

**Parks & Recreation Board
Fees & Charges Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes**

The Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Subcommittee of the City of Mesa met in a regular session at the Parks and Recreation office at 200 S. Center Street, Building 1, Mesa on October 30, 2007.

Members Present:

Frank Alger
Michelle Udall
Russ Gillard
Sue Deck
Nicole Behrman
Don Flavell
Dale Furnas

Staff Present:

Darla Armfield
Cindy Hunt
Mike Holste
Sherry Woodley
Dana Hawkins
Tiffany Krahenbuhl
Kym Otterstedt
Dawn Bies

The meeting was called to order at 12:34 p.m. by Sue Deck, Chair.

Review of Fees and Charges

Ms. Deck welcomed the subcommittee members and informed them that supervisors would be present to give feedback on where they see their programs going, how they are looking at fees and charges, and whether or not to increase fees. She further stated that discussion items would also include cost recovery, scholarship and fee assistance programs.

Russ Gillard asked if staff had received any direction from Council regarding cost recovery. Ms. Deck replied that staff had not received any direction at this point and most likely wouldn't be receiving anything prior to sending the recommendation before Budget Department and the Parks Board.

Ms. Deck gave a brief description of the services provided by Parks, Recreation & Commercial Facilities to the subcommittee. She mentioned that last year a non-resident fee had been implemented for facility use, and would be discussed again.

Aquatics Program

Darla Armfield presented the subcommittee with the following information/recommendations:

- Competitive Programs (swim, dive, synchronized swimming, water polo) - Recommend competitive fee remain at \$50 per session. Delay the scheduled fee increase of competitive fee from \$50 to \$60 to be implemented January 2008. Competitive program is experiencing no growth. Fees have been increased 42 percent over the last three years.
- Swim Lessons – No fee increase recommended. Lesson enrollment declined 38 percent last year. Fees have increased 25 percent over the last three years. Delay the fee increase scheduled for implementation in January 2008. The fee was scheduled to increase to \$21 per session.
- Public swim – No fee increases recommended. Recommend family pass discount Memorial Day weekend continue as a permanent special rate of \$95 for amenity pools and \$62.50 for non-amenity pools.
- Pool rentals – Recommend fees remain the same. Reservations have not reached capacity. Further increases may decrease the number of reservations, decreasing revenue.
- Staff recommends implementing some “pilot” programs next season.

Discussion:

- Michelle Udall asked if staff is considering a sibling discount. Ms. Armfield replied that staff is working on coming up with some strategies for the 2008 season, and would most likely target lesson schedules where enrollment is low and give discounts for those sessions.
- Mr. Gillard asked the reason for the decline in swim lesson enrollment in 2007 and if other communities had experienced the same. Ms. Udall mentioned that Mesa Public Schools (MPS) had a decline in enrollment as well, which was attributed to a shift in the real estate market. Ms. Armfield mentioned that in speaking with parents of participants, the main reason given was convenience. She reiterated that staff is looking at revising schedules, pricing strategies, and other ways to maximize usage at the different facilities, while offering a quality program at a reasonable price.
- Mike Holste asked if staff is considering offering discounts for competitive fees if taking multiple activities. Ms. Armfield answered that this is one of the areas where staff is considering changing the fee structure in order to fill the off-peak time slots.
- Mr. Holste inquired whether staff was considering discounts at various pools also. Ms. Armfield stated that staff is restructuring programs at some of the pools needing renovations.
- Ms. Deck stated that the subcommittee would like more information from staff on discounts, off-peak pricing and multiple activity discounts for the next meeting. She mentioned that staff uses activity based cost recovery tracking for each program.

Reservations:

Sherry Woodley presented the subcommittee with the following information/recommendations:

- Bandshell/Bleacher Rentals - Recommend no increase in fees.
- Park Ramada Rentals - Due to budget cuts, the parks are not cleaned as often as they were in the past. Also, there are fewer rangers, so they are unable to help bag overflow trash (unless they are called out by a citizen). This has created a definite impact on customer satisfaction, and has resulted in more citizen complaints. A non-resident rate of 20 percent more has been implemented for ramada rentals. Because of the increased number of citizen complaints, the recommendation is to leave the fees the same (using the ranges shown in the current fees and charges).
- Sports Field Fees – The current fees and charges have a non-resident rate established for sports fields. This will be 20 percent higher than those fees charged for Mesa residents. At this time, the non-resident fee has not been implemented due to software issues that need to be resolved in the RecTrac system. Financial staff agreed these fees should not be charged yet, as staff would need to manipulate the fees. Due to the construction at Jefferson Park, sports field revenue will be lower this year. It is recommended to leave the fees and charges the same due to the issues listed previously. Keep the range as listed in the current fees and charges to accommodate the various fee structures offered.

Discussion:

- Ms. Deck clarified that the reduction in cleaning was a cost saving measure. Ms. Woodley verified this information. Staff anticipates a reduction in revenue in this area due to the lack of park rangers policing the reservations and the reduction in cleaning of the ramadas.
- Ms. Deck asked if our fees were pretty consistent with fees in other municipalities. Ms. Woodley said the sports fees were pretty consistent with other cities. She mentioned that there is a new complex being built in Gilbert, which could impact Mesa's revenues the first year.
- Frank Alger asked if the major concern for ramada users was the decline in cleaning. Ms. Woodley stated that was the main concern, in addition to people taking over reservations due to the lack of park rangers verifying reservations.
- Mr. Alger asked about the cost to clean a ramada. Ms. Woodley stated that it was a minimum fee of \$200, which included cleaning restrooms also. Mr. Alger asked about adding a cleaning deposit fee to ramada rentals to include cleaning, which would be reimbursable. Ms. Woodley

stated that there were not enough rangers to be able to go back and check the condition of all ramada rentals regarding reimbursing the cleaning deposit. Mr. Alger asked if contact had been made with any civic organizations for help in cleaning the ramadas. Ms. Woodley stated that they are just getting that program started, however, it has been sporadic thus far.

Recreation Programs:

Cindy Hunt presented the subcommittee with the following information/recommendations:

- Adaptive Recreation – The adaptive summer program provides an afternoon day camp that is implemented in concert with the MPS's Summer Education program. Disabled participants attend a morning academic session as part of the extended school year curriculum, followed by an afternoon of structured activities designed to enhance leisure skill development, and positive social behaviors. The morning session is funded by MPS and the afternoon session is funded by the City of Mesa. The Department of Economic Security provides additional financial resources to the City equating to approximately \$88,000 annually. The camp is held June and July for six weeks. Staff recommends no increase in fees for this program.
- Jefferson and Webster Recreation Centers – Sports and leisure programs, when not in use by the City of Mesa Parks and Recreation programs, utilize the facility. In addition, staff is hoping to implement a birthday party package for community members within the next coming months. In July 2007, a non-resident fee was implemented, thus staff recommends leaving the fees the same (as shown in the current fees and charges).
- Elementary After School Sports – This is open to 1st through 6th grade boys and girls attending the Mesa Elementary and Charter schools. The 4th-6th grade program focuses on skill development and fundamentals of a particular sport in the form of special events and intramural mini-games that are officiated by trained staff. The 1st-3rd grade program focuses on recreation activities including parachute games, kickball, dodgeball, and more. School sites are chosen by MPS site availability, central location, and registration. Schools are encouraged to have MPS staff as coaches. Two 10-week sessions (Fall and Spring) are conducted one to two hours a day, twice a week, costing the participant \$36 (\$18 if on MPS reduced lunch program or \$9 if on the MPS free lunch program). Staff recommends leaving the fees the same as shown in the current fees and charges.
- After School Sports 7th & 8th Grade Jr. High Intramurals – The Junior High Intramural program offers three separate sports seasons each school year to the 7th and 8th grade students at each of the thirteen junior high schools in Mesa. The boy's sports include basketball, flag football and soccer. The girl's sports include basketball, volleyball and soccer. Currently in its 43rd year of operation, this cooperative program between Mesa Parks, Recreation and Commercial Facilities and the MPS places emphasis on skill development, fair and equal play, sportsmanship, school spirit, and FUN. Parks and Recreation provides the coordination, marketing, coaches, officials, supervision, and printed materials for this program while the MPS provides the buses, facilities, equipment and on-site Intramural Director. The Intramural Directors make announcements promoting the program at each of the school sites. Three eight-week seasons are offered throughout the year, costing the participant \$36 (\$18 if on MPS reduced lunch program, or \$9 if on the MPS free lunch program). Staff recommends leaving the fees the same as shown in the current fees and charges.
- Summer Sports Camps – Mesa offers a variety of summer sports camps including basketball, indoor and outdoor soccer, volleyball, Sports Plus, and Teen Sports Academy. Clinics are two 4-week sessions for 1st-12th grade. The Outdoor soccer camp has two 3-week sessions. Fees range from \$40 for a 1-hour per day session to \$50 for 1½ hours per day session. The fee for Sports Plus is \$55/session. The Teen Sports Academy is \$55/session. Sports clinics are designed to teach fundamental skills of a specific sport for the youth of Mesa. The Sports Plus and Teen Sports Academy provide a variety of sports throughout the season. It is recommended that fees for the 08-09 school year be increased 5 percent. Staff recommends that all sports clinics be increased to \$42 for the one-hour soccer clinic and \$53 for the 1½-hour volleyball,

basketball and outdoor soccer clinics. It is recommended that the Sports Plus and Teen Sports Academy fees be increased from \$55/session to \$58/session.

- Summer Recreation Youth Development program – The Youth Adventure program is a recreational opportunity offered at two MPS multi-purpose rooms, five days per week, from 7am to 6pm. Activities include crafts, games, aquatics, theme events, guest speakers, quiet activities, physical activities and field trips weekly. Participants provide their own lunch and snacks. Mesa is striving to offer three programs next summer through more available Mesa schools not under construction as in summer 2007. It is recommended fees be increased by 5 percent, from \$98 to \$100.
- Summer Recreation Youth Adventure Series – The Youth Adventure Series is offered to children K-6 grade to supplement the existing summer recreation series, which is held Monday through Thursday. The program is offered on six different Fridays during June and July. This program incorporates recreational experiences and swimming activities that include bowling, theatre, plays, and theme parks. Staff recommends leaving the fees the same as shown in the current fees and charges.
- Summer Recreation Activities (Boredom Busters, Kids in Action, Kidtastic) – This program is held at eight different schools within Mesa. Sites are chosen from MPS by central location and school availability. The program is designed for youth between K-6th grades. The programs include arts and crafts, games, special guest speakers, and theme events, swimming and one field trip per summer. These camps are broken into two 4-week afternoon sessions for 4½ hours at each site. Three Kidtastic programs held 1 session per day, 2½ hour per session with participants of four and five years of age. For summer 2008, staff is scheduling to increase to eleven Boredom Buster sites and six Kidtastic sites as the construction of MPS sites should be less and more availability for City summer programs. It is recommended that fees for the 2008-09 program be increased five percent to \$55 for Boredom Busters and \$45 for Kidtastic.

Discussion:

Ms. Deck asked if staff feels we are maximizing revenue based on the philosophy of the recreation centers being community-based facilities. Ms. Hunt replied that at one point staff was focused on renting the facilities out instead of serving the communities in which they reside. By serving the community, the revenue is lower for weekday usage, however the facilities are rented out to various groups on weekends, when the facilities would normally be closed.

Ms. Udall asked if residents are required to show resident status. Ms. Hunt replied there was a spot on the registration form to check for resident/non-resident, which staff randomly checks. Ms. Udall asked if they were also required to provide legal residents, since Proposition 200 states that the City is prohibited from giving money to non-legal residents. Ms. Hunt replied that we use the list from the school districts. Ms. Udall stated that the school districts are not required to check that information on their residents. Mr. Alger added that City funds are not supposed to be given if resident cannot prove legal status. Ms. Hunt stated that staff would check into that for the recreation programs.

Ms. Deck asked if there was a different fee structure for lower income areas. Ms. Hunt replied that the City has stayed with the three-tier structure currently in place.

Red Mountain Multigenerational Center (RMMC):

Kym Otterstedt presented the subcommittee with the following information/recommendations:

- Fitness Center – Mesa offers fitness coaching to provide guidance to members with tailoring workouts to personal needs, and to attract and retain customers. Staff recommends retaining the current price range for fitness passes, establishing a fitness coaching fee range beginning at \$45, establishing a range of \$45 - \$200, setting the high end of the range at \$200 to accommodate the possible need to establish a 5-session block at \$200 if customer demand dictates.

- Kids Club – Mesa offers a daycare center for children from 6 months to 7 years in age. Parents must remain in the facility while taking classes or using the fitness center while kids are in Kids Club. Staff recommends no increase in fees, but establishing a range of \$2-\$5 per child and a range for the frequent use pass of \$18-\$20. Staff is evaluating cost recovery and safety ratios for staffing of this program.
- Youth/Teens Programs – RMMC doesn't offer youth/teen programs, but currently hosts the Teen Summer field trips on Fridays. This program will be moving under the Recreation Program next summer. Staff recommends retaining the current fee range at this time; fees to be reviewed by Recreation Program staff next year.
- Climbing Wall – Standard climbing wall fees are \$5 for belay certification. If adults wish to become belay certified, they can then supervise their own children instead of waiting for open climb hours. Staff recommends establishing a range for the climbing wall of \$5-\$30.
- Room Rentals – Mesa is comparable in fees with several other neighboring cities. The RMMC has a more extensive price breakdown, and does not have established rates for commercial use. It is recommended that a commercial rate mark up be established, as well as establishing setup and/or equipment use fees as listed below:
 - Increase the high end of the range for deposits on Multipurpose Rooms A, B & C to \$700, and for deposits on classrooms to \$120, due to value of facility equipment and repair/replacement costs for flooring that could be damaged.
 - Add Premium Space Rental fee for high traffic areas that allow for greater exposure to clients.
 - Add Patio Rental fee for outdoor patio use.
 - Add Table/Chair Rental fees to help offset costs of replacement/repair, and to cover staff setup costs. These items are highly used and abused by the number of rental functions, as well as Senior Center use on a daily basis.
 - Add Equipment Use fee to help offset costs of maintenance/replacement of kitchen warmer, refrigerator and stage components.
 - Add Commercial Rental rates, established at 30% markup over resident and non-resident rental fees and a deposit for clients renting the facility for monetary gain or fundraising purposes.
 - Add Non-profit rate, establishing a 30% discounted rate on resident and non-resident rental fees and deposits for clients renting the facility for charitable events, or non-profit events. Fees will be based on non-profit organization address for establishing resident/non-resident fee.
- Party Packages – Birthday party packages include classroom rental, instruction and activities. Mesa's climbing wall rentals include staff to belay participants and classroom rental. Staff recommends changing item title to Party Packages and including climbing wall party rentals. Staff recommends no increase to fees for the party packages, however, it is recommended to change the beginning range to \$60 to include small climbing wall rentals, and increase the top range to \$200 to include larger birthday parties.
- Add Overtime fee for rentals when facility is not already open, to help offset costs of staffing and utility fees. Staff recommends establishing a range of \$20-\$50 for this fee.
- Pumpkin Fest & Breakfast With Santa – RMMC offers two family events currently, with fees ranging from \$2-\$5 per person. Events are held only at RMMC and are not "citywide" special events. Staff recommends establishing a range of \$3-\$10 to allow for increases in 2008 in moving family events toward greater cost recovery.
- Citywide Special Interest Classes – Mesa's price range for special interest classes is comparable to other cities surveyed. Staff recommends retaining the current range.
- Drop-In Classes – Mesa offers preschool (music, cooking, art, and sports) drop-in classes, as well as school age (5-13) drop-in programs over the school holiday and summer breaks. These programs are paid for at each visit. Staff recommends changing the range to \$2-\$20 to accommodate summer drop-in program cost increases, and to help with cost recovery.

Discussion:

Mr. Gillard asked if staff had noticed a drop in participation due to a new fitness center in the area. Ms. Otterstedt replied that some had left, but about half of the regular customers had returned.

Mr. Holste recommended increasing the range for Kids Club pass to \$18-\$30 to avoid having to increase fee range annually. He also recommended changing the fee range for the 20-visit pass to \$36-\$50.

Ms. Deck recommended changing the event line item title to Family Events and Activities, which would include all types of special events.

Ms. Deck asked if staff had noticed a decline in attendance in special interest classes. Ms. Otterstedt replied that there was a slight decline at RMMC, but the largest decline was in the West Mesa classes offered. She further stated there was a lot of competition with other cities, all offering the same type of special interest classes.

Mr. Holste recommended increasing the range for drop in classes to \$2-\$40 to cover holiday breaks, clinics, etc.

Adult Sports:

Dana Hawkins and Tiffany Krahenbuhl presented the subcommittee with the following information/recommendations:

- Adult Softball – The adult softball program consists of four seasons (summer, winter, fall, and spring) and hosted 1,232 teams during the past fiscal year. All games are played at Riverview, Red Mountain, Skyline and Kleinman Park.
- Adult Baseball – The adult baseball program has fall, spring, and summer leagues and hosted 38 teams during the past fiscal year.
- Basketball - The adult basketball program consists has winter, spring, and summer leagues and hosted 172 teams during the past fiscal year.
- Flag Football – The adult flag football program consists of fall, winter, and spring leagues and hosted 100 teams during the past fiscal year.
- Soccer – The adult soccer program offers fall, spring, and summer leagues and hosted 79 teams during the past fiscal year.
- Volleyball – The adult volleyball program offers fall, winter, spring, and summer leagues and hosted 99 teams during the past fiscal year.

Mr. Hawkins stated that staff is proposing a five percent increase for each of the adult sports programs to offset the rising cost of officials for the programs. He further stated that there are no scholarships for fee assistance offered in the adult sports program.

Discussion:

Ms. Deck clarified that the Adult Sports program is 100% cost recovered as a whole.

Mr. Holste asked if there had been any consideration given to baseball teams that can't afford to pay team price to play single games. Ms. Krahenbuhl stated that most users know Tempe offers single-game play and go there for single game use. She further stated that most of our users prefer the double-header game format. Mr. Holste asked if staff had noticed a decrease in participation. Ms. Krahenbuhl noted that flag football participation was down, however, soccer fees had increased and participation had also increased.

Mr. Holste asked if surveys had been sent out to our users, which may explain the decrease. Ms. Krahenbuhl stated that surveys were going out.

Ms. Udall asked if staff felt that some of the sport program participation was based on how the local professional teams were doing. Ms. Krahenbuhl agreed that the sports were very cyclical and participation levels changed with the various sports, depending on which sport was popular at the time.

Ms. Deck asked if staff had looked into ways to increase program participation. Ms. Krahenbuhl stated that Mesa had cut back and only allows the top two or four teams to participate in tournaments, unlike other cities that allow all the teams to participate. She stated that Mesa tries to be as customer friendly as possible, and offers other services such as printing out rosters for all teams, etc.

Mr. Holste asked if Tempe was our only competition for soccer. Ms. Krahenbuhl stated that as far as city leagues, Tempe was our only competition, however, there were a lot of other user groups out there that offered soccer leagues, but not necessarily co-ed leagues.

Mr. Holste asked if staff had looked at ways to increase participation/revenue by adding additional teams. Ms. Krahenbuhl stated that she has scheduled all games at only one facility each evening, which saves on staffing costs by only having staff cover one facility at a time.

Mr. Holste asked if surveys had been done to compare fees for rental facilities in other cities with Mesa fees. Ms. Krahenbuhl stated the Mark Gallo could probably get that information from the other cities.

Ms. Deck asked to have staff bring some more clarification about this item to the next meeting.

Schedule Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Fees and Charges Subcommittee was scheduled for November 20, 2007, 12:30 pm, at the Parks and Recreation Office, 200 South Center Street, Building 1.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Rhett Evans
Parks, Recreation and Commercial Facilities Director