Agreement has been reviewed by SOCA representative(s).

Budgetary Impact

This request does not require any funding from the City budget.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that City Council approve the attached Resolution following Public Hearing.

Alternatives

City Council could choose to not approve this Resolution which will result in the current lease to expire.

Attachments

1. Resolution SOCA Lease Agreement 040323
2. Unity Field SOCA Lease draft revMarch2023