

THE AHS SYNTHETIC TURF FIELD & TRACK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT BUILDING COMMITTEE OF THE TOWN OF AVON HELD A MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2019 AT THE AVON TOWN HALL

Present were Mark Zacchio, Peter Ponziani, Todd Donovan, Sarah Roberson, Jason Indomenico, and David Jadovich. Also present were Grace Tiezzi, Assistant to the Town Manager, Ruth Checko, Director of Recreation and Parks, Larry Baril, Town Engineer, and Myles Altimus, Board of Education Director of Operations.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Zacchio called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

David Jadovich made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 30, 2019 meeting. Mr. Indomenico seconded the motion, but made a comment about the safety netting for the lacrosse fields. Ms. Tiezzi confirmed that the safety netting would be included in the pricing. Mr. Indomenico stated that the minutes need not be amended as this discussion will be reflected in tonight's minutes. All were in favor, and the motion carried.

III. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There were no communications from the audience.

IV. REVIEW OF BID RESULTS/RECOMMENDATION OF A CONTRACTOR

Ms. Tiezzi stated that at the bid opening on March 8th, they opened four bids. There were four general contractors who were interested in the project, and one unresponsive bid. Contractors provided pricing for the track and field, as well as five add alternates. Add alternate 1 was sports field and pedestrian lighting in sync with the rest of the project. Add alternate 2 was sports field and pedestrian lighting on a different track than the base bid project, so that it could be installed up to 180 days after the conclusion of the base project; thereby allowing more time for the fundraisers to come forward with the available funds. The final 3 add alternates were buffering. One was for buffering along Sudbury Way and West Avon Road, one was for the extended buffering up near the baseball field, and the last one was for buffering along the field hockey field.

In response to Mr. Zacchio's question, Ms. Tiezzi confirmed that yes, the bid spec for buffering is indeed what will be executed. She added that the significant difference in cost was due to the inclusion of a healthy contingency should Planning and Zoning alter their requirements.

Ms. Tiezzi stated that the Town performed their due diligence after the bid opening: BSC Group and staff went through the responses, with focus given to the apparent low bidder, which was Mountain View Landscapes. They also conducted a thorough review of Mountain View's references, which included the Towns of Simsbury, Farmington, and Windsor. She stated that BSC Group also has quite a bit of experience working with Mountain View. Town staff and BSC Group conducted a scope review with Mountain View last Friday, and Mr. Zacchio participated. They went through the bid document, the specs, and the plans. Ms.

Tiezzi stated that they came out of it feeling that Mountain View was a really strong low bidder. She feels that they can handle the job because they have a lot of experience, and Town staff recommends that the Committee recommends that Council award the contract to Mountain View for the base project.

Ms. Roberson voiced the concerns of the neighbors on Sudbury Way, West Avon Road, Holly Lane, and Hollister Drive. She also stated that in her professional and neighborly opinion, the bid is too low and therefore unacceptable. The gap between \$48,000 and \$287,000 for buffering is too large. She cannot, in good faith, say that this is an appropriate bid to approve.

Mr. Zacchio suggested they first listen to Steve Corrigan's presentation. He also noted for the record that the Committee's charge is not to decide if this is appropriate or not. The Committee is charged to recommend to Council a contractor to accomplish the spec that was put out at referendum.

Ms. Tiezzi confirmed for Mr. Zacchio that the spec for buffering is the same as what will be executed for buffering.

In response to Mr. Zacchio's statements, Ms. Roberson informed him that the neighbors have attended the Planning & Zoning meetings. That is where a lot of the frustrations were raised.

Ms. Tiezzi introduced Steve Corrigan, the owner of Mountain View Landscapes and Lawncare out of Chicopee, MA.

Mr. Corrigan introduced himself as the owner of Mountain View Landscapes. They have been in business since 1976. He started working for the company when he was nineteen years old. The company currently employs around eighty people. They have two divisions within the company: a commercial landscape/ grounds maintenance business, and a commercial landscape construction business. They are often subcontractors to general contractors for large projects. They've done a lot of work at Amherst College, University of Massachusetts, and Williams College. They also do a lot of park, playground, and athletic field construction where they serve as the general contractor. They recently finished a track and field project for the Town of Windsor; they did another track and field project for the Town of Bloomfield a few years back. Years ago, their first track and field project was for the Town of Simsbury.

Mr. Corrigan introduced his son Shawn who has been with the company for a long time, and now serves as their Operations Manager. Shawn was responsible for their projects in Windsor, Bloomfield, Manchester, Loomis Chaffee, and Lyman Hall. Shawn stated that he just completed a seven million dollar project in Middletown.

Mr. Corrigan added that they have worked with BSC Group many times before, and have a lot of experience, not just in athletic field construction. They've built war memorials and veterans memorials. He is proud of his dedicated team of eighty people, split between the two divisions of the company. He noted the longevity of the staff; many employees have been with the company for more than twenty years.

Mr. Corrigan is excited about this project with the Town. It is interesting, but nothing they haven't done before. Mr. Corrigan noted that the difference in cost for the buffering is due to

the fact that the Town budgeted for a certain amount, but the actual cost ended up being considerably less. Mr. Zacchio agreed and added that there was a lot of money budgeted for the buffering because they wanted to make sure that they could afford it.

In response to Mr. Zacchio's question, Mr. Corrigan said that they would use whatever material they could onsite.

Mr. Corrigan went on to discuss the schedule. The start date for the project is April 22nd, and the date of substantial completion is August 23rd. He explained that the first two to three weeks will be devoted to demolition and site preparation, and then the earthwork can begin. By July 8th, they need to get the track paved with asphalt. This is because the track has to sit for twenty-eight days before it can be surfaced. The last two weeks have been set aside for the track surfacing subcontractor to do their job. The two weeks prior to that is when the turf subcontractor will be coming in to do their job. He stated that the only challenge he foresees is the weather, and that will only be a problem for the track surfacing and the installation of the synthetic turf. The schedule is pretty compressed, and there isn't much wiggle room.

In response to a question from Mr. Zacchio about the schedule being more aggressive than other towns, Mr. Corrigan stated that they're all the same.

In response to a question from Ms. Roberson about completing the project in time, Mr. Corrigan stated that if, due to weather, the track is not done in August, it would get done in September or October at the latest.

In response to a question from Mr. Donovan about the track paving schedule, Mr. Corrigan stated that the track paving subcontractor has seven or eight other jobs going, so it will be a "hollering match".

In response to a question from Mr. Zacchio about the order of jobs, Mr. Corrigan stated that it depends on the turf installer.

In response to a question from Mr. Ponziani about other factors affecting the schedule, Mr. Corrigan stated that there are none.

In response to a question from Ms. Roberson about the lacrosse safety netting, Ms. Tiezzi stated that she will check to see if it was included and if not, they can do a change order or purchase it outside the scope of the project.

In response to a question from Mr. Donovan about the infill that has been selected, Mr. Corrigan stated that there are fields with this system that are failing. Nobody really knows why. The fields are shrinking, and the seams are splitting in certain areas. Mr. Corrigan stated that they are freezing. When it freezes and thaws, that causes the field to contract. It has happened with different turf manufacturers.

Mr. Zacchio asked whether the problem is with original fields or replacements, and Mr. Corrigan said that the problems exist with both.

Mr. Indomenico asked if there are fields with the same product that are not failing, to which Mr. Corrigan replied that he does not know of any yet.

Mr. Corrigan stated that one field with problems is still playable, but some are really bad.

In a response to Ms. Roberson's question about the field issues affecting the track, Mr. Corrigan stated that it does not impact the track at all.

Mr. Indomenico asked when Mr. Corrigan would need to be notified if the Town Council chooses to go with another infill system. Mr. Corrigan stated that that change would need to be made by the end of May.

Ms. Roberson asked how the project can continue if they know about these failing systems. Mr. Zacchio responded that BSC Group determined that there are some fields without these problems.

Ms. Roberson asked what happens if the fields do fail, and if the Committee has any liability for that. Mr. Zacchio responded that the Committee is tasked with making a recommendation for a general contractor, and the Council will have to make the decision from there.

In response to a question from Mr. Donovan, Ms. Tiezzi confirmed that these issues were discussed with the Town Council. Council is aware of the fields, and there was a lot of due diligence done to choose the infill system. She added that BSC Group is monitoring the status of the other fields.

Mr. Baril stated that our project is unique compared to the other fields that have failed. The high school's drainage situation is better than many places in Connecticut.

Ms. Tiezzi confirmed for Mr. Ponziani that all of these issues are on the Council's radar.

In response to a question from Mr. Donovan about anything the Committee might have missed, Mr. Corrigan stated that the only thing he would suggest is that the light bases be included in this phase of the project, rather than later.

There was some discussion about the benefits of getting this done in tandem with the track and field construction, as it would be cheaper to do so now rather than a few years from now. The consensus from the Committee is to get the light bases installed during this phase of the project.

In response to Mr. Zacchio's comments, Ms. Tiezzi stated that the buffering and the lighting go together, so the buffering would be taken care of when the lights are installed at a future point.

Mr. Jadovich asked why Mountain View came in with such a low bid, significantly less than the other bids. To which, Mr. Corrigan responded that the other contractors are road builders and Mountain View builds fields. This is their expertise. They were the only athletic field contractor in the mix.

In response to a question from Mr. Indomenico, Mr. Corrigan answered that a lot of his competitors in the athletic field business are from Massachusetts. Mr. Corrigan stated that Mountain View is also doing a project at University of Saint Joseph, so this enables them to do two projects at once in the same area.

There was some discussion about going over budget, and how there are contingencies to account for changes and a possibility to even come in under budget.

Mr. Donovan made a motion to recommend to the Council that they award the contract to Mountain View at their April 4th meeting. Mr. Ponziani seconded the motion, which received unanimous approval.

V. PERMITTING UPDATE

Ms. Tiezzi informed the Committee that the additional permit applications that were needed for the lighting and landscaping plans were presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission on March 12th. There was a public hearing, and the permits were approved with minor conditions. The first condition being that the lighting installation adheres to the photometric plan, and secondly, that no white pines are to be used in the landscaping. It also became known at that meeting that the ACORN group plans to have their funds raised by the fall of 2020.

Ms. Tiezzi stated that this project is subject to DEEP permitting through the State. BSC Group prepared and submitted an application in January, and the Town should be hearing back by April 1st.

VI. PROJECT SCHEDULE

Ms. Tiezzi reported that the project is still on track for April 22nd groundbreaking.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Ponziani motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Zacchio seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Ponziani, Vice Chair/Secretary

Attest: Sitara Gnanaguru, Clerk