



Public Amenities Committee
Meeting Summary

Wed. March 26, 2008 10:30 a.m. Conference Room 391

Members Present: Lehmann, Johnson, Madison, Robb
Members Absent: None
Other Council Present: Linkhart

- Recreation Centers: Cost/Benefit Analysis, Hours and Community Engagement
 - Winter Wrap-up and Spring Programs
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1. Recreation Centers: Cost/Benefit Analysis, Hours and Community Engagement

Dody Erickson, Interim Deputy Manger of Recreation; Mike Barney, Recreation Director; and Dolores Moreno, Community Recreation, presented information on the Recreation Cost/Benefit Analysis and Fee Structure process and other analysis that grew out of Council's concern over the proposed 2008 budget showing a reduction of hours at some of the recreation centers.

Mr. Barney explained that Parks & Recreation (P&R) has continued working with GreenPlay, the consultants on the earlier recreation assessment project. He described the 8-step process being used to analyze current services, cost recovery and subsidy levels with the goal of adjusting fees to reflect the City's comprehensive cost recovery philosophy.

Part of the process is a pyramid of benefits filters. The base of the pyramid is composed of programs and services with broad community benefit with no cost recovery and full subsidy, such as parks in general. The peak of the pyramid is the most highly individualized program, benefiting few residents, which can be viewed as an "enterprise profit center". This would include the elite swimming teams. In the middle are three levels of benefit.

Highly
Individual Benefit
MOSTLY Individual Benefit
INDIVIDUAL & Community Benefit
COMMUNITY And Individual Benefit
VERY BROAD COMMUNITY BENEFIT

In Step 5 of the process, P&R determined its current subsidy/cost recovery levels. Overall, P&R recovers between 18-20% (for every one General Fund dollar spent, 18-20 cents are recovered).

P&R is at Step 6: Assigning desired subsidy/cost recovery levels, and Step 7: Adjust fees to reflect the City's comprehensive cost recovery philosophy. Benefits, cost recovery and subsidies need to be determined and allocated to the levels of the pyramid, based on shared values and philosophy. For

example, one of Denver's basic shared values is that no one should be denied access to programs and services based on a lack of funds. Therefore, P&R provides scholarships as needed.

Proposed cost recovery allocations range from \$0-20 for after-school programs, youth camps and permits to non-profits; up to \$75-100 for adult sports teams and elite swim teams.

Councilman Linkhart asked about scholarships in 2007. Mr. Barney replied that approximately \$2300 in scholarships were given to between 200-300 people. He explained that there is not a scholarship fund per se, but rather all or some portion of the fees are waived. The program still has the same cost to operate. Ms. Erickson added that this study is looking at the whole picture not only scholarships; there are other ways of addressing economic needs.

Councilman Linkhart asked about cost recovery comparisons with other cities and how similar those others cities are to Denver. Mr. Barney said it is difficult to compare because each city defines its cost recovery differently. GreenPlay looked at cities similar to and different from Denver to ensure that Denver is not way out of line.

Councilman Linkhart said income levels must be considered; there are other ways to raise revenue than raising fees.

Councilwoman Johnson asked about the computer systems that are supposed to help capture more data for use in this analysis. Mr. Barney said the funds were approved, a vendor has been selected, and the contract is being finalized.

Councilwoman Lehmann asked how this is being coordinated with the facilities study. Mr. Barney said this current work is looking at programs rather than facilities. P&R currently charges \$150/year for an adult membership at any recreation center, even though there is a wide variety in the amenities available. Memberships can be used at other centers on a limited basis.

Councilwoman Johnson said that difference in facilities, especially swimming pools, mean we need to talk about equity of access across the city. That might mean using busses to take kids from their neighborhood to a center with an outdoor pool. Dolores Moreno said that Community Recreation works toward equity by providing citywide programs, such as Summer in the Parks. A new site this summer is Sloan's Lake. Registrations are only trickling in; more advertising is needed. Councilwoman Lehmann suggested letting Councilman Garcia know about it so he can include it in his newsletters.

Morey Middle School is another example of partnering with DPS. Councilman Linkhard pointed out that Morey is closed during this Spring Break Week.

Councilwoman Robb noted that the recent discounted membership opportunity raised questions about discounting the best deal in town; it is a balancing act. Ms. Erickson noted that such promotions such are aimed at new members. Councilman Linkhart said that Denver has the best deals in the area on trash pick up and libraries, too, and that seems to be acceptable. Perhaps recreation programs don't need to pay their own way either.

Councilwoman Johnson responded that having more people pay the full cost of the programs provides more money for scholarships.

Hours of operation

Following the conversations last fall regarding the proposed 2008 budget and reductions in hours at some centers, P&R organized 8 community meetings around the City to talk about what the community wanted. Attendance was good at most sessions. Given a certain number of hours, the community was asked how they wanted the hours programmed. Based on the discussions, new hours are shown below for the centers.

Recreation Center Hours			
Winter/Spring/ Fall	Changes	Summer	Changes
AZTLAN 4436 Navajo; outdoor pool			
M-W: 11-8	Open 1 hr later	M-F: 11-7	Open 2 hrs later; Close 1 hr later
TH: 12-7	Open 2 hrs later		
FRI: 12-9	Open 2 hrs later; Close 2 hrs later		
SAT: 10-4	Added	SAT: 12-5	Added
GLOBEVILLE 4496 Grant			
MW: 2-8	Open 2 hrs later	M-TH: 11-6	Open 1 hr later
TTH 11-8	Open 1 hr earlier		
FRI: 3-9	Open 4 hrs later; Close 2 hrs later	FRI: 3-6	Close 3 hrs earlier
SAT: 11-3	Added	SAT: 3-9	Added
JOHNSON 4809 Race (programs coordinated with Swansea Recreation Center)			
M-TH: 12-9	Open 1 hr later	M-F: 10-7	
FRI: 10-7	Open 1 hr earlier		
SAT: 10-2	Added		
HARVEY PARK 2120 S. Tennyson; outdoor pool			
M-TH: 9:30-8:30		M-TH:8:30-7	
FRI: 10-8		FRI: 9-7	
SAT: 9-1		SAT: 9-1	
GLENARM 2800 Glenarm Place			
MW: 10-8		MW: 9-8	
TTH: 6-8		TTH: 6-8	
FRI: 10-7		FRI: 10-7	
SAT: 9:30-3:30		SAT: 9:30-3:30	
SOUTHWEST 9200 W. Saratoga Place; outdoor pool			
MW: 9-8		MW: 9-8	
TTH: 7:30-9	Open 1.5 hr earlier	TTH: 7:30-9	
FRI: 9-7	Close 1 hr earlier	FRI: 9-7	
SAT: 9-12		SAT: 9-12	Close 5 hrs earlier (pool stays open)

20th STREET 1011 20th St.			
MW: 6:30-8	Open ½ hr earlier	MW: 6:30-8	Open ½ hr earlier
FRI: 6:30-6	Open ½ hr earlier; Close 2 hrs later	FRI: 6:30-6	Open ½ hr earlier; Close 1 hr later
TTH: 7-8 am		TTH: 7-8 am	
SAT: 9-1	Open 1 hr earlier; Close 1 hr earlier	SAT: 9-1	Open 1 hr earlier; Close 1 hr earlier
ST. CHARLES 3777 Lafayette			
M-TH: 11-8		M-F: 9-6	
FRI: 10-7	Open 1 hr earlier; Close 1 hr earlier		
SAT: 10-2	Added		

Councilmembers were pleased with the process and outcomes. After the first quarter, P&R will report on attendance. Ms. Erickson said the department is already working on the 2009 budget.

Councilman Linkhart said this was a good process. He noted that people would come to the centers if there were more programming. More centers need to be open later hours, and hours and programming should be considered regionally, as people do drive to centers outside of their neighborhoods.

Community Engagement Process

A Recreation Center Task Force is to be created to help P&R develop a strategic plan to guide decisions over the next five to ten years. The RCTF will establish priorities and recommendations, including such questions as where should new centers be and are any no longer needed. The conversations will build on past studies, including The Game Plan, Staffing Study, and the Cost/Benefit Analysis.

The 25-30 member RCTF will include broad community representation from youth, seniors, the disabled community, non-profits and agencies serving the community. Suggestions from Councilmembers are welcome. Participation will require a large time commitment.

Councilman Linkhart asked how the P&R Advisory Board will be involved. The PRAB will have representation on the RCTF, and the full PRAB will be briefed throughout the process.

Councilwoman Robb asked how this differs from the Recreation Center Assessment. Ms. Erickson responded this is an extension of that assessment, which was about amenities whereas this will focus on programming. The assessment is used for prioritizing capital equipment purchases needed to increase the level of service as well as capital improvement projects.

Councilwoman Lehmann suggested that the public session begin with a recap of the earlier assessment and a list of the goals and how this process will build on that one.

Meetings will take place at eight recreation centers. Discussions at each of the eight will include several other centers. Tentatively, the locations are:

Meetings held at:	Discussions include:
Harvey Park	College View, Athmar, Southwest
Hiawatha Davis	MLK, Montclair
Rude	Barnum, Ashland, La Alma, Highland
Washington Park	Platt Park, La Familia, 20 th Street
Eisenhower	Harvard Gulch, Cook Park
Montbello	Green Valley Ranch
Bruce Randolph School	Swansea, Glenarm, St. Charles, Johnson
Atzlan/Quigg Newton	Globeville, Stapleton, Scheitler

2. Winter Wrap-up and Spring Programs

John Martinez, Citywide Sports Recreation Director, presented the following information.

Winter

Fourth annual basketball program had 180 teams (+14 over last year) with 2040 kids aged 9-14
Games played at 14 sites
Citywide tournament ended March 8

Spring

Youth soccer program starts April 5; register on-line starting Monday March 31
85 youth soccer teams (+12 over last year) for 680 kids aged 5-6.
Games at 4 sites: Hiawatha Davis, Lowry Sport complex, La Alma, and Harvey Park.
No citywide games for kids this young.

Adult softball

131 adult softball teams (+21 over last year; program started in 2004 with 34 teams)

Late spring

Register in May for 2nd Annual Hoopin' After Dark for kids aged 15-18
June – August; Games on Fridays 5:00-10:00
Life Skills class the day before must be attended in order to play
All recreation centers may have teams. Game sites are: Barnum, Davis, St. Charles, Glenarm

Pilot in May for Prime Time Kids program; 40 locations; 24 events scheduled, 16 TBD
Working with Office of Cultural Affairs and Mayor's Office for Children & Education
Looking at doing a First Friday program for the fall