

Parks and Recreation Board
Meeting Minutes

The Parks and Recreation Board of the City of Mesa met in a regular meeting at the Parks and Recreation Administration Office, 100 North Center Street, on February 9, 2006.

Members Present:

John Dyer (arrived 12:35 pm)
Russ Gillard
Connie Gullatt-Whiteman
Don Goodrum
Jeff Kirk
Dina Lopez
David Martinez
Bernadine Mooney (arrived 12:08 pm)
Walter "Bud" Page, Jr.
Marilyn Wilson

Staff Present:

Tim Barnard
Mike Holste
Mary Lindemuth
Terri Palmberg
Diane Rogers
Bob White
Sherry Woodley

Members Absent:

LeRoy Brady, excused

Items on the agenda were discussed out of order but for reasons of clarity will remain as listed on the agenda.

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 noon by Bud Page, Chair.

Approval of Minutes

Marilyn Wilson made a motion, Russ Gillard seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the minutes from the meeting of January 12, 2006.

Public Comments

No public comments.

Chair's Comments

Mr. Page requested that Board members review the member roster for correct information. He also asked that Board members be on time for meetings and read Board reports prior to the meeting to become familiar with the material, which will result in a more productive meeting.

Mr. Page also reminded Board members of the tour of facilities that will occur in April.

Donation of Playground Equipment

Terri Palmberg said a check for \$5,000 will be presented to the Board and Foundation for Mesa Parks and Recreation to purchase a piece of playground equipment at Meadowgreen Park. This donation is in memory of Mr. Ernie Mason, a former City of Mesa employee who recently passed away. A plaque will also be installed stating that the donation is in honor of Mr. Mason.

Kim Mason, daughter of Ernie Mason, thanked Ms. Palmberg for her assistance in this endeavor, and the City of Mesa for allowing the donation to occur. She also thanked Mr. Karl Krapek, a good friend of her father, for making the donation. She said her father enjoyed working for the City of Mesa and enjoyed working with the people.

Fee Adjustments

Sherry Woodley reported that the basic philosophy of the Parks and Recreation Division is to offer year-round diversified recreational programs, services, and facilities ensuring that all citizens have equal opportunities to participate. Because the demand on the Division is greater than the public's ability to appropriate public funds to support it, it is necessary to charge fees and pursue other supplementary revenues in order to attain some cost recovery, which will enable the Division to extend its resources to provide a wide variety of programs and events. Fees and charges are not intended to diminish the City's inherent responsibility to provide public open space, facilities and general leisure opportunities. Rather, fees and charges will be viewed as a method to expand and continue to provide basic services on an equitable basis, especially during challenging economic times.

Fees and charges for parks and recreation services provide only one source of funding for the Division. Other sources include but are not limited to: general fund appropriations; quality of life sales tax collections; grants in aid; special gifts; donations; contractual receipts; and impact and/or development fee revenues.

The City's philosophy of "no youth shall be kept from participating because of a fee" is addressed and applied by one of the following alternatives:

1. Fee Assistance - The fee assistance program provides financial assistance to participants in selected programs when participation would not otherwise be possible due to economic hardship. Individuals who qualify for the public school free or reduced lunch program and/or federal subsidy recipients may receive a discount on selected program fees.
2. Scholarships - Scholarships may be offered for participation in selected programs. Concentrated efforts will be made to secure outside funding to cover all or part of the registration fee.
3. Refunds and Credits - Refunds or credits to a household account may be given to registered participants for reasons of illness, emergencies, etc.
4. Fee Adjustments - It is understood that on occasion special consideration may be needed in determining fees for groups or individuals having circumstances uncommon to those in the fee structure criteria. In these cases, the Parks and Recreation Director will review all such requests. The request shall be submitted in writing to the Director prior to the event and may be taken to the Parks and Recreation Board for consideration, as determined by the Director. In addition, the Director is authorized to institute special discounts, promotions or other short-term fee adjustments that are of benefit to the City, program and/or service.
5. Satisfaction Guarantee - Mesa is so confident that its classes are of the highest quality that a money back guarantee is offered. Within the first week of class, if a participant is not completely satisfied, 100% of the class registration fee will be refunded.

The review process begins in October with the establishment of a Board-directed Fees and Charges Subcommittee. Staff then evaluates direct and indirect program costs, arriving at a subsidy level for each of the programs provided. Further, staff contacts other municipalities for fee structure information and completes market comparisons. Staff recommendations are reviewed and adjusted by management and the subcommittee prior to submission to the Board.

This year's subcommittee consisted of Board members David Martinez, Marilyn Wilson, Connie Gullatt-Whiteman, and John Dyer, who met several times to review and recommend changes. Staff subcommittee representatives were Mary Lindemuth, Christine Fredrickson, Sherry Woodley, and Mike Holste.

The following proposed adjustments were presented:

Adaptive Programs

The adaptive program is substantially supported by partnerships and grants from organizations such as the Department of Economic Security, Mesa Association of Sports for the Disabled, and East Valley Special Olympics. In-kind support and grants totaled almost \$75,000 in FY04/05. An increase to the fees is recommended and should generate an additional \$2,173. This program, which supports Federal ADA requirements, recovers approximately 61% of direct costs, up from 50% last fiscal year.

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Range</u>
Summer camp, per person	\$250.00	\$275.00	\$5.00-450.00

Aquatics

Competitive Program

The aquatics competitive program encompasses multiple sports, which include swimming, diving, synchronized swimming, and water polo. The current recovery of direct costs is 41%. A fee increase of \$10 is recommended this year, which is within the current range \$10-50, and will generate an additional \$27,000, if attendance remains steady. A range increase to \$80 is also proposed should the need arise to achieve additional cost recovery (proposed range: \$50.00-80.00).

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u>
Competitive, per person	\$40.00	\$50.00

Swimming Lessons

A fee increase of \$2.00 is proposed, which will result in an additional \$24,000 in revenues. Lessons are very popular and serve an important role in the community by offering affordable swimming instruction, which not only enhance well being but also increase life safety and drowning avoidance. Swimming lessons are self-supporting and recover 100% of direct and administrative costs. Aquatics reservations guard costs were increased last year and are not recommended to increase. Reservations cost recovery is 65%. The subcommittee did recommend the establishment of a range for the guard per hour classification, in order to allow staff to make fee adjustments as needed. The suggested range is \$22-28 per hour per guard.

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u>
Lessons per person, two week session	\$18.00	\$20.00
Guard per hour per 50 people	21.00	No change

Bernadine Mooney suggested raising the fee to more than \$20.00, adding that it is a great program with great instructors.

Jeff Kirk asked if the revenue over and above the 100% cost recovery could be used somewhere else.

Ms. Woodley replied that it is used for pool maintenance.

Mr. Gillard asked if estimates for additional revenue take into account that participation may decrease.

Ms. Woodley replied that demand for the classes is high.

Bernadine Mooney made a motion, David Martinez seconded, that the fee for swimming lessons be increased to \$21.00.

Dina Lopez said she felt that the subcommittee has worked hard and taken everything into consideration. Staff are being asked to get 100% cost recovery and this program does that. A higher increase may be viewed negatively by the public. She will not support the extra \$1.00.

Mr. White said depending on the results of the election coming up, fees may have to be raised even higher next year.

Terri Palmberg said the City has a philosophy that kids need to learn to swim for safety and health reasons. Fees impact lower income residents the most. It is staff's recommendation to raise by only \$2.00. It is staff's philosophy to keep lesson fees lower so they are accessible programs.

The motion made by Bernadine Mooney, seconded by David Martinez, that the fee for swimming lessons be increased to \$21.00, failed by a vote of 7-2 (aye-Martinez, Mooney; nay-Gillard, Gullatt-Whiteman, Goodrum, Kirk, Lopez, Page, Wilson).

Park Ramada Rental

A proposed \$2.00 per ramada per hour increase is recommended, which is well within the range of \$5.00-60.00 currently in place. Ramada rentals recover approximately 158% of direct costs. The additional charges are estimated to generate approximately \$45,600 in new revenue if reservations remain steady.

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u>
Small	\$ 8.00	\$10.00
Medium	13.00	15.00
Large	18.00	20.00
X-Large	23.00	25.00
Open Space Fees		
X-small	\$10.00	\$12.00
Small	15.00	17.00
Medium	20.00	22.00
Large	25.00	27.00
X-Large	30.00	32.00

Miscellaneous Field Fees

Field supervisors are City employees who monitor the use of ball fields, softball, and miscellaneous baseball facilities during league and/or tournament play. No fee increase is recommended, although an increase to the range up to \$30/hour is recommended so that staff has greater flexibility to adjust to market conditions and the unique needs of each event. At this time, no revenue increases are anticipated, but collections will be monitored.

Recreation Centers/Gymnasiums (Jefferson and Webster)

Jefferson and Webster recreation centers were built in cooperation with Mesa Public Schools (MPS) to serve the elementary school populations and Mesa residents. The City and MPS jointly operate the centers and each pay half of the costs for maintaining and repairing the facilities as required by an intergovernmental agreement. Jefferson and Webster offer a variety of programs and services, including youth sports leagues and tournaments, special events, adult sports, fitness classes, and open gym. Each center has a gymnasium and classroom available to rent. Cost recovery is approximately 10-15% because the majority of youth programs are free. The proposed fee increases should result in an additional \$2,340 in revenue.

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u>
Gym use		
main court, first hour	\$80.00	\$84.00
main court, each add'l hour	40.00	42.00
side court, first hour	40.00	42.00
side court, each add'l hour	20.00	21.00
Scoreboard operator/per hour	16.00	17.00
Recreation leader/per hour	16.00	17.00
Commercial use		
Rental/hour (entire center)	300.00	315.00
Classroom/activity room/hour	80.00	85.00
Recreation leader/hour if needed	16.00	17.00
Clean-up/hour (if needed)	25.00	26.00

Mr. Martinez said he believes the forget that the overlying issue is that the City is trying to help the community, trying to save as many programs as possible, so if a fee is low and the market will bear it, then the fee should be increased. The focus should be what affects the City, not particular groups.

Red Mountain Multigenerational Center

Daily visit fees have not been raised since the facility opened in April 1999, so an increase is recommended. Even with the increase, the facility remains competitive with Valley market pricing. The proposed increases are expected to generate an additional \$57,000 in revenue. The "teen" designation will be consolidated with youth fees to create new category, Youth/Teen.

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u>
Daily visit fees		
Youth/Teen (5-15, to be combined with Teen)	1.50	3.00
Adult (16-54)	3.00	4.00
Senior (55+)	2.00	3.00
10 Visit Pass		
Youth/Teen (5-15, to be combined with Teen)	12.00	22.00
Adult (16-54)	24.00	30.00
Senior (55+)	16.00	22.00
20 Visit Pass		
Youth/Teen (5-15)	20.00	38.00
Adult (16-54)	40.00	50.00
Senior (55+)	28.00	38.00
Monthly Pass		
Youth (5-15)	15.00	24.00
Adult (16-54)	25.00	31.00
Senior (55+)	18.00	24.00
Two adult pass	40.00	50.00
Family pass	50.00	60.00
Single parent family pass	35.00	45.00
Monthly Pass Rate With EFT Promotional Discount (15%)*		
Youth/Teen (5-15)	13.00	18.00
Adult (16-54)	21.00	24.00
Senior (55+)	15.00	18.00
Two adult pass	34.00	43.00

Family pass	43.00	54.00
Single parent family pass	30.00	38.00
Annual visit /pre-pay		
Youth/Teen (5-15)	156.00	200.00
Adult (16-54)	252.00	290.00
Senior (55+)	180.00	200.00
Two adult pass	408.00	469.00
Family pass	516.00	593.00
Single parent family pass	360.00	414.00

* This discount is applied for those patrons who choose an auto-pay option automatically deducted from their bank account, which reduces administrative costs and ensures reliable collections.

Mr. Goodrum asked about the level of participation at the Center.

Mr. Gillard, who uses the Center on a regular basis, said it is always busy, probably because people consider it a bargain.

Sports Field Use

Last year, fee ranges were adjusted to meet customer demand for various levels of preparation required for sports fields (softball, baseball, flag football, soccer). This enables participants to determine the level of field preparation that is needed for their particular event, and allows them to do some of the prep work themselves at a lesser cost. There is no increase in estimated revenue for these adjustments, but fee and range increases for lighting and day field use are recommended. The additional revenue generated is estimated to be \$11,300.

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u>
Field preparation per field	\$15.00-90.00	No change
Partial prep (drag and dust control)	22.00	No change
Lights/hour	18.00	20.00
Day field use by permit/hour	6.00	8.00

Community Youth Groups

Youth sports organizations, such as Little League and other community youth groups, currently pay no hourly field usage or lighting fee to use sports fields. Because of the financial challenges the division has been experiencing, these groups have recently proposed paying a nominal hourly fee for field lighting to help offset the City's subsidy. A \$6 per hour fee was suggested and will be applied this year in an attempt to help ensure continued lighting availability. (These groups received approximately \$35,000 from the City of Mesa in subsidized light, field, and maintenance costs.) It is estimated that the hourly lighting charge will generate \$130,000. Teams will pay only for billable hours, so they will pay only for what they actually use.

Teams using City fields have, in the past, paid \$48 per team per season for use of the fields. It is recommended that instead of this flat fee, a charge of \$4 per child be implemented. Mesa Public Schools charges \$4 per child and this would make the City's fees consistent. No additional revenue is anticipated; however, approval to change to this per-child application of fees is requested.

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u>
Youth sports (partners)/per team	\$48.00	\$4.00 per child
Field lighting/hour, community partner groups	None	6.00

Mr. Dyer said one reason the City builds parks is to provide opportunities for youth to use them. If the leagues want to step up and help, that is fine. However, an across-the-board \$6.00 an hour fee is not equitable because fields vary in size and lighting requirements. Organizations should pay according to the portion of lights they are using.

Mr. Martinez questioned if a range should be established.

Mr. Dyer said it is very easy to count the number of lights and charge accordingly. Groups should be charged according to what they are using.

Ms. Palmberg said the City has some parks with older lighting that costs more to use, so the City could charge more for use of those fields or it could charge according to the size of the team. It is a difficult issue; however, the critical issue is whether to charge or not to charge.

Adult Sports Leagues

Adult sports programs offer a variety of leagues and tournaments to participants on a yearly basis for six major sports venues. Mesa's goal is to remain competitive with other cities in its fees while achieving total cost recovery. In the past two fiscal years, fees were raised substantially for all six sports, which resulted in some drop-off in registration. In order to strengthen revenue goals for the division, adjustments are recommended, which should result in \$32,800 additional revenue (with impact on registration and participation to be monitored).

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u>
Baseball - Adult		
2 games/week/per team	\$1,250.00	\$1,300
Basketball - Adult		
1 game/week/per team	415.00	\$435.00
2 games/week/per team	500.00	525.00
3 on 3/per team	100.00-300.00	No change
Flag Football - Adult		
1 game/week/per team	420.00	440.00
Soccer - Adult		
1 game/week/per team	510.00	535.00
Softball - Adult		
1 game/week/per team	290.00	305.00
2 games/week/per team	430.00	450.00
Volleyball (Indoor) - Adult	250.00	265.00
Adult sports tournaments	None	

Summer Recreation

Summer recreation programs are held at 16 schools within Mesa and are designed for K-6th grade. The eight-week programs include crafts, games, special guest speakers and theme events, plus swimming and one field trip per summer. Goals are to provide a safe and positive place for children to play and develop social skills. A 5% across the board increase is expected to generate approximately \$135,000 in revenue. Range adjustments are also recommended.

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u>	<u>Current Range</u>
General programs/per session, per person	5.00-50.00	\$5.00-53.00	5.00-55.00
Partial day programs/per session/per person	44.00-95.00	44.00-\$100.00	44.00-105.00
Full day programs/per week/per person	20.00-95.00	21.00-100.00	20.00-130.00

Tennis/Volleyball

The Gene Autry Sports Complex (GASC) provides a wide range of tennis and beach volleyball opportunities. Programs include tennis lessons (adult/junior), court rentals, drop-in tennis, ball machine rental, pro court rental, volleyball ramada rentals, and beach volleyball drop-in use. The recommended adjustments last fiscal year included new fee ranges, adjusted fee ranges, and increases to existing fees for adult and junior instruction classes and league fees for volleyball. This resulted in a revenue increase of \$6,300, although usage declined slightly. As the new fee structure was implemented in September 2005, due to a management recommendation, no new fees are currently recommended as these operations remain at market level. Approval to establish a new range for USTA singles and beach volleyball court and league fees is recommended to provide staff flexibility in responding to market conditions. Recommended fee adjustments will contribute to cost recovery efforts. GASC currently recovers approximately 59% of costs.

	<u>Current Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Fee</u>	<u>Proposed Range</u>
Court Use/per court/per 1½ hours			
Daytime/singles	6.00	No change	5.00-18.00
Daytime/doubles	9.00	No change	5.00-18.00
Evening (after 6 pm)/singles	7.00	No change	5.00-18.00
Evening (after 6 pm)/doubles	12.00	No change	5.00-18.00
Court Use (Pro)/per hour			
Daytime	5.00	6.00	5.00-18.00
Evening	7.00	8.00	5.00-18.00
Junior tennis pass/month	10.00	No change	10.00-15.00
Ball machine/per ½ hour	7.00	No change	7.00-12.00
Tennis racquet use/per 1½ hours	2.00	No change	2.00-5.00
Instructional classes/per person/per hour			
Adult	7.00	8.50	
Junior	6.50	No change	
Drop-in program/person			
Day	2.50	3.00	
Evening	3.00	3.50	
Tournaments	20.00-35.000	No change	
USTA Singles, Doubles, Junior NET/person	10.00-17.00	No change	
USTA Singles/person	15.00	No change	15.00-25.00
USTA Doubles/team			
Junior NET/person		No change	
Leagues	None	35.00	
Singles/per person	43.00	No change	
Daytime	55.00	No change	
Evening	None	40.00	
Doubles/per person	55.00	No change	
Volleyball (Beach)			
Court Use, per court, 90 minutes	\$ 8.00	No change	\$5.00-18.00
2's/per team	60.00	No change	60.00-90.00
4's and 6's/per team	80.00	No change	60.00-120.00
Drop-in program/person	2.50	No change	
Ramada use/hour (2 hour minimum)	10.00	No change	10.00-20.00

Financial Impact

The fiscal year 06/07 division operating budget is projected at \$20.4 million (budget process in progress). Projected revenue associated with fees and charges anticipated for FY 05/06 are \$2.9 million. The proposed increased fees are projected to generate an additional \$473,000, which represents an increase of about 16%, for a total of \$3.37 million in revenue.

John Dyer made a motion, Don Goodrum seconded, and it was unanimously carried that the Board recommend that action be taken to adopt the proposed fee adjustments for selected programs and services, with the amendment that the Community Youth Groups proposed fee be a range of \$3.00-12.00 per hour.

FY06-07 Budget Update

Bob White reported that the budget process has begun and includes a schedule that takes the City through June 30, 2006. District neighborhood meetings have begun and City Council met to again review the priority list in case both elections pass or do not pass or if only one passes.

The Board will be updated as information becomes available on the budget.

Mr. Gillard asked if two different budget scenarios are being prepared.

Mr. White replied positively and said one is if nothing passes, which will result in a \$25 million deficit. However, if one or more of the issues passes, items will be put back in if and when funding becomes available.

Ms. Wilson asked about parks and recreation items on the priority list.

Mr. White said 27 (of the original 108) items on the list relate to parks and recreation and represent about \$4 million.

Mr. White also said that he attended the last two district neighborhood meetings and specific comments were received concerning Jefferson Recreation Center, Red Mountain Multigenerational Center, the Park Ranger Program (do not eliminate), aquatics, and the after-school and summer recreation programs.

Board Work Plan

The work plan for FY05-06 was distributed, including status to date. Mr. White requested that Board members review the plan and provide feedback. Adjustments will be made to the plan as action steps are completed through the end of the fiscal year.

Meetings and/or Events Attended

Connie Gullatt-Whiteman reported that she attended the District 1 town meeting, where she met Chris Brady, Mesa City Manager. She also attended a luncheon at Mesa Community College.

Ms. Lopez reported that she serves on the Martin Luther King Board and she chaired the event this past January. The lack of City staff support was apparent this year.

Staff Updates

Tim Barnard reported:

- Staff continues to work towards acquiring the Berge property.
- The City is close to closing escrow on the Zaharis land (McKellips/Ellsworth).

- Cell tower installation is underway at Chaparral Park and the Harmony Park installation is moving forward.

Mike Holste reported:

- The Martin Luther King celebration was the last special event the City will be involved with. It was a successful event, with the parade having about 4,000 spectators.
- The Red Mountain Multigenerational Center recently gave away three-month passes to two families. The promotion, called "Family Fun and Fitness," had 203 entries.

Terri Palmberg reported:

- The Request for Proposal for Autry Tennis Center will be on the street in the near future and will also be available on the Internet.
- Beginning March 1, Autry ballfields will be operated by the City of Mesa. A business plan will be developed and revenue will be realized from use of the fields.
- Carson Aquatic Complex continues to be in the design stage; it is almost 90% complete. Staff hopes the project will go to Council in April for approval to begin construction, with ground breaking in May.

Sherry Woodley reported:

- Staff is preparing two budgets; one is a baseline and the second is adding in items that were cut.
- Staff is working with the Mesa Convention and Visitors Bureau to track economic impact and create marketing materials. Tournaments held in December resulted in an impact of almost \$900,000 to Mesa.

Director's Report

Mr. White distributed the ranking sheet that is available at the district town meetings for citizens to provide feedback to Council. The PowerPoint presentation that the City Manager shows at each meetings is available on the Internet.

Mr. White also reported that staff morale is low and several Parks and Recreation staff have accepted positions in other Valley cities. Staff is being redeployed on a weekly basis.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 1:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob White
Parks and Recreation Director