



TO: Board of Commissioners

FROM: Rob Sperl, Director of Parks and Planning  
Joe Themel, Fleet Manager

THROUGH: Michael Benard, Executive Director

RE: ABI Force Infield Groomer

DATE: February 1, 2022

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**SUMMARY:**

In 2017, the park's department began utilizing a new type of infield groomer called an ABI Force. A summary of this piece of equipment and comparison to our previous operations is attached.

We are seeking to purchase our fourth ABI Force that would replace the last of our Sandpro rakes. In previous statements, we were able to compare the ABI Force to the cost of the Sandpro. As noted in the attachment, we do not consider these two pieces of equipment as comparable. ABI has included a statement to that effect as well.

With the desired attachments, the quoted cost of the ABI Force is \$30,043. Like many other items we have seen, this cost has increased recently. We have been advised that delivery can be expected within 30 days.

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE/BOARD ACTION:**

ABI Forces were approved for purchase in May 2017, February 2018 and September 2019.

**REVENUE OR FUNDING IMPLICATIONS:**

The FY2021 Budget (10-101-000-57-5701-0000) and (10-101-000-57-5706-0000) includes the following items for the Parks Equipment:

Item	Budget	Total Purchase	2021 Budget #
ABI Field Grader	\$29,000	\$28,548.46	10-101-000-57-5706-0000

**STAKEHOLDER PROCESS:**

We have received positive feedback from the Athletics department and teams on the improved quality of infields utilizing this equipment.

**LEGAL REVIEW:**

N/A

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Quote  
ABI Statement regarding  
Staff summary of benefits seen from switch to ABI

**ALTERNATIVES:**

N/A

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the Wheaton Park District Board of Commissioners approve the purchase of the ABI Force with accessories in the amount of \$28,548.46 from traqology North America.

Traqnology North America  
 510 N Main Ave  
 Ladd, IL 61329  
 traqnology-na.com



# Estimate

**ADDRESS**

Wheaton Park District  
 1000 Manchester Rd.  
 Wheaton, IL 60187

**SHIP TO**

Wheaton Park District  
 1000 Manchester Rd.  
 Wheaton, IL 60187

**ESTIMATE # 1049**

**DATE** 02/02/2022  
**EXPIRATION DATE** 03/06/2022

DATE	SKU	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
	10-99143	ABI Force z23st w/Tweels	ABI Force z23st w/Tweels	1	23,999.00	23,999.00
	10-99149	Stealth Blades provide subsurface compaction relief without creating ridges in the soil. They are commonly used during the manual or laser grading process to loosen the soil ahead of the mini box blade. The Stealth Blades are designed with a flat bottom profile and offer less resistance to cut through rooted vegetation with ease. Also, great for weeding and vegetation removal off an infield skin.	Stealth Blades for ABI Force (Set of 7, complete)	1	549.00	549.00
	10-90165	Vibraflex 3800	Vibraflex 3800	1	699.00	699.00

DATE	SKU	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
	10-90410	The 1/2 Ton underbelly mid-mount roller has a 58" working width & an 8" diameter. Used for compacting turf and soil. Requires 10-90449 200lb Weight Kit for model z23 to reach ~1/2 ton of pressure. No weight kit is available for the z18 model, compaction will be limited.	Ton Roller (Requires 10-90449 200lb Weight Kit)	1	1,499.00	1,499.00
	10-90259	6' x 3' XD Flexible Dragmat	6' x 3' XD Flexible Dragmat	1	599.00	599.00
	10-90449	200lb Saddle-Mount Weight Kit - (Qty 4 50lb) ABI Force z23	200lb Saddle-Mount Weight Kit - (Qty 4 50lb) ABI Force z23	1	799.00	799.00
	10-99136	Infield Lip Edger System	Infield Lip Edger System	1	1,299.00	1,299.00
		ABI overall discount	discount	1	-1,500.00	-1,500.00

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SUBTOTAL	27,943.00
TAX	0.00
SHIPPING	605.46
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$28,548.46</b>

Accepted By

Accepted Date



ABI Attachments, Inc.  
520 S Byrkit Ave  
Mishawaka, IN 46544

877-788-7253  
[www.ABIattachments.com](http://www.ABIattachments.com)

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**SOLE SOURCE & EXCLUSIVE DEALER LETTER**

1/1/2021

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is to confirm that the **ABI Force, zero turn vehicle, models z23s or z23st**, referenced in the included quotation, is a sole-source product offered exclusively by ABI Attachments, Inc and it's assigned exclusive dealer in your region. No other company offers a similar or competing product. This product must be purchased from ABI Attachments, Incorporated's assigned exclusive dealer in your region.

Competition is precluded by the existence of proprietary product capability and trade secret manufacturing processes and techniques which enable the ABI Force, stand-on zero turn vehicle's purpose and function (models z23s or z23st). Exclusive functions include: Zero-Turn Grading, Hydraulic Control Of Interchangeable Front, Mid, and Rear Mount Attachments, Stand-on Access & Visibility, Exclusive VibraFlex & Profile Blade Field Conditioning Technologies With Positive Depth Control, Exclusive Responsive Variable Force (RVF) Technology. These and other proprietary facets of the ABI Force are additionally protected under U.S. patent law by the following U.S. patents: US9,332,687, US9,883,621, & US10,149,440.

There is no other like item or product available for purchase that would serve the same purpose or function, and there is only one retail price for the ABI Force, zero turn vehicle, models z23s or z23st. If you desire additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me at (574) 850-8708 at any time or visit our website at [www.ABIattachments.com](http://www.ABIattachments.com). Thank you for your interest in our products.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Catalano', written over a horizontal line.

Jim Catalano

Sr. Vice President  
ABI Attachments, Inc.

## **ABI – Absolute Innovations**

(Assessment by Wheaton Parks staff)

The ABI Force is a ball field grooming machine that is designed solely for the purpose of grooming and maintaining baseball and softball fields. Prior groomers used were the Toro Sandpro, Tractor w/rake, and the Superstar Bunker Rake which have been eliminated due to safety concerns and inability to purchase (no longer made) the rakes for the tractor. The ABI Force reduces errors and has numerous attachments capable of producing a quality product with one machine. Currently, we have three ABI machines in our fleet. Two are used for daily grooming throughout the district. The other is the ABI Force Z-235, which is capable of finely tuning each field. It has the option of the laser attachment which will assist in renovating fields, and ensure safe and well drained playing surfaces that the competition cannot compare to.

<b>Pros of ABI Force</b>	<b>Cons of Bunker Rake, Tractor w/Rake</b>
Laser Grading (less cancelations)	Laser Grading not available
Multifunctional machine	Multiple machines needed to equate to ABI Force
High Efficiency (less labor and machine hours spent on field)	Three men minimum needed and more days spent to complete a job
Renovations and repairs completed in just hours	SandPro and SuperStar do not renovate fields
Zero turn radius	Zero turn not available

- Old machines don't meet quality standards and/or parts are no longer available
- Eliminates the need of a large tractor (significant cost reduction)
- Efficient machine, one-person operation
- Multi use of machine. (grooming, landscaping, grading/ leveling)
- Laser Grading function adaptable to other landscaping applications
- Safe and well drained playing conditions
- Outperforms competition
- Athletic department endorses this product
- Coaches feedback has been positive
- We have graded four fields with dramatic improvements
- Stand up design allows field to be in front of you
- Bunker rakes were always an adaptation not a sole grooming machine for baseball/softball

Parks Department would like to continue to keep athletes safe, employee efficiency, and reduce equipment costs. Safety is a priority for staff and athletes, we believe this machine will contribute to this positively. This sole machine will do more in a shorter time and create a better product for the participants in the programs of Wheaton Park District.