



Results

Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee

Policy Review Working Group

22358 S. Ellsworth Rd., Queen Creek, AZ

Municipal Services Building

San Tan Conference Room

May 15, 2012

6:00 p.m.

1. **Call To Order and Roll Call:** Meeting started at 6:07 pm.
Members present: David Dobbs, Dru Alberti, Daniel Babcock, Michael Shirley, Sylvia Tarin
Members absent: None
Staff present: Debbie Gomez, Adam Robinson, and Tracy Corman
2. **Introductions:** None
3. **Public Comment:** None.
4. **Items for Discussion:**
 - A. *Consideration and possible approval of the February 21, 2012 meeting minutes*

Motion to Approve: Daniel Babcock
Second: Mike Shirley
Vote: Unanimous
 - B. *Discussion and possible recommendation on existing partnership guidelines, field allocation processes, and fees for youth sport organizations.*

Debbie Gomez reviewed the purpose of the youth sport partnership policy and partnership criteria with comments to date from the Working Group included. Mr. Dobbs suggested the partnership policies be better defined in the area of background checks to include additional verbiage that would ensure youth sport organizations are conducting background checks on volunteers prior to beginning any organized activity for the league. The working group agreed and Debbie will reword the policy stipulation more specific.

Mrs. Gomez reviewed the desired outcomes for the meeting. She mentioned the need to come to decision on fees, residency requirement in the partnership guidelines, redefine "in-season" time frames and "out-of season" user guidelines to determine field allocations. Mrs. Gomez reiterated the changes to fee, partnership guidelines, and field allocation would become effective July 1, 2012 for those organizations that have registrations after July 1, 2012.

Discussion on Fees

Adam Robinson provided a summary on current fees current vs. the proposed changes. There were questions from the Working Group with regard to how the direct costs for lights, \$18.35 and \$7.23 per hour direct cost for field maintenance were developed. Mr. Robinson responded that the costs identified were above and beyond those associated with the typical use of an open park and were those identified as being specific to maintenance for sports leagues. The Working Group felt it important that sport league organizers and their participants are paying only for their use and not for general park maintenance.

Michael Shirley stated most leagues are anticipating a fee increase. The feedback he has received is that league organizers are acceptable and planning for the change. He further stated the organizers of the leagues are non-profit organizations and if they desire to keep costs low for participants it may require them to increase fundraising. Mr. Dobbs indicated he was not sure how much in donations a league would have to gather to help offset burden to families. The general consensus among the Working Group was to accept the fees as proposed and recommended staff review fees every two years due to inflation and continue to seek cost savings opportunities such as energy efficient lighting.

Mr. Dobbs asked if staff felt these fees would be sufficient for at least two years. Adam Robinson stated the fees should be acceptable unless there is something major that happens with the economy. Debbie Gomez stated she is comfortable with the proposed fees and the Town is now more in line with the cost recovery goals identified in the parks trails master plan. In addition, she stated the proposed fees are still within range of the surrounding market for fees charged to youth sport groups.

Dru Alberti mentioned she would prefer higher fees depending on the residency requirements set by the Working Group in the partnership criteria. She stated a higher residency requirement would lean her towards a lower fee and vice versa.

Discussion on Partnership Criteria

Debbie presented residency requirements options and boundary options requirements. Adam Robinson reported he asked leagues if they have ability to hold non-resident and resident registrations and leagues stated they could but would add difficulty to the process. Adam Robinson reminded the Working Group of a previous discussion had among the group with regard to Queen Creek Unified School district and the planning area. The discussion entailed the low population density in these two areas and the general feeling that these areas would not add a large amount of people; major population are in San Tan valley, County Islands, and within the Town of Queen Creek.

Debbie Gomez asked the Working Group to consider how we would handle organizations who did not meet residency requirements especially those who miss the requirements by 5% or less. Should tiers be considered for partners with different fees?

The discussion among the Working Group on residency requirements surrounded

- Making sure viable leagues are produced.
- The high density population to the south of Queen Creek that impacts residency requirements and the ability to produce viable leagues.

Results

Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee

May 15, 2012

Page 3

- Ensuring that a large majority of subsidy does not benefit non-residents.
- Attracting non-resident participants to shop in town for food and gas.
- Requiring games to be played in Town if no residency is required or if leagues register more non-residents resulting in league growth and other facilities are required, so that secondary benefits of shopping our town are realized.
- Convenience for residents.
- Ability to track sales tax dollars to show benefit. Need to be able to sell to council.
- The need to feel comfortable with soft benefits.
- Trends in other cities moving towards elimination of non-resident rates because they want the economic benefit and visibility.
- Demand for fields by partner organization not critical and residency requirements could be adjusted once demand for fields became an issue.
- Phase in options. Charging a higher fee to organizations that do not meet residency requirements and give programs and opportunity to grow into residency.
- Ensuring current programs who meet residency requirements are not penalized by any decisions made by the Working Group regarding fees for non-compliance of residency requirements.

Michael Shirley suggested if a number is needed for residency requirement for partnership status should that number be 40%. He stated organizations don't turn people away, so residents are being served. Sylvia Tarin stated it is unfair to put standards that would be impossible to reach. Daniel Babcock indicated the Working Group should not force an unattainable goal, and punish with higher fees. David Dobbs mentioned that when the Town gets to build out, there will not be room for non-residents. Right now have higher non-resident ratio than what is in our geographical area. Over time will change, however current numbers to support viable programs need lower residency ratios. Sylvia Tarin would like to add to the marketing and advertising of programs in Town to ensure residents know about programs.

David Dobbs stated that there are few age divisions that don't get enough teams and have to inter-league, however for those who do not get enough teams for their age division that emphasis be placed to have the majority of games be played town fields. He would like to see stipulations in agreements on this emphasis.

Mr. Dobbs indicated he was comfortable with a 40% residency requirement for partners to receive partnership status allowing discounted fees and field allocation. He further stated he would like staff to review fees, partnership criteria, and field allocations every two years as a good practice. He indicated as time goes on, things will change, and residency requirements can be reviewed and adjusted to the community needs.

Daniel Babcock added that the 40% allows non-residents playing in addition to residents, not in place of. However, there may be some perception that there is some subsidizing of non-residents playing. On the other hand, arguments on secondary benefits on the economy could be realized, and the convenience of having the games local for residents.

David Dobbs asked how much the Town is subsidizing non-residents vs. what they are spending locally. Adam Robinson stated youth sports are typically held in evening, and families may end up getting dinner locally, or purchase supplies. He mention Horseshoe Park and Equestrian Centre is currently doing surveys to try to determine economic impact of events, however the secondary benefit values of youth sports is not part of that survey.

Dru Alberti asked what incentive youth sports organizations have to redraw boundaries to match the Town boundaries if a 40% residence requirement is mandated. Adam Robinson stated national organizations will dictate boundary changes. In the case where the organizer is not part of a national organization such as San Tan Football, the incentive is designated field space and the convenience of having games play locally. Debbie Gomez added discounted fees.

Debbie Gomez mentioned to the working group they could set 40% residency requirement and consider fee tiers. Mike Shirley felt those types of systems create animosity amongst groups because some may not be in control of setting their own boundaries. David Dobbs felt that non-residents are still needed to form viable leagues.

Michael Shirley felt if anything more is to be raised it should be the field fee, up to \$8, because that is the brunt of the maintenance. Mr. Shirley proposed \$8/hr field use fee, \$14/hr for light use, and a 40% resident/60% non-resident requirement for partnership status.

Dru Alberti felt \$8/hr for field use would be more than the average field maintenance costs. David Dobbs suggested \$7/hr. for field use and \$15/hr. for light costs since the direct cost is \$18.35/hr.

Consensus amongst the Working Group is \$15/hr. light use, \$7/hr, field use, and 40% residency/60% non-residency requirement of partnership status.

Discussion on Field Allocations

Debbie Gomez introduced the current practices for field allocations and defined “In-Season” timeframe as a period of time in which a partner youth sports organizer conducts their primary season of play, and “Out-of-Season” defined as the period of time that is not the primary season of partner youth sports organizer.

Debbie Gomez explained the current practice for field allocation during “Out-of-Season” timeframe is by rental of facilities in 10-packs, upon field availability, made by reservation on a first-come, first-served basis, and charged full price of use of fields and lights.

Michael Shirley confirmed the need to have specific “In-Season” dates, and have “Out-of-Season” organizers pay full price for use of facilities.

Adam Robinson reported that based on working with groups he will look at what will give each group a viable league. Dates that do have overlap tend to work out because both sports are not in full swing. He went on to state that currently soccer has 4 months and the Christmas and New Year’s holidays, while other sports have 5 months. He stated the working group needs to figure out what will make sense for all youth sport organizers.

The Working Group discussed what dates work best to start baseball/softball, soccer, and football. The group discussed and considered;

- Overlapping of baseball and soccer, and the difficulty of overlapping into the football season.
- Other activities that could occur such as clinics until fields were fully turned over to leagues.
- Feedback from recent interviews held with youth soccer organizations through the Request For Proposal process.
- Impacts on Fall Leagues.
- Impacts on setting different allocation dates for different facilities or parts of facilities.
- The need for lit fields and differing seasons.
- Discussions that ensured green belts were not used for practices if Town field were available.

After discussion the Working Group came to consensus on the following field allocation dates:

Baseball/Softball	March 15 through July 31
Football	August 1 to first Saturday of December.
Soccer	Second Saturday of December to Second Saturday of March

“Out-of-Season” Rental vs. Field Allocation Discussion

Adam Robinson stated rentals for “Out-of-Season” vs. “In-Season” rental guidelines goal are to ensure some field space is available for the general public. The current practice during “In-Season” most rentals for the same type of sport are rented in 4 packs while the “Out-of-Season” maximum is 10 packs. Mr. Robinson stated this type of system generally works. Where there begins to be an issue is when you now have off-season “seasons”, or leagues. For example, Fall Ball operating a full league of season play. From policy standpoint the league would not be able to operate season. He stated the indentified season is good for revenue and the fields are being used. He asked the Working Group to consider developing a policy that met a goal of having space available for general public use and still allows “Out-of-Season” leagues to operate efficiently.

David Dobbs wanted to know what the demand is for club baseball teams on Founders’ Park. He felt the town still gets solid revenue. Adam Robinson stated there are not a lot of club teams demanding space, but have some club teams demanding a lot of space. Adam Robinson stated that operationally the Town has been using season rules for those that have out of season seasons. Mr. Shirley stated perhaps restricting only out of season use on 4-plex baseball fields at Desert Mountain Park.

Debbie Gomez said there are revenue advantages to having leagues using fields all the time. She stated the group could consider reserving Desert Mountain Park for leagues, perhaps need to also accommodate off season leagues at Desert Mountain Park 4-plex and give 4 packs at Founders’

Results

Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee

May 15, 2012

Page 6

Park Aldecoa Memorial Ball Fields only when you have out of season leagues requesting fields to host league play.

Debbie Gomez stated there is no need to make this decision as part of the sub-committee and would not impact the allocation of fields for partners and this issue could be brought back by staff at another time.

Motion: \$15 per hour fee for light use, \$7 per hour for field use, a 40%/residency requirement, field allocation specific timeframes of March 15 through July 31 for Baseball/Softball, August 1 through the first Saturday of December for Football, second Saturday of December through the second Saturday in March for Soccer.

Moved: Michael Shirley

Second: Dru Alberti

Vote: Unanimous

5. Announcements:

There were no announcements.

6. Adjournment:

A. **Motion to adjourn:** Dru Alberti

B. **Second:** Michael Shirley

C. **Vote:** Unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.

This concludes the discussions by the Policy Review Working Group on existing partnership guidelines, field allocation processes, and fees for youth sports organizations. The Policy Review Group is recommending to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee a consideration and possible approval of a \$15 per hour fee for light use, \$7 per hour for field use, a 40%/residency requirement, field allocation specific timeframes of March 15 through July 31 for Baseball/Softball, August 1 through the first Saturday of December for Football, second Saturday of December through the second Saturday in March for Soccer.

PREPARED BY: Debbie Gomez, May 15, 2012

PASSED ON APPROVED ON: _____, 2012

David Dobbs, PRAC Chair