

Lewiston Porter Youth Football League shares football field plans with Village of Lewiston

BY JOSHUA MALONI
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The Lewiston Porter Youth Football League has grand expansion plans for Richard F. Soluri Park at the Lewiston plateau off Portage Road.

On Monday, Lewiston Porter Youth Football League Commissioner Michael Wall updated the Village of Lewiston Board on plans for the near-future – including building a new and dedicated football field.

“Flag football registrations nationwide are through the roof, and with the New York State Public High School Athletic Association having made it a championship sport next year, the Lew-Port school staff is referring all interested athletes to our program for experience,” he said. “Last year, our tournament had almost 2,000 people on Saturday, and we expect the same turnout this year.”

He explained, “Many of our leaders are lifelong Lewiston residents, and we all wish to work symbiotically with the school staff to improve our athletes’ experiences. With that being said, we have met with varsity coaches to have direct conversations on how we can assimilate the two programs back together like they were in the past. That cohesive mentality has afforded us the opportunity to reintroduce our varsity Spartans program back for the oldest of our youths next year. The school heard our voices, and they’ve altered their program to allow for that to happen.

“Lastly, we had a change in our leadership last year, and our new board has restarted our efforts to construct our own field at Richard Soluri Park, which will include a park comfort station, field concession stands, equipment and meeting rooms, multilevel bleachers, a press/announcers box, (public address) system, as well as field lighting for events after dusk.

“We look forward to working with the Village Board of Trustees in the future to ensure our athletes have an even greater time, nurturing lifelong relationships, friendships and memories.”

Mayor Anne Welch said, “I think you guys do a great job up there. It’s great for the kids and the parents and everybody. I have been up there to watch the games. You do a great job, and we’re glad to have you up there.”

The board approved Lewiston Porter Youth Football League’s request to use Richard F. Soluri Park for the 2023 season. Wall said the first program is co-ed



An electric car-charging station was installed this week at Academy Park, just adjacent to the Niagara River Region Chamber of Commerce office and the comfort station.

flag football, which will begin with practice on April 11 and wrap with a year-end two-day tournament on June 10-11. After that, the tackle season is scheduled to run from July 10 through the end of October.

“Last year, with only seven teams, we had over 160 athletes in tackle and cheer,” Wall said. “We have increased our number of teams to nine, and expect our numbers to grow – which are already above anything we have on record.”

In 1999, Soluri, a four-term mayor, successfully negotiated the return of 47 acres of land from the New York Power Authority. The village used a New York State Parks grant to begin transforming the spoils pile into a recreation and wildlife habitat. Twenty years later, the grassy area leading into Artpark was renamed Richard F. Soluri Park.

July 4 Fireworks

A July 4 tradition will continue this summer in Lewiston.

Trustees approved a motion to pay Sky-lighters Fireworks NY \$15,000 for an Independence Day “pyrotechnic display.”

Fireworks have become a big deal in Lewiston. In 2020, when festivals and concerts were canceled, the village held a beefed-up light show so residents could watch from their homes or in a more socially distanced location. A similarly grand presentation was offered in 2022 as part of the bicentennial celebration.

Welch explained this year’s fireworks program might be less elaborate than last year’s (which cost double, but was offset by a Town of Lewiston contribution), but, “hopefully, we will get some more donations. Whatever we get, we can add on to that \$15,000 and maybe get a little bit better display.”

A fireworks rain date was set for July 5.

Also:

In other news from Monday’s monthly board meeting:

- Trustees added language to the village’s new short-term rental laws.

A motion was approved to adopt a resolution amending Appendix C-Schedule of Miscellaneous Fees of the Village Code to read:

(11) Initial Building Inspection fee for Short Term Rental, \$250

(12) Initial Fire Inspection fee for Short Term Rental, \$250

(13) Building Inspector yearly inspection fee, \$100 (additional \$50 fee for every reinspection)

(14) Fire Inspection yearly fee, \$100 (additional \$50 fee for every reinspection)

A public hearing was scheduled for 6 p.m. Monday, April 3, to adopt the following proposed laws:

#12-2023 – F-2.2.a PROPOSED SHORT TERM RENTAL REVISIONS

“The initial building inspection and fire inspection fees for Short –Term Rentals/ Bed & Breakfasts are \$250.00 each. Yearly re-inspection(s) fees will be \$100.00; if everything is up to NYS Uniform Building and Fire Code standards and the inspection is a one-visit walk through. If there is a violation and/or corrections are required resulting in the inspectors having to re-inspect the premises, an additional fee of \$50 per visit will be charged until the violation(s) has been corrected.”

• Deputy Mayor Vic Eydtt and Department of Public Works Superintendent Larry Wills are looking into the feasibility of replacing, enhancing and expanding the holiday lights on Center Street. The cost to switch to LED bulbs and upgrade the wir-

ing was pegged at \$20,000.

- Board members gave Joshua Reed permission to use the Red Brick Municipal Building parking area and Marilyn Toohey Park pavilion to host family-friendly car/bike meets from 8:30-10:30 a.m. Sundays, July 16, Aug. 6 and Sept. 3. Up to 20 cars and 10 bikes are expected.


The agenda states, “All the proceeds would go to a non-for-profit organization built around learning automotive repair; its main focus is around mental health and giving people a safe place to talk, be with a like-minded community, with resources available for them built in, and completing something bigger than themselves.

“The events will also have basket auctions, kids games, coffee, and snacks.”

- Motions also were approved for:
 - √ The Mason FOREVER Foundation 1 mile/5K run, to be held from 5-8 p.m. Thursday, June 1, beginning and ending at Marilyn Toohey Park.

- √ A lease agreement with Chelsea Sears of Chelsea’s Modern Images for Red Brick rooms No. 2 and No. 4, from April 1, through March 31, 2028. Due to the length of this contract, Sears was told the rent might increase.

- √ A lease agreement with Joel and Maryjo Erway of Betterway Enterprises for Red Brick room No. 11, on a month-to-month basis. The Erways already rent two rooms on the upper floor.




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