BOARD OF ALDERMEN & PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT BUILDING
COMMITTEES SPECIAL JOINT MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF SHELTON
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2025
SHELTON CITY HALL, 54 HILL STREET, SHELTON, CT
Live Streamed at www.cityofshelton.org

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Alderman Anglace called the Special meeting of the Board of Aldermen and Public Improvement Building Committee meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. in the auditorium at Shelton City Hall. All those present stood and pledged allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Roll Call – Board of Aldermen
Alderman John F. Anglace, Jr., President – Present
Alderman Eric McPherson, Vice President – Absent
Alderman Cris Balamaci – Present
Alderman Lorenzo Durante – Present via Zoom
Alderman Porter McKinnon – Present
Alderman Anthony Simonetti – Present – arrived at 5:15
Alderman Bernie Simons – Present
Alderman Benjamin Perry – Present

Public Improvement Building Committee
Bill Banfe – Present
Mark Romano – Present
Jason Neves – Present
Alderman Bernie Simons – Present

Administration
Mayor Mark A. Lauretti
Kellie Vazzano, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor

1. APPOINTMENTS TO PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT BUILDING COMMITTEE

Alderman Balamaci MOVED to appoint the following people to the Public Improvement Building Committee effective immediately:

Mr. Mark Romano (R)
6 Frans Way
Shelton, CT 06484
mrkromano@aol.com

Mr. Jason Neves (R)
22 Cobblestone Drive
Shelton, CT 06484
jmneves@gmail.com

Seconded by Alderman McKinnon.

No discussion.

A voice vote was taken and motion passed unanimously (6-0). (Alderman Simonetti had not arrived as of the time of the voting).

Alderman Anglace asked that the new members of the Public Improvement Building Committee be introduced.

Alderman Simons: We have Mark Romano and Jason Neves. Both are builders.

Alderman Anglace: Bill Banfe has a huge background in education and did tremendous things for many years. I am very thankful that he is still serving Shelton.

Alderman Balamaci: The Town Clerk is prepared to swear them in.

2. NEW MULTI-PURPOSED TURF FIELD AT SHELTON HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION

FieldTurf
Andrew Dyjak, Regional Vice President
Chris Hulk, Director of Design & Construction

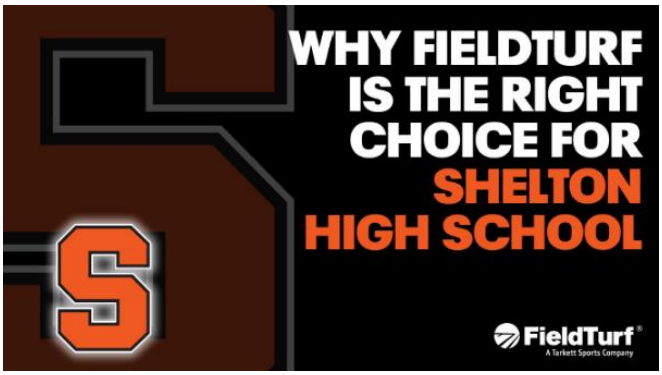
Andrew Dyjak: We appreciate you having us here tonight. Chris, myself and some other members of the Shelton Community, the Mayor, Bernie and some other folks have been working towards a plan. There was an initial RFP (request for proposal) that went out for design services. What our company does, we not only do the design, but also the manufacturing of all the materials and also the construction of it as well. The way we can do that in the State of Connecticut is that we are on the CREC Co-Op purchase agreement so everything that we talk about tonight in terms of pricing, in terms of design has already been vetted by the State of Connecticut which partners with 37 other different states to pre-bid a variety of different items, but mainly what we go over is anything that has to do with a field, a turf, a track, lights and anything that is associated with those types of features. The goal of the meeting for us tonight is to tell you a little bit about ourselves, go through kind of how the process works and what we have done at other municipalities. What Chris is going to do is dig into the specifics and go down kind of the laundry list of exactly what the scope of the project could be and also the associated pricing. These are real prices, not pricing that we did on the back of an envelope. These have been vetted by the State of Connecticut and Chris does a great job doing the design work.

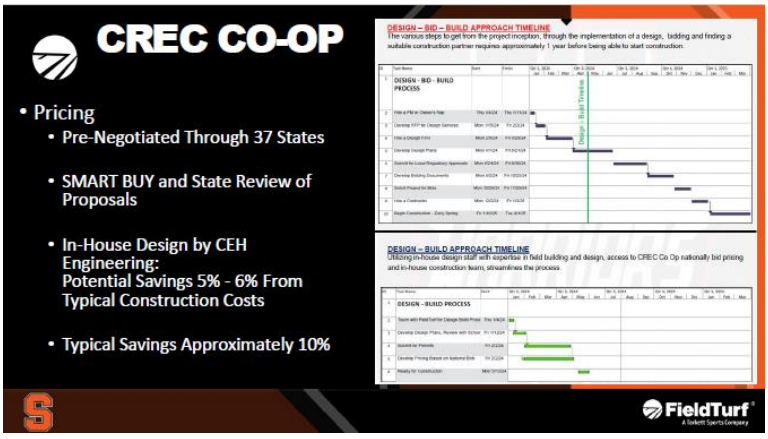
You can peruse the first couple of pages of the handout. The name of our company is FieldTurf. We are an international company. We have revenues of over a billion dollars a year. We have manufacturing plants all over the world, but the one that serves us is right outside of Atlanta, Georgia. Our manufacturing plant is Triple ISO Certified, which means that we have national certifications in quality, the environment and occupational safety. We are the only synthetic turf manufacturer to have one. The plant was in Dalton, is now in Calhoun, Georgia.

We have done a tremendous amount of work in the athletic fields throughout the country, throughout New England, but also in the State of Connecticut. We currently do, on average, about 20-25 projects a year in the State of Connecticut. We have done every single Division I school in the State of Connecticut. Projects like Central Connecticut State, University of Connecticut, Fairfield University, Sacred Heart, Quinnipiac University are all our clients. We also do projects at the high school level. We do a tremendous amount of work with athletic directors, Parks & Recreation Departments and basically anybody that is interested in athletic servicing. The scope that we do internally is synthetic turf, we also build tracks and build tennis courts as well as basketball courts.

Again, the way we go about doing these projects is that the State of Connecticut grants each municipality in the State to use what they call their contracts that they have already bid out nationally. The benefit to the municipality, the benefits to Shelton would be that, 1. You would get a heavily discounted rate for what the standard project would because you are buying in economies of scale; 2. Since we have in-house design services, you are not paying an additional third party person to do the design work. A project like this, the bids for engineering came in between $40,000-$50,000. The standard design fee for a project like this would be in the $50,000 range. We don't charge for that. Right off the bat you save $50,000 that could be put towards the project or any piece.

The other thing that this process does is it saves time. Instead of having multiple people working on it and then doing a local bid and if the bids come in higher then rebidding. It saves almost 6-9 months to the project process and with inflationary pressures, 6 or 9 months can be anywhere between 3 and 5%. You are not only saving the upfront $50,000, you are also saving up to about 5% to the total project cost, which is pretty exciting for us. This is the way we do a tremendous amount of our work.





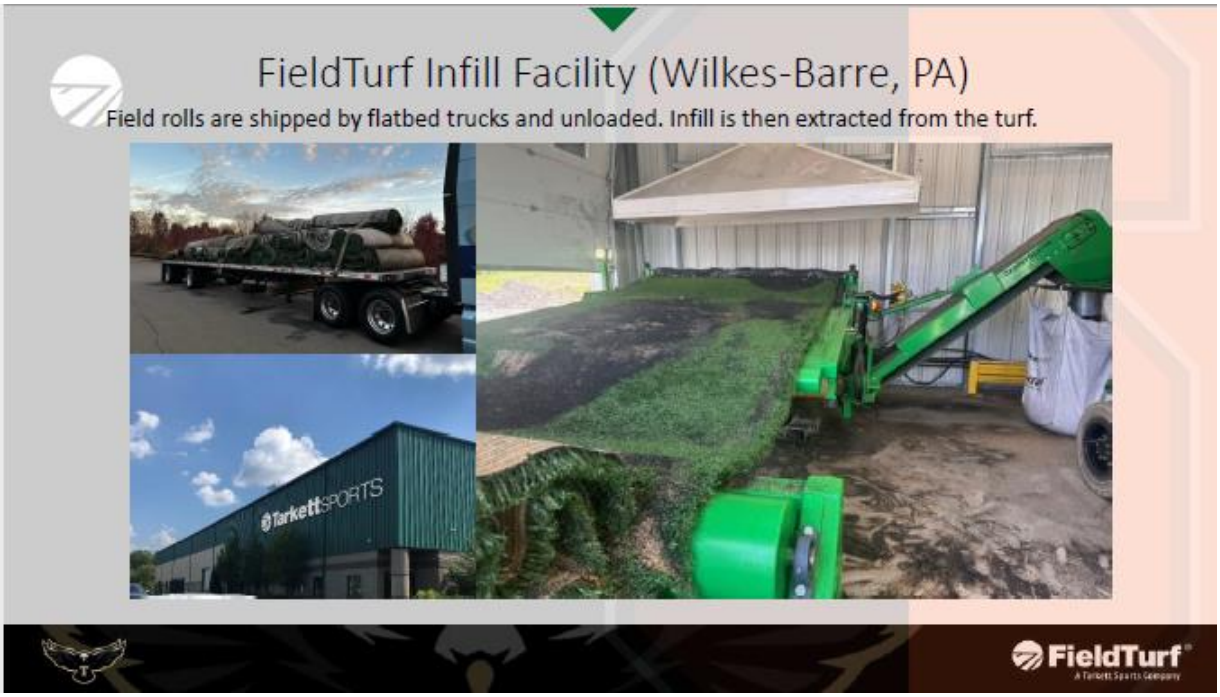
The next page shows some references. The references are, just to be kind of clear, the references are just places in Connecticut, just through the cooperative purchasing agreement, and just within the last couple of years.

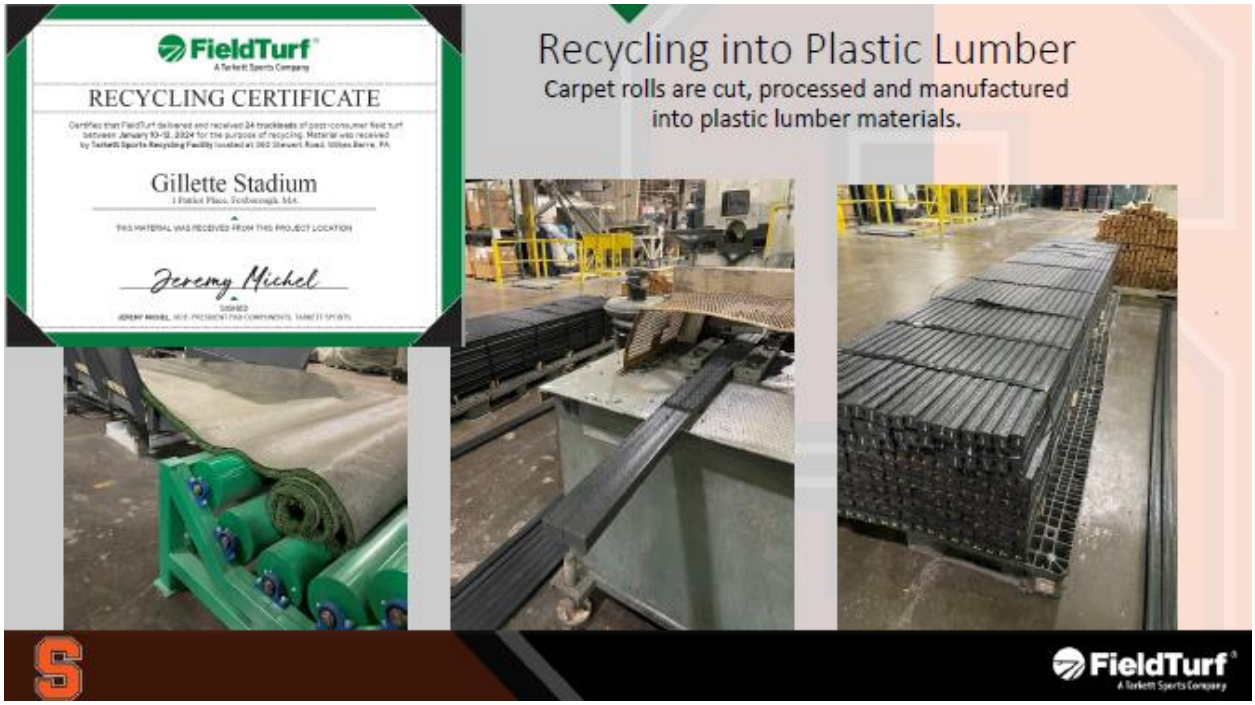
We have done literally in the hundreds of projects, just in the State of Connecticut, using this process. We have been, obviously, fully vetted and have a tremendous amount of references.

Next page, one of the things that we had a deficit in up until a couple of years ago, was what happens at the end of the useful life of the fields. After 10-15 years what happens to the fields? The industry standard, and what we used to do is you used to just throw the field out, put it in a dumpster, in a landfill and there it goes. We have completely changed that. Right now, each one of our replacement projects has a net zero carbon emissions output, which is very important.

We also take every field that we remove and we ship it down to a facility we have in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. We separate the infill from the carpet and then in the infill we separate the sand and there are different sizes of rubber and we separate that and clean it and put it into bags. We reuse that infill for different projects.

Also, the carpet goes to a sister company of ours and gets turned into plastic boards, like plastic decking almost, almost like glorified Trex decking. One of the first projects we did with getting a certificate for this type of process was Gillette's Stadium when we most recently replaced that field. The field that we took out was 100% recycled and you do get a certificate saying that everything was recycled, which is pretty important on our end.

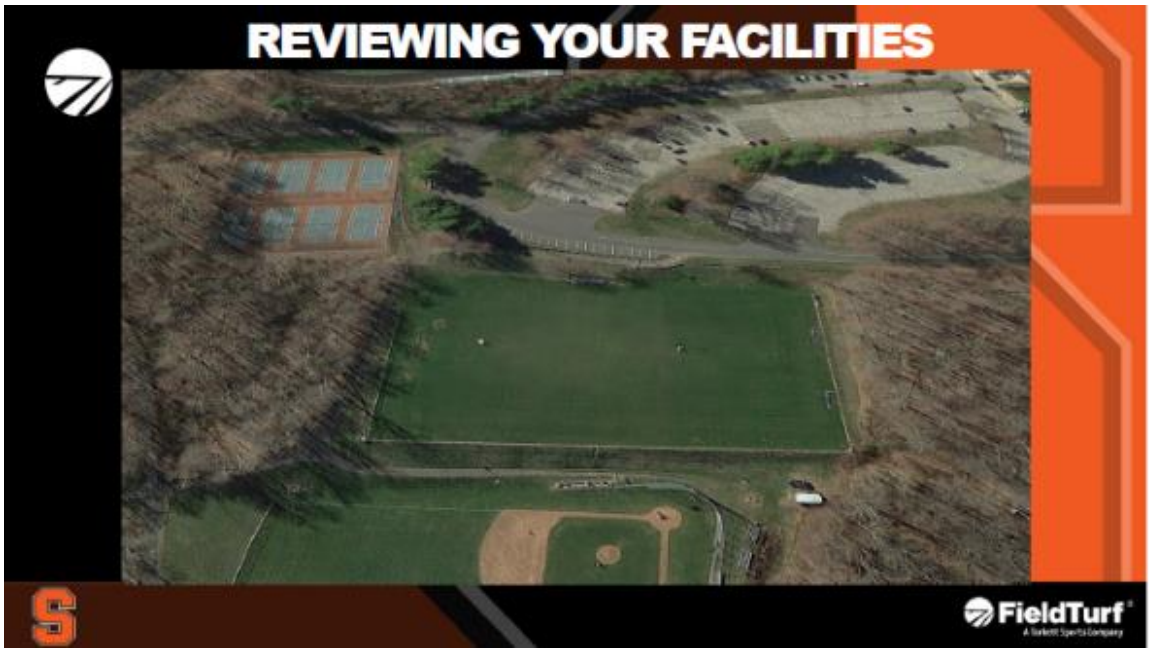




I think this gives you kind of a quick overview of who we are, what other kinds of projects we have done, how we went about the design process and how you get your project done in the quickest amount of

time possible, but also the most efficient and effective and also at the lowest cost. I will turn it over to Chris who will dig into the nuts and bolts of how we got to the pricing, how he reviewed your facilities, how he did the design and kind of what led to our proposal.

Chris Hulk: I am the Director of Design and Construction, a licensed professional engineer here in Connecticut. We have been working over the last several months to come up with multiple different designs for the facility.



We have visited this facility multiple different times. We have reviewed all the available mapping. We are very familiar with everything that happens on the site, how the use is going and how the process of these fields were built. The way these projects need to happen is the topsoil that is on the site needs to be removed. It is an organic material so what happens is it breaks down if you put the carpet on top of it so it gets all lumpy. So basically, we need to remove that. Then we fine-grade the field, on the subgrade put in drainage piping on either side of the field to collect the storm water. Luckily here we have an area where we can tie into the existing storm drains on the sides so we don't have to ship it somewhere else from the site. We would then bring in our dynamic stone base and fine grade that. Then we would put together what is called a concrete turf anchor curb. It is about a 12"x18" or 12"x12", depending on where it is going, concrete curb that the turf actually gets attached to and it holds all the stone in place and makes it so the field does not shift around and has the longevity that you need to be able to maintain something like this.

There are lots of different options that go into a field like this, but in general every field that we do needs to meet certain criteria for us to be able to maintain the warranty for a project like this, which varies from 8-10 years, depending on the type of product you use. I believe here we are looking at 8 year, but can be upgraded. A turf system like the one that we are proposing should last in the 12-15

year range, warranty being for the 8 years. We have a set of standards that we have developed based on the number of projects we have done that have to be met, things like the hardness of the stone, how things get graded, the amount of stone that goes in, the type of turf, type of concrete, those types of things. It makes it so you guys have a long-lasting project that is not going to fall apart on you.

Because we go through this CREC Co-Op process and we do so many of these, we have trusted site partners that build basically all of our fields for us. It is not something where Joe Schmoe is going to come in and say oh, I built a road, I can build a field. We have specific people who build our fields for us and we do the in-house turf installation, in-house design, in-house maintenance of the fields and all that kind of stuff.

So, in looking at your facility, some of the things that jumped out to us are there is some potential to improve the ADA accessibility to the site. Currently there is a 4 or 6' tall fence around the site. It is a pretty well graded field, not too steep, not too flat, so that works pretty well. It is situated between two steep slopes and trees on one side. Based on the actual layout of the field and what is currently there, it will fit nicely to have a nice new field.

We then looked at a couple of different concepts and we based these concepts on being able to have multiple different levels of field and size of the field to be able to fit here. Football, soccer, field hockey, lacrosse and then one of the things that we made sure we wanted to do was we made the field wide enough that perpendicular to the game fields you could have two youth games going on at the same time on either side of the field.

On the page with the orange and black shows a layout with a bunch of different options, one for improved ADA accessibility, some improved seating to the walls. The fields potentially have ball netting on the ends, fencing, etc.

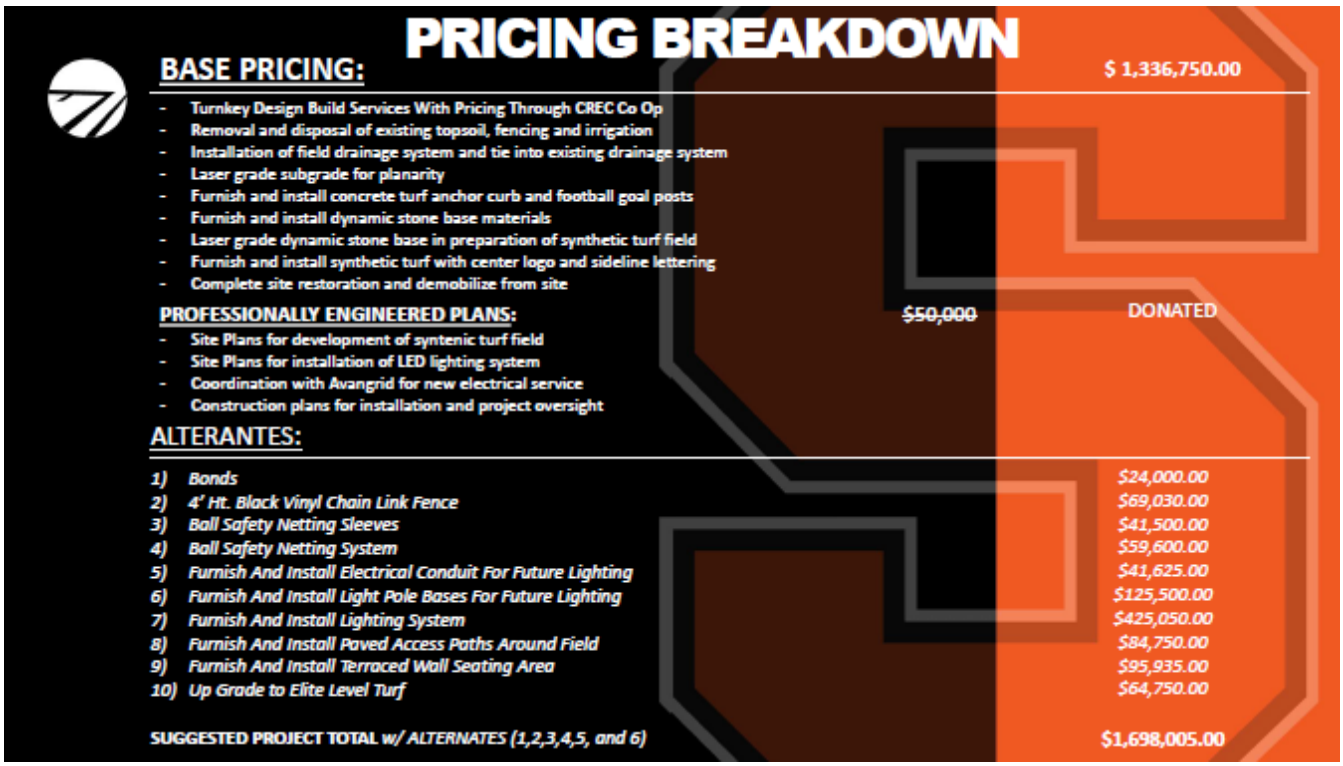
This is a project that we want to be able to facilitate you guys having what you want, we basically made the pricing so it is the field and then every other thing that could be added in to make it function how you need it to function. You may not necessarily need a ball netting. You may not necessarily need a fence. We wanted to put all the options in there so you can have the options to choose from.

On the next page, there is a 3D rendering based off of the site plans we have currently done. The base plan for the field. You can see how it fits in nicely to the overall site. It would be sized for football, sized for lacrosse, field hockey, soccer, everything that you guys need and want to grow into and help to promote even the youth programs.

One of the things that is really special about how the synthetic turf fields operate is that a couple of weeks from now, kids are going to want to get out there and they are not going to be able to use that field. They probably won't be able to use it for several months and probably miss the majority of their season. The same sort of thing when you get to the end of the fall season, it might look great for the first couple of weeks in the fall and by the time you get to the end of it, it is very hard to keep it up and keep it playable, but the synthetic turf fields, we like to call them as all weather fields. You can basically be out there as much as you want. I am sure you are familiar with how the track and field is at the other side of the site. Lots of increased playability and what we find a lot of times is once one of these fields goes in, the teams really benefit from it because of the practice time, no loss of time.

We do have multiple different options for pricing with alternates. The major differences being the paved access coming down from the field, the athletic field lighting, ball netting, a nice terraced wall seating area.

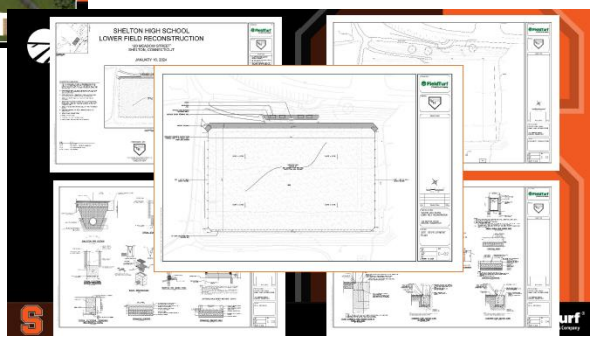
To just kind of get into the nuts and bolts of the pricing breakdown. What we have seen over the last couple of years is there has been a significant increase in the cost of materials, cost of construction in building these things. Not last year but the year before there was about a 15-20% increase in just overall inflationary costs. We have seen that the pricing of these things has crept up over the years. This is based on the updated Connecticut CREC Co-Op pricing.



On the base price here you see we have the Turnkey Design Build Services. We will be doing the design in-house. This would include all the removal and disposal of the existing topsoil, the fencing, capping the irrigation system that is out there, installation of all the drainage systems, laser grading the field, putting in the concrete anchor curb and football goal posts, putting in all the stone base material, laser grading it and getting it ready and putting in the synthetic turf field. Again, we would restore the site as needed. One of the things I want to point out is what Andrew mentioned earlier, being the in-house designer we are able to basically donate the design services. We do anywhere to about 15-25. Realistically we have designed hundreds of these throughout the country, about 1000 a year. Very streamlined process for us, very easy to do for us internally so we don't need charge for those as the Co-Op pricing kind of allows us to donate that portion of it.

In here we put in a bunch of different alternates for things that would kind of be sort of upgrades to the facility. Bonds, is performance and payment bonds. Some municipalities say you are a billion-dollar company and you've been around forever; we don't need bonds from you. Other places require bonds for everything. We put in a 4' high black vinyl chain-link fencing around the facility. We think that one is usually an important one to do. It is something you could potentially add later, but in all actuality what ends up happening is you spend a million plus dollars on a field and you don't have the ability to close it down or protect it, so you can end up with people out there with dirt bikes or dogs walking on it or whatever the case may be. The fencing gives you a nice ability to kind of have a little more security for your field. The way the ball netting goes, there are sleeves that go into the ground. Those could be installed separately and not necessarily need the whole netting system which would be all of the poles and all the nets and the other stuff that goes with that, so we broke those two as separate. The netting

is basically 20' tall and goes behind the end zones so soccer balls aren't getting kicked down the road, lacrosse balls aren't whacking people in the back of the head. Usually, facilities are having those now. Then we broke out things knowing that lighting is something that is really important for a field like this. We broke down the pricing to do the conduit underneath the field that would go to all the light poles, the installation of the light pole bases themselves. Those bases come in premanufactured posts and get drilled about 15-20' into the ground. They are pretty substantial, We also broke out what the actual lighting installation costs would be to be able to service the field. Then those kind of nice to haves of the paved access coming down to the field and around one side of the field, a nice terraced wall seating area kind of built into that slope that you have there. There would be a 3' wall with a platform through the wall platform so it would give you a nice spot where people can watch. One of the nice things about this particular set up is being that it is set down from the parking lot, you do get a really nice vantage point from the upper portion so we thought that trying to build in some sort of seating or at least have an option for that would be good. The last one would be an upgrade to what we call our "Elite Level Turf". That would be the turf that is at Gillette's Stadium or Yale or something like that. Knowing that we have two maybe to get away with, our kind of middle-of-the-line system, which will last the same 12-15 years, the Elite Level you should get 15 pretty easily with minimum maintenance. We do provide the maintenance equipment as part of the overall project, but all in all I would say we looked at this from multiple different aspects and for a field with fencing, ball netting and the foundations for the lights and electrical it was a little under $1.7 million. If you want just basically the standard field it would be in that $1.3 million range. If you want to add the lights on or add other things you can always do that at a later date of afterwards. We tried to break it all down for you so that you have options to select from.



The proceeding couple of pages is a little bit more of how the field gets built, some of the fields around we have done, lots of projects around the surrounding area. A couple of snippets of some of the site plans that go together for the existing conditions, the actual plans and details associated with it.

We did three or four different iterations. This happens to be the one with the rectangular field.

The last page is a little bit about how the LED lighting system works. You may be familiar with the metal highlight system, the big circular lights, they kind of spread light everywhere. The way those were always working is that they would basically push the light out in hopes of covering everything because they were not very efficient. The LED lighting systems are extremely efficient and very specific to the field locations. Very low energy usage, but they would last, I think the warranty that comes with those is 25 years. I think it would be a must go type system. So, you have one operator on site. That is kind of our spiel. We are happy to answer any questions you may have about any of this.

Mayor Lauretti: In the interest of time, we have another meeting right after this so we are going to cut this short. The goal tonight was to get this project in front of the Board of Aldermen so they can understand exactly what it is that we are doing and the costs associated with it. I have asked them to break this out in alternates so that we can pick and choose what we want to do this year. You may or may not be aware of this, but there are a number of large capital requests that are coming our way for the next budget year, so that all has to be sorted out. $2.2 million for a roof on a school, another million and a half for this project, there are fire engines that are coming in that is another $2 million and that has to be all laid out so we can fund it and it will be, but we are just not ready to talk about that now. Again, I asked them to put all these alternates together so you understand that some of this stuff may get done next year, we may put the lights in a year from now. Something like that as an example.

Alderman Simons: When we originally looked at this, we also had a softball field design in this. I didn't see it on here.

Chris Hulk: We did look at that as an option. Through some of the internal discussions it seemed like trying to get the costs down to a palatable number was more of a driving factor. The softball field could always be added on. It would be kind of a bump out in some of the things that get added with that such as dugouts, backstops, etc.

Mayor Lauretti: I am the culprit here. I asked them not to include that at this point. We have a softball facility.

Alderman Simons: I just wanted to make sure it wasn't omitted by accident.

Mayor Lauretti: When we are prepared financially to do all these things, we may include that at a later date.

Alderman Simonetti: You say 12-15 years. What is that usage? Every day, twice a day, three times a week?

Chris Hulk: We base that on about 40 hours of play a week and we do provide maintenance training for the facility staff and provide that equipment. Maintenance is grooming once every 6-8 weeks, roughly once a season and just making sure you keep an eye on the high use areas so goal creases and things like that and infill isn't getting fully displaced and you are getting down to the backing of the turf, which you sprinkle some in there, hit it with a broom and good to go.

Mayor Lauretti: This will be back before you in short order.

We appreciate your time.

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Simons MOVED to adjourn the Joint Board of Aldermen Meeting/Public Improvement Building Committee meeting.

Seconded by Alderman Simonetti.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously (8-0). Meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Donna Fonda

Donna Fonda
Acting Clerk, Board of Aldermen

DATE APPROVED _____ BY: _____
Mayor Mark A. Lauretti