James W. Cownie
Baseball Park
Park and Recreation Board...Did You Know?

June 26, 2018
Location – City View
2501 SE 22nd Street
Location – Field Layout
Location – 1930’s
Location – 1950’s
History – Brown Family

• 1912 – The Brown Estate was valued at $300,000 or $8 million by today’s standards

• 1918 – Louis P. Brown donated 573 lots in Des Moines for WWI “war garden purposes”

• 1922 – Louis moves to Des Moines and lived on the west side of Greenwood Park

• 1950 – Owned 100 acres of land on the western side of Gray’s Lake

• 1958 – Louis died with an estate valued at $8.8 million by today’s standards
Location – 1970’s
History – Property

- 1965 - City acquired property from the Brown Family

- 1974 - Des Moines Register refers to the area as Soldiers Field
Development – Timeline

- 2005 – County awarded $50,000 grant to South Des Moines Little League to use the Soldiers Field site
- 2005 – $1.4 Million paid with public and private funds
- 2006 – City entered facility maintenance agreement with I-Cubs
- May 1, 2006 – James W. Cownie Baseball Park opened
Development – Naming

• James W. Cownie Baseball Park
  • Named after James W. Cownie father of James (Jim) S. Cownie
  • Active in youth athletics
  • One of the founders of Little League in Des Moines
  • Raised funds to build the first ballpark
  • Jim Cownie helped raise $1.4 million toward the construction of the Park
Facility Details

- 8 irrigated fields
- Seating for 75 at all fields
- 2 lighted fields
- Concession stand
- Restrooms
- Playground
Programs and Events

• Home to South Des Moines Little League

• Tournament host for multiple United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) baseball events
Future Actions

• Fall of 2018 $250,000 of improvements
  • Cement and dugout footing repairs
  • Batting cage upgrades
  • Field repositioning
  • Drainage and irrigation system improvements