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FEATURED

## Committee approves up to \$1.25 million for GVR pickleball center

By Andrew Paxton [apaxton@gvnews.com](mailto:apaxton@gvnews.com) Jan 23, 2019



WSM Architects' digital rendition of GVR's new 24-court Pickleball Center.

Miles Waterbury

GVR's Fiscal Affairs Committee approved a recommendation of up to \$1.25 million for a new pickleball center Wednesday.

The eight-member board originally considered a motion from committee chair Roger Myers for up to \$1.5 million, but that was voted down by Tom Sadowski, Keith Skytta, Stewart Tagg and Carol Crothers during the meeting at the East Center, with more than 100 people attending.

The committee was not tasked with determining how many courts and other amenities will be built; that decision will be made by the GVR board, Myers said.

Crothers questioned Myers on why he chose the \$1.5 million figure.

"It's not scientific, that's for sure," he replied. "But it seemed to be an appropriate amount for us to start this first phase. It is a starting point."

He explained that the amount wasn't enough to fund the entire proposed 24-court center and other facilities, but enough to get the project started with at least 10 to 12 courts, with the possibility to add more later.

"So it seems to be a happy medium between two extremes," he said.

Blaine Nisson, who is on the GVR Foundation board, said GVR is in "something of a hurry-up-and-build mode, if not a crisis mode, with pickleball."

"We have been studying this for problem for over five years, we've arrived at a design, we have a location, so we need to move forward," he said.

Skytta said he wanted to "see some documentation on the \$1.5 million."

"It's a lot of money," he said. "In the past, when there were improvements to the tennis courts, they knew exactly what they were going to spend and the money was provided to them. We're whistling in the dark here."

Myers replied that the site preparation and development is estimated to be around \$1 million, including parking lots, and then the number of courts and other amenities would be the variables that would affect the total cost.

The additional \$500,000 would provide for about 10 more courts, he said.

Crothers contested that information, saying estimates provided by WSM Architects would be around \$1 million for the scenarios with fewer courts.

Documents provided by WSM last week show a 16-court center would cost about \$1.3 million, a 12-court center about \$1.2 million, and an eight-court center would cost a little over \$1 million.

The most expensive proposal, a 24-court center with a training court and meeting hall, is estimated at just over \$2.1 million.

Sadowski said he was worried the motion for such a large amount could exceed the committee's authority and violate GVR bylaws. He said it may require a vote from the full membership, an idea that was met with audible groans from those in attendance.

After the original motion was defeated, Sadowski made a motion to authorize up to \$1 million for the center. That motion was quickly amended by associate chair Nina Campfield to authorize up to \$1.3 million.

Tagg said after Campfield's amendment that he wanted to meet in the middle.

The \$1.3 million amendment was defeated along the same 4-4 lines, and then Tagg made a motion for up to \$1.25 million. That amount was approved unanimously.

The committee also declined to provisionally approve the financial statements for fiscal year 2018 until they are audited, which should be end of February or March, Myers said. The vote was split 4-4 along the same lines as the pickleball funding votes.

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