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LARPD
Facilities Committee
4444 East Ave.
Livermore, California

Dear Honorable Board Members;

I apologize for not attending the July 25th meeting of the Facilities Committee. I am scheduled to play at the Golden State Tournament in Concord, CA at the same time and day as the meeting.

Since the Board of Directors meeting on June 26th, I have had time to evaluate and research the proposed addition of outdoor dedicated courts to Livermore. As you know, my stance has been to increase the number of outdoor dedicated courts as much as possible, given budget constraints, timing and available resources.

It was my understanding that court resurfacing with a possibility into converting to pickleball was due to take place at Tex Spruell Park, Jack Williams Park and May Nissen Park. I visited all three locations yesterday and it is my opinion that if the LARPD Board was to move forward with resurfacing existing courts for pickleball, **my first choice would be May Nissen Park.** May Nissen has enough tennis courts (4) that at least 2 of them could be converted into 8 pickleball courts. In pickleball, if the measurements of existing tennis courts are adequate, you can place 4 pickleball courts on 1 tennis court. Properly spaced and with enough room, tennis courts could also be accommodated depending on final measurements.

My second choice is Jack Williams Park. These existing courts (2) could also have 8 pickleball courts placed onto them, again if there is enough room surrounding courts. The picnic tables and nearby trees could also provide shade and a place to sit for players waiting for a court to clear.

The Tex Spruell Park basketball pad is my third choice and it may not be big enough for pickleball. I did not see any tennis courts at the park and if they are present, I missed them. In my estimation, the pad would only have enough room for 2 pickleball courts unless the pad was made longer and wider.

I have been in contact with many players on the Pickleball Friends of the Tri Valley list that currently they do not want to see their number of courts diminished. If the shoe were on the other foot and we were to lose pickleball courts, I wouldn't be very pleased either. I am advocating for a balanced and equitable solution for all parties. Those same tennis players stated they have not seen that many people play tennis at May Nissen Park, but I have seen it in use but sparingly.

The immediate solution in my view would be resurface the May Nissen courts as mentioned above. I also suggest that if resurfacing the May Nissen Park courts is approved, seek bids from other contractors to perform the work based on issues regarding the Livermore Downs resurfacing project. (see below)

AND:

Allocate funds to repair and improve the courts at the Livermore Downs. Since the courts were opened, a small indentation had been observed and noted on the northeast court. This indentation does affect play and it could cause someone to misstep and injure an ankle, foot or leg. This issue has been brought up to staff in the past with no resolution. In addition, 2 of the 4 courts have developed dead spots, which in the pickleball world, means that after a ball hits the court surface, it will "die" and not bounce as expected. This results in substandard levels of play and reflects possible faulty construction. The court resurfacing may have not been up to standards and hopefully there is a warranty under contract. We have seen as many as 30 people try to play at the same time at Livermore Downs. Many bring their own lawn chairs and end up placing them on the courts, inside the fence line, near the remaining tennis net that separates the north and south side courts. This creates hazardous situations for players who attempt to chase down a ball only to find someone seated a few inches from them. One solution is to build a 2 small cement pads on the outside of the courts that are between the court fence and walking path. One for the north courts and one for the south courts. Attach some permanent benches to these pads and people can sit and watch the games safely from the outside. Cut out a section of the fence at the northeast corner, add a gate and allow ingress and egress to the north courts without interfering with south side play. Add a gate to the southeast opening because balls tend to roll out of the courts and into the adjacent grass area. These gates may also act as a barrier to bike riders, skateboard riders, dog

walkers, and others that may venture onto the courts without a legitimate purpose. Tennis courts all have gates for the same reasons.

NEAR FUTURE:

I might also suggest a far-reaching solution for the future that would be in the best interests of pickleball, tennis players, LARPD and City of Livermore. Table a discussion for the next CIP and investigate whether or not a new 6 - 8 court pickleball complex is feasible. Estimates reveal that brand-new courts range from about \$100,00 - \$150,000 (fencing no lighting) and depending on various options. A project like this would have been ideal for an area like the William Payne Sports Park, away from housing, a good-sized parking lot and close to a freeway. 6 courts would be nice for local players and I think for a city of our size that would suffice. However, if we increased to 8 court complex, local players would certainly benefit, and the possibility of hosting major tournaments presents itself. With 6 courts LARPD could host a tier 4 (100 + players) in a 2-3-day tournament and with an 8-court complex LARPD could host a tier 3 (250 + players) in a 2-3-day tournament. These tournaments run properly have the potential of adding revenue to the LARPD and overall tourism to Livermore.

In my presentation June 26th, I glanced over the number of pickleball participants in the nation – 3.3 million, a 12% increase over the previous year. Our Pickleball Friends of the Tri Valley has about 90 members but that does not include drop in players that have no knowledge of the group's existence. Add the average 12% per year to our group and you can see that over time the numbers will increase significantly. Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the US and demand for more courts will increase as more and more of the population ages and others discover this fun, social and engaging sport.

Best regards,

Kirby Wong

USAPA Ambassador – Livermore