



NYC Parks

Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP, Hon. ASLA
Commissioner

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Parks & Recreation
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May 24, 2021

Richard Briffault
Chair
Conflicts of Interest Board
2 Lafayette Street, RM 1010
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Briffault:

This letter serves to notify the Conflicts of Interest Board ("COIB" or "Board") that pursuant to the Rules of the City of New York, Title 53 §1-13(e) (I), I have designated New York City Department of Parks & Recreation ("NYC Parks") employee Christine Dabrow to work with the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation ("Foundation"), a non-profit foundation that builds and develops athletic fields across the country and provides free athletic programming to underserved youth.

Founded in 2001, the Foundation is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Since 2010, the Foundation has completed 100 Youth Development Parks baseball or multipurpose, synthetic surface fields that give at-risk youth clean, safe places for to play, and grow. Three of these parks are located in New York City. The Foundation's programs include: Badges for Baseball (crime prevention/mentoring program), Healthy Choices, Healthy Children (character education curriculum), I'm GREAT (leadership program for girls), and Baseball/Softball/Quickball Camps among others.

It is NYC Parks' intention to enter in an agreement with the Foundation to assist the agency in raising funds for the Col. Charles Young Ball Field ("Field") renovation project. Under this agreement, the Foundation will serve as the financial conduit for the deposit of all funds received in connection with this project, and also serve as the general contractor for the construction of this project. Moreover, NYC Parks will disclose to COIB all donations with a value of \$5,000 or more in a public report to be filed annually, as set forth in COIB Advisory Opinion 2003-4.

The Colonel Charles Young Youth Development Park, located in North Central Harlem, will be the Foundation's 103rd renovation project within the last 10 years. Like all of their projects, they work with committed community-based stakeholders who are invested in the revitalization of underutilized spaces in need of repair. This new multipurpose Field is at the center of a larger community revitalization project that includes the following already fully funded initiatives: new asphalt, fencing, backstops and bleachers to the main basketball court; repairs and new sports-coating to three existing courts along with new backboards; and a conversion of a fifth basketball court to a soccer pitch funded by the U.S. Soccer Foundation.

The Foundation is the ideal partner to work with NYC Parks on this project as they share a strong mutual interest with the interests of the City of New York (City") and NYC Parks' mission

to provide free educational, fitness and recreational opportunities for the benefit of the general public and underserved youths.

In addition, the Foundation has a unique set of attributes to assist the City and NYC Parks with fundraising and project management as it has a consistent history of:

- Deep relationships with Major League Baseball, the NFL Grassroots Youth Development Fund, and other foundations who are fundraising prospects for the Col. Young renovation
- A history of serving as the fiscal conduit for renovation projects in other municipalities
- A commitment of \$150,000 by the Cal Ripken Foundation towards the project
- Experience in building and renovating 103 ball fields nationally over the last 20 years in partnership with Major League Baseball, the NFL and other organizations

Ms. Dabrow is NYC Parks' Chief Marketing and Development Officer, a position she has held since April 2018. The Marketing team is part of NYC Parks' Community Outreach and Partnership Development Division. The Marketing team is responsible for raising funds for NYC Parks' programs and initiatives, creating marketing and advertising campaigns, managing the agency's brand identity, and co-managing the agency's signage program. Ms. Dabrow has been with NYC Parks for 15 years and leads the Marketing team's activities.

The Foundation's mission is to provide opportunities for kids to play in safe environments lead healthy lifestyles and learn how make productive choices for their futures. Based on the Foundation's work to provide recreational spaces and programs to disadvantaged youth and the nature of her responsibilities, Ms. Dabrow will work with CRSF to raise funds (approx. \$5.3 million) for the renovation of the Field starting in April 2021 through the end of the calendar year, spending between 3 – 7 hours weekly. The Foundation's goal is to help NYC Parks and NYPD complete their fundraising efforts. Once all funding has been raised, the Foundation will work with NYC Parks to oversee all aspects of design, permitting, and construction of the Field.

Indeed, there is a demonstrated nexus between Ms. Dabrow's City job, NYC Parks' mission and the proposed activity with the Foundation's work and activity which clearly furthers the City and NYC Parks' mission and, is not undertaken primarily for the Foundation's benefit or interest. Ms. Dabrow meets the criteria delineated by Board Rule 1-13(e)(1) (i-iii) for agency head's designations to work on behalf of not-for-profits or similar entities that:

(e) (1) An agency head may designate a public servant to perform work on behalf of a not-for-profit corporation, association, or other such entity that operates on a not-for-profit basis, including serving as a board member or other position with fiduciary responsibilities provided that:

(i) there is a demonstrated nexus between the proposed activity, the public servant's City job, and the mission of the public servant's agency; and such work furthers the agency's mission and is not undertaken primarily for the benefit or interests of the not-for-profit;

(ii) the designated public servant takes no part in the entity's business dealings with the City at the entity or at his or her agency, except that Council Members may sponsor and vote on discretionary funding for the entity; and,

(iii) within thirty (30) days the written designation is disclosed to the Conflicts of Interest Board and will be posted on the Board's website.

Ms. Dabrow's supervisor, Sam Biederman, the Assistant Commissioner for Community Outreach and Partnership Development has advised NYC Parks that he does not anticipate or foresee any conflicts between her day-to-day responsibilities at NYC Parks and her involvement with the Foundation. Mr. Biederman is supportive of Ms. Dabrow serving in this role, subject to any required stipulations and/or recusals on her part. I am also requesting that Ms. Dabrow be allowed the reasonable and incidental use of City time, equipment, supplies and resources for her activities with the Foundation as part of her City duties.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Senior Associate Counsel Sharmila Rampersaud who can be reached at (212) 360-1326, if the Board has any questions or requires further information.

Sincerely,



Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP

cc: Sharmila Rampersaud, Esq.