



Dear Soccer families,

Five of Chesterfield County's soccer clubs: CVSA, Chesterfield United/UFC, FC Richmond, Midlothian Youth Soccer League, and the Richmond Kickers have united to share our concerns with you regarding Chesterfield County's Board of Supervisors recent approval of a partnership with the for-profit sports group known as SportsQuest. If you are not aware, the County Supervisors have approved a lease that requires the County to pay \$4.3 million to SportsQuest with \$2.3 million coming out of the Parks and Recreation budget upon signing the lease. This item was not open for public discussion regarding this extraordinary use of taxpayer funds because it was slipped onto the Consent Agenda for the May 26 Board of Supervisors meeting.

On May 21, the Chesterfield's Economic Development team quietly added this SportsQuest lease onto the consent agenda for the Supervisors, despite requests from the four local youth soccer clubs as well as Central Virginia's largest adult soccer league, CVSA, to defer until the following month so the community could have some public discussion. On May 26, the Board of Supervisors voted to approve the lease with three positive votes from Dan Gecker, Art Warren, and Dorothy Jaekle, while Jim Holland voted against the proposal and Marleen Durfee abstained.

**Our clubs are unified in asking the County to defer signing this proposed lease with SportsQuest until there is public discussion so the County taxpayers can have a realistic understanding of the long term risks associated with this lease arrangement. These risks include possible folding of existing youth organizations, increased prices from less competition, and Chesterfield County youth tournaments moving to other counties.**

Our primary concerns are:

1-We cannot understand why the county is using public money to support an unproven for-profit organization like SportsQuest that aims to compete against our existing non-profit programs in the county.

2-The County recently added a \$5 fee per child per season usage fee for all kids in the co-sponsored programs that our clubs provide. We do not understand why these fees have been implemented in a struggling economy when the County's Recreation and Parks Department has the ability to pay \$2.3 million up front for a lease for turf fields where there is no programming scheduled.

3-The County did not speak with existing clubs about field needs in the future then proceeded to secure access to SportsQuest's turf fields only on Mondays through Thursdays for the next twenty years. This means no affordable access to the County's newly leased fields on the weekends for our club's tournaments. Some of these tournaments have driven sports tourism into Chesterfield County for twenty plus years.

4-The County Supervisors have communicated through their Economic Development office that we need to work out our own deal with SportsQuest to gain access for our tournaments and other needs not protected within the county's lease.

5-The County plans to reallocate dollars that were previously approved for field improvements at other sites in the County to invest in Sportsquest. These dollars could improve fields at Tomahawk MS, Huguenot Park, Clover Hill Athletic Complex, and other venues through the Chesterfield.

6-Based on recent press reports, we have concerns about SportsQuest's finances. It would be very important for the County and the public to fully understand the financial issues surrounding this investment before diverting these public funds from other worthy projects.

While we are not against private enterprises in Chesterfield County, we have concerns about the County moving forward so swiftly without public discussion. We again would like to request an additional period to study the proposed arrangement that would allow time for the county and the taxpayers to obtain the proper information before funding this private project.

Specific to MYSL: It is important to understand that in 2007 the county denied approved financial support for the Hensley Road Soccer Complex on the grounds that it was a privately owned facility yet the county is approving \$4.3 million in tax payer funds for Sports Quest which is a privately owned for-profit facility.

MYSL makes its facilities available as part of the county allocation for other clubs' tournaments. Even though we own our own fields, our members will be required by the County to pay \$5 per person per season as part of the county usage fee - this fee is being passed along to our membership thru the registration fees.

**Please take the time to email your Supervisor below and share your unhappiness with this reallocation of County funds. We are disappointed the County has chosen not to have public discussion regarding this project and the use of discretionary economic dollars in these challenging economic times especially when so many programs are in jeopardy including public education and our teachers.**

Please contact your supervisor to share your concerns with the SportsQuest Project:

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Yours in soccer,

Tom Leahy, President, Midlothian Youth Soccer League  
Mike Brown, Director of Operations, CVSA  
Joe Tyler, President, Chesterfield United/UFC  
Mark Kiehl, President, FC Richmond  
Rob Ukrop, President, Richmond Kickers Youth Soccer Club