

**BEAUMARIS SPORTS ASSOCIATION**

*Grievance*

**MR J.R. QUIGLEY** (Innaloo) [9.29 am]: My grievance is directed towards the Minister for Sport and Recreation and concerns the circumstances in which the sporting clubs attached to the Beaumaris Sports Association - which fall within the City of Joondalup - find themselves. I will provide the minister with a brief background of the Beaumaris Sports Association. The Beaumaris Sports Association is the peak organisation of a number of sporting clubs that occupy sporting grounds on the corner of Miami Beach Promenade and Marmion Avenue. The association has three foundation members - a cricket club, a hockey club and a bowling club. Through the cricket club a soccer club and rugby club are also affiliated. The total membership of the sports association is approximately 2 500. The club facilities were built as a result of funds initially supplied by the Department of Sport and Recreation under the community sporting and recreation facilities fund program. A third of the funds was contributed by the City of Joondalup and a third was contributed by the developer of the land, the Catholic Church, because there was not an already established club there. I understand that the club premises cost in excess of \$1.2 million. Thereafter, the association - comprising the executive and the volunteers of the constituent clubs - established two sets of turf wickets on the ground, plus practice turf wickets. The North Perth Cricket Club relocated there and became known as the Joondalup Districts Cricket Club. It has 144 active cricketers in both the senior and junior ranks. The soccer club has more than 600 active juniors. All this is supported by volunteers attached to the association.

The association has received advice from the City of Joondalup that it wishes to formalise a rental agreement with the association and to strike a rent. The city has sent in the Valuer General to strike a value of the rental for that facility. In doing so, the Valuer General has indicated by letter dated 27 July 2004 that he wants to base the rental to be struck upon the club's ability to pay the rent; that is, not recognising it as a social facility but basing it on how much rent the club can pay. To that end, the Valuer General, acting on behalf of the City of Joondalup, has demanded that the association produce all the bingo books, the quiz night results and the disco night bar sales etc to the Valuer General so that he can advise the city on the ability of the lessee to pay a rent. Any rental levied as a percentage of the turnover of the sports club must be regarded as a commercial rent, whether it is a high rent or a low rent. It is totally inappropriate to levy that sort of rent upon an association that is supporting junior sport.

I will give an example of the contribution that this association is making to junior sport in the area of Ocean Reef, Iluka, Kinross and suburbs north. The Joondalup Districts Cricket Club is a member of the Western Australian Cricket Association. In fact, last year it won the one-day competition. Its under 17s won the final, and the second and third grades also played in the finals. This club established two turf wicket squares and has maintained them at a cost of \$25 000 a year. I have contacted the Mayor of the City of Wanneroo, in a neighbouring municipality, and he has advised me that it has a policy of charging 0.1 per cent per annum of such a building's worth as annual rent, which would come to, in the case of the Beaumaris Sports Association, between \$750 and \$1 000 a year - a peppercorn rent. That is what would happen if the club was situated about a kilometre north within the boundaries of the City of Wanneroo.

However, in this case, the City of Joondalup is seeking to strike the rent having regard to the fundraising capacity of the association to support junior sportsmen in the area. Additionally, in Wanneroo, the Wanneroo Cricket Club, which is also a WACA club, receives a grant of \$24 500 per annum for the maintenance of each of the turf wickets - a total of \$49 000 - whereas the volunteers at the Beaumaris Sports Association must raise the \$25 000 a year. The facilities have largely been built by volunteers attached to the Beaumaris Sports Association. Even the manner in which the City of Joondalup is seeking to negotiate the rent is most inappropriate. For example, the association has had only two concrete wickets. Therefore, the junior cricketers - there is a cricket coaching academy there - have had to be split into two groups, with parents taking them to surrounding ovals on practice night.

As patron of the club, I have been in the privileged position of working with the executive comprising president Tony Wight, vice-president Bob Eagles, treasurer Max Goldenberg, secretary Stuart Hodgetts, and of course the very able manager Wendy Orford in raising money to install another two practice wickets. However, once again, that is not at cost to the City of Joondalup, but at cost to the sponsors of the club. In that regard, I acknowledge my friend Joe Passione of Prime Projects Pty Ltd, who has organised the building of the two extra concrete wickets for the start of this cricket season. I also acknowledge the generosity of Mr Len Buckeridge and BGC (Australia) Pty Ltd in providing the concrete and the grano workers to put in the wicket. It was a very generous contribution to junior sport in the Mindarie electorate by both Mr Passione and Mr Buckeridge, and I sincerely thank each of them for his community support.

It is by community effort that all this is being built. Now the City of Joondalup wants to come in and assess the worth of the building, which contains fixtures and fittings such as bar fittings, tables and chairs that are worth

\$200 000, all of which was raised by the sports association. The City of Joondalup wants all this to be valued so that it can strike a rental amount that is based on a percentage of the value of this asset. I ask the minister whether he and his department could persuade the City of Joondalup to produce a more commonsense and reasonable outcome.

**MR R.C. KUCERA** (Yokine - Minister for Sport and Recreation) [9.34 am]: I thank the member for Innaloo for drawing the concerns of the Beaumaris Sports Association and the broader community to my attention. I also thank him for the great work he does with the soccer association and other sporting associations with which he has been involved at both a local and state level. The Beaumaris Sports Association is, by any measure, a considerable social asset to the community in that area, and I congratulate the volunteers who are involved with it. Indeed, I congratulate all volunteers, because it is the depth and commitment of volunteers in this State that has given us a grassroots edge over most other places in the world. Just yesterday evening I attended the annual hockey presentation with the member for Wagin. It was again clear that the grassroots support that is provided to sport in this State is why 54 Olympians from our great State went to Athens this year. That is a fantastic record. It is really groups such as the volunteers at Beaumaris Sports Association who make this possible.

I am aware of the premises of the Beaumaris Sports Association, which are situated on the corner of Miami Beach Promenade and Marmion Avenue, Iluka. The State Government has committed some \$695 000 towards the construction of clubrooms and facilities at these premises, including more than \$86 000 this year towards the installation of floodlighting, from the community sporting and recreation facilities fund. The lights will be fully installed and completed by the middle of 2005. It is important that I quickly explain the nature of the CSRFF funding. It is a one-third, one-third, one-third split. The State Government has committed \$695 000 to the association and would have leveraged a similar amount from both the club and the local city council. I thank the member for Innaloo for making that point. It is a point that local governments must always keep in the back of their minds when they start to impose fee structures on any sporting association that is seeking funding under this kind of fund. It is a three-way split between the local government, the community and the State Government. The important point about the community contribution is that it is not just a monetary contribution. It is also an in-kind contribution. The support and absolute commitment of those volunteers is a matter to which every local government must give foremost attention. This is not something that can be underpinned by drawing a bottom line. I urge all local governments to make sure that they give it that attention. A fine example is the City of Stirling, which, through its better clubs program, has an enormous amount of support for the way in which it approaches sporting arenas within that area. It is evident today in editorials about some of the difficulties that the Western Australian Cricket Association is having that keeping turf wickets is a very expensive exercise in this day and age. I urge local governments to make sure that they realise the true cost to these clubs. I understand that the Beaumaris premises are well utilised for not just cricket but also bowls, soccer, hockey, rugby and darts, which is exactly the kind of complex we are now urging local governments to be involved with.

The issue of the fees charged by local governments for access is a complex one. There is no doubt about that. I would foresee any future Labor Government working through the Department of Sport and Recreation towards standardising the approach taken by local governments. I am aware that a broad range of formulas is currently used by local governments to calculate the level of fees. It is true that some local governments require clubs to open their books before calculating the level of fees that they wish to charge, which is something that I have been urging the Western Australian Cricket Association to do with anything for which it wants government support. I know that it is sometimes used as a means of calculating a club's capacity to pay, but the manner in which it is done is important to the way in which the final formula is arrived at. Unfortunately, this currently varies across different local governments. I am aware, for instance, that local governments provide some 50 per cent discount on fees for juniors. The member for Innaloo mentioned Wanneroo. Wanneroo is an example of where those kinds of formulas are being applied. Some local governments simply charge a flat rate based on a percentage of the value of the premises, but that does not always reflect the amount of support that goes into sporting clubs from the local community and members. The City of Stirling's fee structure in its management agreements with sporting clubs that wish to use premises ranges from \$5 to \$23 a week. The member used the term "peppercorn rent". The City of Stirling's fee structure is not even a peppercorn rent; however, it is based on a combination of factors. It approaches the issue in a very sensible way, taking into account the size of the membership of the club, its capacity to pay, whether it has a junior club and whether it has a liquor licence. Under the City of Stirling's system, though, if two clubs, such as cricket and football, share a single facility, they pay only half of the yearly management agreement fee. Again, those kinds of variations are coming into these agreements. I would be very concerned, however, if the City of Joondalup introduced a fee structure that reduced the capacity of the Beaumaris Sports Association to service the needs of its members. Ultimately, this issue is not about propping up local government budgets; it is about making sure that grassroots sport and, indeed, the fundamental facility of providing sport to the general community, is underpinned. I ask the City of Joondalup please to consider very carefully before it enters into contractual arrangements that may put the kind

of pressure on these clubs that has resulted in the folding of clubs in other parts of the State. That is the last thing we want, particularly when the emphasis is on getting youngsters into sport and keeping them on the sporting field not only at a State Government level but also at a federal Government level.

I remind the House and the City of Joondalup that the city is in a very privileged position. Whereas most local governments must pay for their facilities, Arena Joondalup is a world-class facility, the operating costs of which are paid by the State Government. All other local governments must pay for their swimming pools, whereas Arena Joondalup is subsidised by the State Government. Given that the city receives such a special and generous contribution towards the cost of its ratepayers' sport and recreation facilities, I would be surprised if it were necessary to charge a commercial-style fee for the city's other premises. I urge the City of Joondalup to consider very carefully the issues that have been raised by the member for Innaloo, as patron of the Beaumaris Sports Association, and make sure that they keep kids on the playing field, and not just simply underwrite a bottom line.