



PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Meeting: September 21, 2021

Subject

Consider adjustments to the revised Athletic Field Use Policy

Recommended Action

Consider adjustments to the revised Athletic Field Use Policy

Background

The Athletic Field Use Policy was revised and presented to City Council on April 20 and approved on May 4. A revision to the policy was recommended in the Parks and Recreation System Master Plan and assigned as a City Work Program item in Fiscal Year 2019-2020. The purpose was to update the policy to address the scheduling structure, fee schedule, and Sunday reservations. The staff report from the May 4 meeting is attached for reference (Attachment A).

Prior to the May 4 City Council authorization, staff presented the following adjustments to the prior policy to the Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) on April 8 for review and input: These adjustments were recommended after performing outreach to the community and receiving input from the youth sports organizations.

- Transition to an hourly fee structure
- Revised fees based on 25% cost recovery (supplemented with a comparison of fees to neighboring cities)
- Addition of four Sunday field reservations per organization from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The Commission supported the hourly fee structure, recommended a phased approach for the resident non-profit youth group fee to reduce the impact on the youth sports organizations, and also recommended a reduction in the additional Sunday field reservations to accommodate recreational use of fields by residents and families. The revised policy presented to City Council on May 4 included the recommended the following recommended adjustments from the Commission:

- Transition to an hourly fee structure
- Revised fees resulting in 17% to 20% cost recovery (based on the Commission's recommendation)
- Addition of two Sunday field reservations per organization from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

On May 4 City Council considered and approved the proposed adjustments, but with the following amendments:

- A two-year phased approach for the revised fees, established at 50% of proposed levels for the first year and increased to 100% of proposed levels for the second year for all organizations
- The additional two Sunday field reservations per group was expanded from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Limit of 10 Sunday reservations for each site per year
- Provide a status update on the revised policy implementation to City Council in one year

A summary of Athletic Field Use Policy changes is attached for reference (Attachment B).

Discussion

The revised field use fee schedule was incorporated into the City's Fee Schedule, and field permit applications were updated and sent out to the youth sports organizations. As applications were received and reviewed, staff generated a field permit schedule to track the days and times fields were reserved. This is posted and updated regularly on the City's website for public viewing by month (Attachment C).

Staff perform spot checks to ensure organizations are adhering to their reservation dates and times. Members of the public can also review the field permit schedule posted on the City's website to check if a group has the field reserved or not, and can report unauthorized uses to Code Enforcement using the Cupertino311 app or accessing Cupertino311 through the City's website. The City has received several complaints regarding unscheduled and unauthorized organized use at the Library field on Sundays. Staff are also currently working on signage to post at the fields to communicate field usage status more easily to all park users.

Limited Sunday use continues to be a concern expressed by youth sports organizations. The policy adopted last May permits each organization to reserve up to four Sundays in total (including two Sundays for tournaments). However, most youth sports organizations prefer expanded Sunday reservations to schedule games, make-up games, and practices. While this would provide more scheduling opportunities for the sports

organizations, it would reduce the availability for recreational use of fields by residents and families.

City Council could consider increasing the number of Sunday reservations allowed per organization to meet the demand from the organizations. However, since the revised policy has only been in effect for approximately two months, staff's recommendation is to keep the revised Athletic Field Use Policy as approved and to review the policy in one year as originally directed. As requested by City Council, staff will continue to collect a year's worth of data to present a more complete comparison to the original field use policy and the impacts from the adjustments can be reported to City Council for consideration.

Sustainability Impact

No sustainability impacts.

Fiscal Impact

No fiscal impacts.

Prepared by: Joanne Magrini, Director of Parks and Recreation

Reviewed by: Dianne Thompson, Assistant City Manager

Christopher Jensen, City Attorney

Approved for Submission by: Greg Larson, Interim City Manager

Attachments:

A – May 4, 2021 Staff Report - Athletic Field Use Policy Update

B – Summary of Field Use Policy Changes

C – Field Permit Schedule (August 2021)