

CITY OF COLLEGE STATION

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

FEES POLICY STATEMENT

The citizens of College Station have made a commitment to excellence in parks facilities and recreation programs. These facilities and services require substantial expenditures by the City to ensure appropriate maintenance and effective programming. This policy is intended to insure that a proportion of these costs is recovered through user fees in an equitable manner in accordance with the City's current fiscal and budgetary policies approved by the City Council.

- I. Fees for athletic programs shall be set in accordance with the following guidelines:
 - A. The cost of maintaining and operating athletic facilities should be borne by those who use them. In addition, in those situations where the City has responsibility for organizing and/or programming activities, participants should bear proportionate staff salaries and overhead of direct supervisors associated with the program.
 - B. The City recognizes that it is appropriate to subsidize youth athletic and aquatics activities. Such activities contribute to educational development and to encourage leisure literacy, which are increasingly important aspects of life. Youth is defined as all individuals up to, and including, eighteen years of age. The City will absorb all maintenance and operating costs associated with facilities and the staff costs associated with organizing and/or programming activities. A fee will be assessed to cover all variable costs associated with programs such as uniforms, equipment, awards, umpires, etc. in accordance with the City's fiscal and budgetary policy statement.
 - C. It is intended that facilities and programs should be available to all citizens and that none should be excluded because of inability to pay. The Department Director, at his/her discretion, may reduce any fee in individual cases upon evidence of financial hardship. The "Parks Bucks" program is intended to meet the majority of these cases.
 - D. In addition to this user fee policy, the City levies a fee surcharge, which goes into an Athletic Renovation and Improvement Fund. The policy governing that fund is attached to this policy.
- II. Fees for the use of rental facilities shall be set to cover the cost of utilities and maintenance expenses related to that facility. Deposits may be required, as needed, to ensure proper care and clean-up is provided by user groups. Deposits

may be waived when users establish a satisfactory record with the City, and will be determined on a case by case basis The fee and deposit will be waived for the College Station Independent School District per a joint use agreement.

- III. Aquatics, special events and instruction fees shall be set to cover all expenses directly associated with conduct of the class or event. Pool admission fees shall be set on an annual basis to recover a portion of the pools' operating expenses up to 50%.

All fees shall be reviewed on an annual basis at public meetings by the Parks and Recreation Board. After receiving public input, the Board will then submit fee recommendations for the next calendar year to the City Council for final approval.

Athletic Renovation and Improvement Funds

The CIP Committee recommended multiple lighting, irrigation, shade structures, pathway and backstop projects on athletic fields as part of the 1998 bond program that was approved by the City Council and the citizens. They were assured that this would restore all athletic fields to the City's desirable standard.

However, the CIP Committee noted that it was unreasonable to fund these short-term projects which had an expected life of considerably less than 25 years with 25 year bonds, since future taxpayers would be paying for assets that no longer existed. The Council concurred with the Committee's strong recommendation that a surcharge should be required of all teams using athletic fields to pay for the replacement of items that have deteriorated as a result of their use, and for any improvements in the existing standard of facilities they would like to have.

In response to this mandate, the Parks and Recreation Department is preparing a rolling 10 year schedule which projects the renovations and improvements required at each athletic field complex. Input from representatives of the athletic field users will be solicited in preparing this schedule. The costs of implementing the 10 year program will be calculated, with allowances made for likely future cost increases, and divided into equal annual amounts.

The surcharge will be sufficient to pay each user groups' prorated share of the fields' annual renovations and improvements. This money will be retained in a separate capital fund for each athletic field complex, and will be used exclusively for renovating or improving that complex. The Parks and Recreation Department will consult with representatives from the athletic groups contributing to a fund before money can be appropriated from it.

It is likely to take some months for the staff to carefully develop and cost the 10 year plans. However, it is desirable to implement the program as soon as possible, since delays will increase the surcharge amounts that will be needed in future years. This policy will be implemented on October 1, 1999 at the commencement of FY2000.

In lieu of the availability of the 10-year plan, the Parks and Recreation Board recommended a surcharge be leveled on each item that equates to approximately \$5 per person, per season (Fall, Spring, and Summer), per team in FY2000. This will be reviewed with athletic team representatives before the FY2001 budget cycle when the rolling 10-year plan is available, and revisions, if necessary, will be made to this \$5 amount to reflect the financial needs of the fields. This procedure will be replicated annually in future years.

Approved by Parks & Recreation Advisory Board: April 23, 2001.

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