Parks & RECREATION TRUST FUND (PARTF) UPDATE

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| to: | CITIZENS OF CLAY COUNTY |
| from: | Debbie Mauney ~ County managerJERRY PAYNE ~ Clay County rec Director |
| subject: | UPDATE & INPUT on PARTF Planning for the proposed sports complex |
| CC: | Clay County Board of Commissioners |

First and foremost, we would like to extend our sincere hopes that you are all healthy and well during this unprecedented time in not only our county’s history but that of our nation and world. Please know that our thoughts and prayers are with our entire community during this difficult time.

As you are well aware, through funding awarded from the Needs Based Public School Capital Fund Grant, Clay County is in the process of constructing a PreK through 2nd Grade school facility to replace a building constructed in the 1950s. While construction of the new building addresses a dire need within the community, it has, itself, created a serious need. The building site was previously the location of the county’s ball fields. Many of you have followed and been involved in the County’s quick response in stepping up to fill the great needs these losses created. The community has been kept abreast of all these developments through various outlets: Commissioner Meetings, the Clay County Progress, Facebook, emails and just good old-fashioned word of mouth. Out of sheer necessity, these projects have been on a fast track to meet the needs of our children and our entire community. Without these crucial places to exercise, gather and play, we face a serious loss.

Knowing that the loss of these fields is detrimental, Clay County has secured funding for new ballfields and seeks to include a sports complex. This 3.2-million-dollar project will be completed in two phases. Phase I, which will address the ballfields, is already in the works. Phase II, will include the construction of a 100 x 125 multipurpose building which can be used for indoor batting practice; basketball; exercise classes and other sports activities for all ages. In addition to the recreational facility, a 16x125 open-air, covered picnic area will be attached to the side of the building. The covered open-air, picnic area has long been needed by those who use the fields, the playground and surrounding area and will add a new venue for the community to gather for meals, music, arts, crafts and other activities with cornhole and horseshoes available. Also, within the complex will be eight pickleball courts and a timber-framed pavilion with benches. The location of the proposed project is ideal in its proximity to the school, senior center and business district, making it easily accessible to all.

During the planning of the Sports Complex, we were able to secure funding thorough the Dogwood Health Trust to pursue a PARTF grant. Again, as you are aware through informal discussions, the PARTF grant, if awarded to Clay County, will be used to help complete PHASE II of the Sports Complex. It will provide up to $500,000 in a dollar-for-dollar match to help us put into place our new recreational complex. This $500,000 will ensure that we have the type of high-quality facilities that are of benefit to everyone in our community for years to come. We are so excited to put this proposal together on behalf of Clay County.

The PARTF grant is heavily geared towards community input for projects. Clay County has always subscribed to the same philosophy. We seek to have everyone involved in how our community grows and prospers. Due to the COVID-19 and the state’s limitation on public gatherings to combat the virus, we are bringing our public input to you via our website. Please feel free to respond with any questions or comments that you might have. Also, we would appreciate it if you would let us know that you are behind us as we proceed with the submission of this grant which will provide essential funding for this project. Please send your responses to our Recreation Director, Jerry Payne: jpayne@ClayNC.us. Thank you so much for investing your time in our shared future! We strive to be good stewards of the resources that are entrusted to us and want to stretch every dollar that we can to meet the needs of our citizenry.