



**Letter of Intent  
June 28, 2017**

Goodwin Group PR  
c/o The Bill Belichick Foundation  
1600 Providence Hwy.  
Suite 125  
Walpole, MA 02081

Dear Sir or Madam:

When most people think about sports in Lexington, KY basketball and horse racing come to mind. However, football has a stronghold with two bowl contending college teams within an hour and a half drive from one another. If horseracing is the King of Sports, football is a crown prince.

A conversation with the Director of Athletics and her staff indicated that the football program effortlessly moved from City and County leagues to a merged league in 1974. The league has experienced years of robust participation as well as years of middling participation since 1974. At this time, football is a popular program with the numbers of participants doubling from 300 + in 2015 to 600 + in 2016.

The cost for a season is \$55 per player and approximately 65% of the participants receive scholarships. Most scholarships cover half of the cost - \$27.50 and at a minimum, 15 full scholarships are offered. The annual budget for football is \$18,160. Uniforms, safety equipment and balls are covered with an amount that equals \$30 per player, based upon 600 participants. The football program is faced with a difficult situation – cap the number of participants or raise fees for families that are barely making it through a month. Such a dilemma stifles program growth and the ability to move to the next level. Funding from the Belichick Foundation would afford greater participation and provide the momentum needed for growth.

The following NFL players began their love of the game via the Parks and Recreation Football Program - Brian Foster (Cincinnati Bengals), Frank Minnifield (Cleveland Browns), Chase



Minnifield (Washington Redskins), Mark Logan (San Francisco 49ers), Dermontti Dawson (Pittsburg Steelers – HOF), Cornell Burbage (Dallas Cowboys), Kio Sanford (Miami Dolphins), Eric Shelton Carolina Panthers), Roy Philon (Pittsburg Steelers) and George Adams (New York Giants. The next NFL player or Hall of Fame member may be signing up for league play in a few weeks. Will a cap on players keep him away? Will there be enough scholarship money to cover him? Will his parents have to say no because they cannot afford the fee?

Please consider funding the LFUCG Parks and Recreation Football Program.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Leibee, MS  
Grants Manager





## The 2017 Bill Belichick Foundation Grant Application

Please type the requested information

Your Name & Title: Suzanne Leibee, Grants Manager

Name of Organization:

Lexington Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) Division of Parks and Recreation

Organization Address: 469 Parkway Drive, Lexington, KY 40504

Telephone: 859-288-2962

Email: sleibee@lexingtonky.gov

Organization's Website: https://www.lexingtonky.gov/departments/parks-recreation

Organization's Social Media Handles, if applicable (FB, Twitter, Instagram):

Facebook: Lexington, KY Parks & Recreation (@lexkyparks)

Twitter: @lexkyparks

Instagram: @lexkyparks

### Verifications

Date Founded: Merged Government – January 1, 1974

TAX ID # (if applicable): 61-0858140

Current Annual Program Budget: Parks - \$23,000,000 Football Program -\$18,160 (.0008% of the budget)

Representative Signature:

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is your organization a registered 501(c)3? (circle one): Yes  No



\*\*If yes, please attach a copy of official 501(c)3 letter

## References

Please list three references and their contact information below.

Name:	Email:	Phone:
1. Dan Wentz	<a href="mailto:dwentz@email.uky.edu">dwentz@email.uky.edu</a>	859-321-6107
2. Chris Ford – Commissioner of Social Services - LFUCG	<a href="mailto:cford@lexingtonky.gov">cford@lexingtonky.gov</a>	859-258-3800
3. Rod Johnson	Not available	859-509-2389

## Questions

### **History of organization:**

When the city and county Parks Departments merged in 1974, they were organized into the Division of Parks and Recreation. Parks and Recreation equips, maintains, and operates all parks, playgrounds, swimming pools and golf courses owned by the Lexington Fayette Urban Government (LFUCG). Additionally, the Division is responsible for planning, organizing, staffing, equipping and operating all recreational and leisure time programs and activities.

The Division of Parks and Recreation is under the purview of the Department of General Services. The current Commissioner of General Services is Geoff Reed who supervises the current Director of Parks and Recreation, Monica Conrad.

As a result of the 1999 Master Plan, the Parks Advisory Board was established to serve as a consultative board to the Division of Parks and Recreation (DPR). It serves as a vehicle for receiving public opinion and for promoting a comprehensive parks and recreation delivery system. The fifteen members represent each of the 12 Council Districts, along with 1 At Large Council Member, 1 Council District Member, and 1 Fayette County Public School Representative. All members are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Council. The board meets monthly.

The merged government has been in place for more than forty (40) years. Parks and Recreation continues to be committed to making a positive impact on community life for the citizens of Lexington and Fayette County. Programming elements and services encompass: 104 parks, 5 golf courses, 7 aquatic facilities, equestrian facility, 4 skate parks, 3 disc golf courses, 1 foot golf course, 4 dog parks, environmental education programs, natural areas, 14 summer camps, 4 community centers, athletic programs, 10 Extended School Program sites, Cultural Arts and Special Events, Therapeutic Recreation programs and services and rental facilities. In addition to the aforementioned list, Parks and Recreation is an essential community partner for events such as parades, holiday celebrations, neighborhood association meetings and events, community sporting events, non-profit fundraising events and other downtown events.



The Lexington-Fayette County community is dynamic and diverse. Lexington is the second largest city in Kentucky and it is surrounded by smaller communities that benefit from the services offered through Parks and Recreation. Lexington does not operate under resident and non-resident policies thus services are open to all. Staff is encouraged to address the divergent needs and interests of diverse communities. Programming decisions consider these factors. Data is used from the US Census Bureau to analyze the characteristics of communities to safeguard that relevant programming is offered to all segments of the population. Customer feedback is solicited in an assortment of methods such as surveys, advisory and Friends groups and comment cards.

A conversation with the Director of Athletics and her staff indicated that the Football program effortlessly moved from a City and County League to a merged government league in 1974. Since 1974, the league has experienced years of robust participation as well as years of middling participation. At this time, football is a popular program with the numbers of participants doubling from 300 + in 2015 to 600+ in 2016 . Approximately 65% of the participants receive scholarships and funding from the Belichick Foundation would afford greater participation.

**1) How does your organization benefit the community? Please include any charity work or activities your organization has participated in or hosted.**

The mission of Parks and Recreation is “**building community and enriching lives through parks, programs and play**”. In keeping with the mission, staff attempts to advance experiences that will accomplish the following:

- Provide leisure resources for people of all ages
- Enhance family and social relationships
- Promote diversity and inclusion
- Acknowledge the importance of play and overall wellness
- Promote cultural programs
- Experience the natural environment

Parks and Recreation attempts to remain current and several means are utilized to assess community and societal trends. The Parks and Recreation Division has representation on Lexington’s Division of Planning Technical Committee, Zoning Committee, and Planning Commission, which review development proposals from the community. Ongoing efforts in greenspace, greenway zoning, infill, development and pedestrian/bicycle transportation planning are managed as part of the total park planning process through multidivisional committees.

Parks maintains ongoing relationships with Neighborhood Associations, Friends Groups, Council Members and Boards to assess community trends and recreational needs. The information obtained is incorporated into staff meetings and budget planning process.

Parks is currently in the midst of creating a Master Plan to guide the agency for the next ten years. During the month of June, seventeen focus groups, including one for football, were held



along with four Public Meetings. A wealth of information was gathered and a full report will be available by the end of the calendar year.

Parks cannot do everything and collaborations with local businesses, the school system and non-profit organizations such as the YMCA, abound. As a result of the Master Plan process, a new vision statement - **parks and programs that inspire individuals to imagine and pursue greatness**- has emerged and could not occur without the partnerships, sponsorships and the enthusiastic citizens of Lexington.

Our Core Values follow:

1. Community
2. Stewardship
3. Inclusion
4. Collaboration
5. Innovation

All of the Parks and Recreation athletic programs reflect the core values, with football taking a leading role in demonstrating and living the values. The program is poised for another growth phase and funding from the Bill Belichick Foundation will assure that it happens.

#### Essay

Please type your response to this essay.

**Describe how a grant would help this school or community take programming to the next level; include three specific goals.**

Football sign-ups for boys and girls 5-12, began on June 1 and continue through July 31. Two combines were held earlier this summer and 60 players took advantage of the pre-season conditioning events. Teams play at seven parks, which are located in all areas of the city, and practice begins August 1. Opening day is September 9. An eight game season is planned with a single elimination tournament. First steps to college scholarships are taken during the brief season.

Last year, the growth of the program from 2015 was a grand event. However, there was not enough money to operate the league until transfers were made from the Director's budget and from the budgets of other athletic programs. No child was turned away. Sadly, that will not happen again as the Division and the city, are dealing with a flat budget – NO NEW FUNDING. As much as the program wants to progress, finances are prohibitive.

During a conversation with the Athletic Director and her staff, a question was posed – what are the next steps? How would funding from the Belichick Foundation allow such progress? There was no hesitation with answers!

- 1) Capitalize on the popularity of the league and the growth which has occurred since 2015. Have a designated amount of money held for scholarships and avoid having to cap enrollment.



- 2) Expand the combine offerings from two to four, allowing for more participation and the chance to begin conditioning early in the summer. Plan some conditioning Saturdays during the winter and spring and initiate a year round conditioning program. Parks has four community centers with full size gymnasiums and two of the centers have weight rooms. Having conditioning events during the off season would only be a matter of scheduling.
- 3) Earmark some funds to inaugurate a Regional Tournament for Lexington. Parks has seven fields and the six high schools in the city are excellent partners, allowing current tournament play to occur on their fields. A regional tournament is a way to spotlight the Lexington teams and to acknowledge the efforts of regional competing teams. The tournament would have an element of fundraising, primarily in concessions and souvenirs, which would provide sustainability once the Belichick Foundation funding is exhausted.

The Parks and Recreation Football Program through growth and piloting combines have made critical first steps toward ramping up the program. Grant funding will make the expansion sustainable.

*Submit this completed application by July 1, 2017 online.*

*Grant recipients will be notified by October 2017.*

For more information or if you have any questions, please email [info@billbelichickfoundation.org](mailto:info@billbelichickfoundation.org)



