

Amesbury Soccer Association
PO Box 388
Amesbury, MA 01913



January 31, 2022

Office of the Governor
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon Street, Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

RE: Release of \$600,000 for Sports Fields in Amesbury

Dear Governor Baker:

The Amesbury Soccer Association (ASA) is requesting that \$600,000 dollars appropriated for construction of soccer fields be provided to Amesbury. Youth sports provide so many benefits to our communities. ASA is a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to providing a fun, safe and healthy environment for youth players to enjoy in-town recreational and competitive travel soccer. Our organization offers opportunities for more than 400 players annually with players ages 3 to 18.

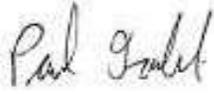
Amesbury has been deficient in the number of rectangular, athletic fields for many years, and the number of fields available has decreased further in the past three years. For over 25 years ASA has been playing soccer on historic pastures at Woodsom Farm. These fields have never had any grading, leveling, drainage, or irrigation, and therefore the fields are subject to natural conditions (rain, drought, sun, frost heaves), dog walkers (who may or may not pick up after their dog), and various other public activities at Woodsom Farm. Playing soccer on such spaces for decades has resulted in some fields being deemed no longer safe by the Essex County Youth Soccer Association for matches. This deficiency has forced many ASA teams to have to play all or most games outside of Amesbury, Amesbury Soccer Association to pay more than \$60,000 to rent field space, and limited soccer participation for the youth of Amesbury. It has been a long-time goal of ASA (going on 20 years) to build proper fields in Amesbury. This goal has been the impetus of ASA paying for a field design, ASA obtaining all of the necessary permits from the Conservation Commission, ASA working with the city to obtain a lease, and ASA attempting to fundraise to cover the complete cost (>\$1.5 Million).

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts appropriated \$600,000 for construction of soccer fields in Amesbury in the FY2014 Environmental Bond Bill (line item 2000-7054), and this line item was reauthorized in the 2018 Environmental Bond Bill. The office of State Senator DiZoglio advised the City of Amesbury to formally advocate that these funds be released by the Secretary of the Executive Office Environmental Affairs and the Office of the Governor. The Amesbury City Council formally requested these funds in November 2021 (Bill No. 2021-135). As the Board of Directors of the Amesbury Soccer Association we are asking for you to provide the \$600,000 for construction of youth soccer fields in Amesbury. These funds have already been appropriated. The state currently has a surplus of funds. NOW is the time for the state to follow through with its commitment.

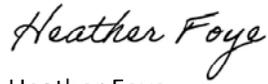
Sincerely,

Amesbury Soccer Association

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