

As compared to surrounding towns, Belmont does not have an abundance of playing fields. It is important to many outdoor youth programs that we maintain the quality of the fields we have. The youth sports programs enroll thousands of children each year and the quality of the fields has a direct relationship to the quality of the programs.

In response to the growing threat of the elimination of Town supported watering of playing fields, the Belmont Soccer Association (BSA) began investigating several years ago the possibility of drilling water wells at the Pequossette, Grove Street, and Town Fields. The BSA currently spends approximately \$30,000 a year for turf maintenance programs at the Pequossette, Grove Street, and JV fields. Last year, the Belmont Second Soccer Association spent \$125,000 renovating Town Field and Belmont Youth Baseball spends approximately \$5,000 per year to maintain the Grove Street baseball fields.

Part of maintaining the fields in good condition is to have a consistent turf program, which involves clipping, fertilizing, aerating and watering. The cost of using drinking water to water the fields each year is \$20,000 to \$30,000 per year.

The state and municipal financial situation is dire, and projected to be getting worse. Cuts in non-essential services are expected to be widespread. It is a very real possibility that the water budget allocated to field maintenance will be cut. Without water, the substantial investments that the private organizations have made, as outlined above, will be rendered useless. The deterioration of field quality would take years to recover.

After months of preparation and discussion the BSA created a formal RFP process, received responses to the RFP, and decided on what we believe is the best approach to drill water wells at the three fields. We estimate the total cost for the wells to be between \$75,000 and \$125,000. The BSA feels that this investment in the town's fields is an investment in the quality of the programs that use these fields and is a prudent financial investment given the municipal financial condition.

Well drilling is not an exact science and we estimate that we will need a yield of approximately 60-80 gallons per minute to properly water each field. It is for this reason that we will drill a 2 ½ inch test well at each field to determine the best location to drill the permanent well. Some fields may require two test wells. These test wells will help us determine the most efficient type of well to drill at each location.

It is important to note that the actual pumps will be deep in the wells so there will not be any issue with noise to the surrounding neighbors. The work will be done during the designated working hours as set by the town. All of the Town of Belmont's department heads have been involved in the development of the RFP and will provide oversight for the project. The project will be done at no cost to the Town and the Town will own the wells and ancillary equipment. The cost of electricity for the pumps will be a tiny fraction of the price the Town currently pays for water.

Once the test wells are completed, the BSA will be in a better position to choose the appropriate drilling method, and drilling contractor.

If you have any questions you can submit them to the BSA website:  
[www.belmontsoccer.com](http://www.belmontsoccer.com) or you may call Jim Fitzgerald at 617-489-1697.