



TOWN OF STRATHAM

INCORPORATED 1716

10 BUNKER HILL AVENUE • STRATHAM NH 03885

VOICE (603) 772-7391 • FAX (603) 775-0517

MEMORANDUM

TO: Select Board

FROM: Seth Hickey

DATE: February 1, 2024

RE: Request to Name Stevens Park baseball dugout after John Hopping

In accordance with our [Parks, Areas & Facilities Naming and Dedication Policy](#), I am submitting to you three requests in support of naming the ‘home’ baseball dugout at Stevens Park after resident John Hopping. This request originated with the Stratham Baseball Board several years ago. Recently, Stratham residents Jake Bourn, Tom Coate and Sean Burke submitting additional letters of support. All three of these individuals have seen first-hand the impact that Coach Hopping has had on the youth of Stratham.

I personally have worked with John through the years and cannot think of a more fitting tribute. For more than 20 years, John has been involved in all aspects of the Stratham baseball program including coaching, fundraising, and organizing. He has generously given his time and shared his skill and love of the game with Stratham baseball players, from elementary school age through high school.

Thank you for considering this request.

Recommended motion: Approve the request to name the Stevens Park ‘home’ team baseball dugout after John Hopping.

From: [David Moore](#)
To: [Karen Richard](#)
Cc: [Seth Hickey](#)
Subject: FW: John Hopping Dugout
Date: Thursday, August 10, 2023 12:45:36 PM

Karen,

Please establish a connection to this person and provide him with the latest version of our policy for naming facilities. If he has questions have him reach back out to you. It might be appropriate for him to schedule time with me over the phone to ensure he understands the process after reading it.

Seth, if there is anything particular about this request I should be aware of, please let me know. Likewise, please let me know if you have any initial feedback or heads-up to either Karen or I.

David M.

From: Jake B <jwbourne@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2023 7:03 AM
To: David Moore <dmoore@StrathamNH.gov>
Cc: Seth Hickey <SHickey@StrathamNH.gov>; Tom Coate <tomcoate@gmail.com>; Tom Healy <Healyconstruction@comcast.net>
Subject: John Hopping Dugout

Hi David,

I hope this note finds you well, I'm writing to you to formally request that the home dugout for the baseball diamond at Stevens Park be named for John Hopping. There are no name designations for the dugouts.

John has been a tireless volunteer for the Stratham Youth baseball for well over 20 years and is responsible for multiple successful Stratham baseball teams and helped many kids continue on the high school and college teams. He has run summer clinics and is willing to come in on nights and weekends to help out. He has been an ardent fund raiser, helping the Friends of Stratham Baseball raise money for scholarships and equipment for the less fortunate in the area. For me personally, he has provided guidance as a coach and Board president on how best to serve the community. I'm convinced our success at Cooperstown in 2018 was because of the time he volunteered to coach our kids.

I've CC'd the former presidents of the Stratham baseball league who can add much more color and detail to John's contributions to youth sports.

Thanks,

Jake

From: [Tom Coate](#)
To: [Karen Richard](#)
Cc: jwbourg@hotmail.com; [Seth Hickey](#); [Tom Healy](#)
Subject: Re: John Hopping Dugout
Date: Tuesday, August 22, 2023 7:45:41 AM

Hi Karen,

Please let me know if an email in support of this naming effort will not suffice and I will take additional steps.

I have been involved in the Stratham Baseball League for the past 20 years and I have had the privilege of coaching with, and against, John. I also participated in the Stratham Baseball Board alongside John. His dedication and commitment to the league, the kids and the Stratham families was instrumental in making Stratham Baseball the overwhelming success that it was. He was much more than a coach and a board member. He would never say no to an opportunity to help provide instruction to any player, on any team. He would also take it upon himself to ensure that all coaches were supported and provided with the tools and education necessary to ensure they were successful and the kids had a meaningful baseball experience regardless of who the coach was. He did so many things above and beyond the typical expectations of a coach and board member. One example was his "Blitz-Ball" where kids from all teams were welcome to come to SHP for 45 minutes of instruction and a 45 minute blitz-ball game every Sunday night.

He continued his support on through Babe Ruth and Sr Babe Ruth, even when none of his own kids were playing. Even after his coaching days, he still made himself available to come back and provide instruction for the kids and training for the coaches. If I sent him an email today asking for his support in some capacity, I have no doubt he would ask where and when.

John was also instrumental in starting the Stratham Golf Tournament which generates thousands of dollars annually to support the league. He still supports the administration of this tournament and plays in the even annually.

Naming a dugout after John would be a small, yet meaningful, gesture symbolizing the towns appreciation for all he has done, and continues to do, to support youth baseball.

If there is anything else I can provide just let me know. Thanks.

Tom Coate

On Aug 10, 2023, at 1:46 PM, Karen Richard <KRichard@strathamnh.gov> wrote:

Hi Jake,

David asked me to reach out to you regarding naming the dugout at Stevens after John Hopping. Please read through our naming policy https://www.strathamnh.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif5051/f/uploads/final_accepted_policy_-_parks_areas_facilities_name_policy.pdf and let me know if you have any questions. Your email requesting the dedication is a great

start. As you'll read, we'd need at least a couple more people to write letters supporting the request. The process includes holding a Public Hearing and it would be discussed at at least two Select Board Meetings. It's not a fast process, but it is worthwhile to recognize the dedication and effort John has put in all these years. I've no doubt he will appreciate it. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Karen Richard

Town of Stratham
10 Bunker Hill Ave.
Stratham, NH 03885
603-772-7391 x187

From: [Seth Hickey](#)
To: [Karen Richard](#)
Subject: Fw: Winter clinics
Date: Friday, January 26, 2024 8:27:17 AM
Attachments: [image004.png](#)
[image008.png](#)

This is the third letter in support of naming the dugout at Stevens Park after John Hopping.

Can this request now go before the Select Board?

From: Sean Burke <sburke@ebsco.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 3:49 PM
To: Seth Hickey <SHickey@StrathamNH.gov>
Cc: Zach Cherry <zcherry@StrathamNH.gov>
Subject: RE: Winter clinics

Dear Select Board,

I would like to offer my support in naming the home dugout at Stevens field after John Hopping, John has been a tremendous asset to the Stratham Baseball program for many years. most recently I had the opportunity to work with him and assist in youth Skills clinics he volunteered to offer for Stratham residents. He dedication to the kids of Stratham and decades of support of our baseball program should not go unrecognized. Naming the home dugout is particularly appropriate as I would be hard pressed to imagine a kid playing in that dugout that has not benefitted from John's contributions in some way.

Best,

Sean Burke

Stratham Resident and current head of Stratham Youth Baseball Board

From: Seth Hickey <SHickey@StrathamNH.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 3:42 PM
To: Sean Burke <sburke@ebsco.com>; Zach Cherry <zcherry@StrathamNH.gov>
Subject: Re: Winter clinics

CAUTION: External E-mail

What dates/ times do you think would work best?

I will see if John is interested in offering the clinics again and Zach can see if the gym at CMS is available to host the clinic.

Sean, could you write a letter of recommendation to the Select Board regarding naming the home dugout at Stevens Park after Hopping. Now that you have seen his

skill at coaching first had last spring, you can gauge is ability to reach these young athletes.

I need one more letter of recommendation to move this dedication forward. I am having a hard time finding folks in town that remember John's legacy with the baseball program.

Thanks

From: Sean Burke <sburke@ebsco.com>

Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 9:40 AM

To: Seth Hickey <SHickey@StrathamNH.gov>; Zach Cherry <zcherry@StrathamNH.gov>

Subject: Winter clinics

What do we need to do to recreate the clinics with John hopping like last year?

Sean Burke

Sr. Talent Acquisition Specialist

(978) 414-0306

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