

WOLTERS FIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL– 2008-09

The Wolters Field Light Advisory Committee met three times during the 2008-09 school year on the following dates: November 7, 2008, February 18, 2009 and May 7, 2009. The committee members include:

Brigid Ohlwein – Community Member
Kevin Fassett – Community Member
Ross Deutsch – Community Member
Scott Chukerman – Community Member
Judy Schmeuser – Community Member
Marjie Sandlow – District 113 Board Member
Mary Anderson – City of Highland Park Director of Public Works
Jim Kirsch – City of Highland Park Council Member
Barry Bolek – District 113 Assistant Superintendent of Finance
Paul Shafer – City of Highland Park Police Chief
Bobbie Monroe – Highland Park High School Athletic Director

November 7, 2008 Meeting Synopsis

During the first meeting of the Advisory group in November, a review of the Fall Light Schedule was presented and it included 11 regular dates with lights, one play-off game and 3 special occasion practice dates. The ordinance allows a total of 25 regular dates, 3 possible football play-off dates and 7 special occasion dates. The scheduled games were in compliance with the ordinance.

The parking situation in the neighborhood during Friday night games was discussed. Citations have been issued for vehicles parked on streets without permits.

There was a concern that parents are using Centerfield Court to drop off and pick up students. This is because school staff is not discouraging vehicles from entering the barricaded street. Radios will be provided to school staff so that in the event of a problem, police may be quickly summoned to assist.

The Park Avenue drop off was also discussed. Ways to encourage parents to use the designated driveway for this were discussed. It was recommended that next year we reverse the traffic pattern, so that parents are entering the east driveway at the Administration Building and exiting the center drive at Wolters after dropping off their kids.

The loudspeaker sound volume was also questioned. The District checked the sound coming from all four speakers to make sure the sound is in sync. Also, the District began locking the controls to the sound system to make sure the volume control is always at the right level and personnel cannot randomly adjust it.

It was noted that traffic was worse on side streets on Saturdays and Sundays this fall during Little Giant football games because of the construction project. Things should be back to normal next fall.

The need for an amendment to the ordinance was discussed because of our situation with practices during the playoffs. The teams run out of daylight due to turning the clocks back, so anytime they are still playing in the late afternoon of November, that problem will exist.

An update regarding the construction projects on the field was also provided by Mr. Barry Bolek, Assistant Superintendent.

February 18, 2009 Meeting Synopsis

The second meeting of the Advisory Group was held in February and a discussion regarding a change to the ordinance was presented. It was resolved that a resolution will be requested for consideration by the City Council from District 113 to authorize the use of lights at Wolters Field for post regular season football practices. The resolution would also allow HPHS to notify the neighbors by placing practice announcements on their website instead of posting them on the schedule two weeks prior to the first event of each school year. This resolution was presented and passed by the City Council on March 23, 2009

Mr. Jeff Goltz, a resident of the area, brought several concerns to the Advisory Committee. In general, he did not support any modification of existing restrictions without further concessions by the School District. He did appear before City Council and voiced his concerns on March 23rd. Mr. Goltz also brought attention to the meeting time of the Advisory Committee and expressed that several neighbors could not arrive in time for a 4:30pm meeting. Mr. Greenberg agreed with this. Mr. Chukerman, on the other hand, expressed that many neighbors had issues with a 7:00pm meeting time. Consensus was reached to move the meeting to 7pm next school year since the schedule for the meetings had been previously published.

Mr. Kirsch recommended that our committee vote to either give approval or object to the resolutions that will go before the City Council.

Mr. Chukerman made a motion to approve sending the resolution to the City Council. Brigid Ohlwein seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 in favor of sending the resolution to the City Council.

May 7, 2009 Meeting Synopsis

During the May 7, 2009 meeting, the 2008-09 light schedules were reviewed. There were 20 lighted events during the school year. No significant issues were encountered this spring.

The 2009-10 Walters Field lighted event schedule is incomplete at this time. However, in the fall of 2009, there are 11 events currently scheduled to be played under the lights. The schedule will be posted on the High School website for the fall as soon as completed.

Bobbie Monroe reported that the possible renovation of the backfields at Walters Field may start as early as summer. As soon as details are available, the District will share the information with the neighbors.

The 2009-10 meeting dates for the Wolters Field Advisory Group are:

Thursday, August 20, 2009 – 7:00PM
Thursday, November 5, 2009 – 7:00PM
Thursday, May 6, 2010 – 7:00PM

Summary

The following items brought to the attention of the Wolters Field Advisory Group will be incorporated in the 2009/2010 operational plan.....

- 1- The loudspeaker system volume will be set and maintained by a locked cabinet so as not to allow unauthorized access and increases in volumes.
- 2- The drop off area adjacent to Park Avenue will be adjusted to reverse the traffic flow. Signs prohibiting drop off on Park Avenue will be utilized to discourage this practice.
- 3- The School District schedule will be mailed to area residents two weeks prior to the first event as required by the ordinance.
- 4- School staff, with Police assistance, will discourage unauthorized access to Centerfield Court to eliminate drop offs there.
- 5- The meeting times for the Wolters Field Advisory Group will return to 7pm.