

Town of Ashland

Public Hearing

June 4, 2024

Present: Chairman Tyler Michaud, Christopher Bessey, Gerard Raymond, Gayle Burby and Manager Cyr Martin.

Absent: Sherri Calhoun

I. **Call meeting to order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Michaud.

II. **Public comments:** There were no Public Comments

III. **Consent item:** There were not Consent Items.

IV. **New Business:**

1. To hear the proposal on leasing the Ashland Trotting Park to North Star Motorsports for a 5-year lease to run and make changes to the park by making multiple off- road tracks and expanding the camping area. A motion was made by Cathy Howes to nominate Fred Howes as the moderator of the Public Hearing. Seconded by Sharon Cobb. No discussion motion passed.

A motion was then made by Fred Howes to only let Ashland residents speak during the Public Hearing. Seconded by Cathy Howes. After much discussion back and forth on who should be able to speak at the Public Hearing Councilor Gayle Burby spoke up and said" she thought this was a meeting for everyone to speak and talk." She made a motion to let all taxpayers and Ashland Residents speak during the Public Hearing. Gerard Raymond seconded the motion. No discussion motion passed. Buddy Collins President of North Star Motorsports and his wife Charley made their presentation with a slide show and drawings showing the changes and improvements they would like to make to the park. Among the changes he would like to make is turning the infield into a smaller track for BMX or Strider bikes. Adding more racetracks. Fix up the playground but leave it open to the public. Camper pads would be added toward the back of the park. They would have day passes and Annual Memberships. They would like a 25-year lease. The first 10 years paying \$2500.00 per year. They would be willing to pay for the first 10 years in one lump sum. Then paying \$5000 for the last 15 years. Buddy explained that if they got a lease from the town they have spoken to their lawyer, and they would be insured, and the town would not be liable. He also stated that because of insurance the park would need a fence around it and a locked gate. Some of the comments and concerns made by the Ashland residents and taxpayers were, 1) Have you investigated other locations. 2) Look at how many businesses have closed and how many people have moved away. We need to invest in our town. 3) Money from the lease should go toward a new place to walk and bring their dogs and a new field to play sports on. 4) This could bring in jobs and commerce. We should welcome businesses who want to bring business to our community. 5) Why can't we use the land behind the food

pantry that the town owns for a walking park. & field for games. 6) Why can't the town apply for grants to get money for a new walking park.

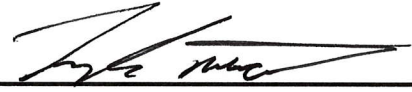
A special Town Meeting is set for June 12, 2024, at 6:00 pm at the Ashland Rec Dept for voting.

- V. **Adjournment:** Christopher Bessey motioned to adjourn the meeting, Gerard Raymond Seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Susan Jimmo

Recording Secretary



Tyler Michaud, Chairman



Gerard Raymond



Sherri Calhoun



Christopher Bessey



Gayle Burby