



# CITY OF CONCORD

## REPORT TO MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** David Gill, Parks and Recreation Director

**DATE:** February 1, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Request from the Empire Baseball League to expand to Concord and play their home games at Memorial Field.

### **Recommendation**

I recommend City Council authorize the City Manager to work with Legal and the Parks and Recreation Departments to review the request and enter into an agreement with Empire Baseball League as long as there are no legal restrictions or negative impact to regular users.

### **Background**

In January, we received a request from the Empire Baseball League to expand to Concord and to play their home games at Warren Doane Baseball Field.

The Empire League is an Independent Professional Baseball Organization established 2015. The league operates with teams primarily out of New York, Puerto Rico and Maine. The league is a Rookie to Class A-level of minor league baseball. Their purpose is to give players out of college or with a little pro experience the true opportunity of staying in shape and providing them the chance at being signed to higher level league contracts with affiliated or independent teams.

The leagues request is to host their home games here in Concord and will not need additional days for practices.

We have reviewed the field use over the past couple of years for Warren Doane Diamond and have worked with Eddie Gonzalez the CEO of the league to reduce his request to host 26 home games to 20 home games. This will allow current users continued access to the field that is similar to previous years. The Empire League is aware and able to pay all field rental fees and if needed staff overtime and light costs.

As the City of Concord has received funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for several improvements at Memorial Field we checked to make sure this use is permissible. The New Hampshire Department of Natural and Cultural Resources is responsible for the LWCF program in the state and their response is below

**From:** Feldbaum, Eric [mailto:Eric.Feldbaum@dncr.nh.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 30, 2018 8:19 AM  
**To:** Gill, David; Gegas, Vasilios (Bill)  
**Subject:** RE: Empire League Request

David,

Thank you for bring this to our attention as it relates to the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Memorial Field. As you are aware the entire property of Memorial Field is protected within the 6(f)(3) boundary after receiving multiple grants under the LWCF program. Based on our conversation the other day the Empire League like any other public group is looking to rent/reserve the field and host roughly twenty games which would be open to the general public for a fee to watch. The city has a process for anyone to reserve field space making the rental process nonexclusive. This office sees no issue with the Empire League (like any other group) renting field space and charging an entry fee (just to the baseball field). Like the general public the empire league has the ability to rent space based on availability under the current Cities policy for field reservations.

As long as the league remains nonexclusive and the property remains under the ownership of the City there is no issue with the City entering into an agreement for the Empire League to rent field space. If you have any further questions please let me know as you move through the rental process.

Thanks  
Eric

**Eric Feldbaum-Community Recreation Specialist/CPRP**

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