



# MEMORANDUM

Date: February 3, 2023

To: The Honorable Chair and Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Lesher   
County Administrator

Re: **Agenda Item 48 – Hearing – Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Fees for Services**

Attached please find a Memorandum from Natural Resources Parks and Recreation Director Victor Pereira that provides feedback on a variety of concerns raised relating to the proposed amended fees for parks and recreational services.

If you have questions or would like additional information, please feel free to contact me, Deputy County Administrator Carmine DeBonis or NRPR Director Pereira.

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c: Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator  
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator and Chief Medical Officer  
Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator

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# MEMORANDUM

**Date:** February 3, 2023

**To:** Jan Leshar  
County Administrator

**From:** Victor Pereira<sup>VP</sup>  
NRPR Director

**Re: Additional information – February 7, 2023 Agenda Item #48, NRPR fees**

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The purpose of this memo is to provide additional information regarding inquiries you have received about the Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation (NRPR) proposed fee structure, which is scheduled as a BOS agenda item on February 7, 2023.

1. Special Revenue Fund fee clarification
  - a. Pending fee approval, it is proposed that **all fees** generated by the department will be placed into a Special Revenue Fund for the purpose of reinvestment back into NRPR to accelerate and provide new amenities and programs at our facilities.
2. Community Center reduced lunch/free lunch clarification
  - a. NRPR will apply the same criteria that schools utilize to determine who qualifies for free and reduced meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
  - b. The following tiers will be used for Community Center After School and Summer Youth Programs:
    - i. Tier 1: Family that requires no financial assistance
    - ii. Tier 2: Family who self-identifies as a family:
      1. on NSLP—**reduced priced** meals
      2. on any other federal assistance program at **185%** or less of the current federal poverty level guidelines
    - iii. Tier 3: Family who self-identifies as a family:
      1. on NSLP—**free meals**
      2. on any other federal assistance program at **130%** or less of the current federal poverty level guidelines
  - c. The following vignette outlines the enrollment process:
    - i. A family is enrolling their child in ACTIVE NET for the Picture Rocks Community Center. They start off paying Tier 1 prices. ACTIVE NET will ask if they are enrolled in the NLSLP. The family answers Y/N. If they answer Y, ACTIVE NET will ask if they are enrolled on the reduced fee or free meal program. ACTIVE NET will then categorize the family in either Tier 2 or 3 based on their answer. NRPR will have families provide proof of NLSLP enrollment during Community Center family orientation day. Families typically receive a NLSLP letter from their school, which will suffice as validation.
  - d. Families not participating in NLSLP, can still qualify for Tier 2 or 3 discounts by showing an award letter from a similar federal or state assistance program that is indexed to the federal poverty level guidelines, and they would either fall into the “below 185%” level (Tier 2) or the “below

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130%” level (Tier 3). If a parent is not enrolled in any federal or state program and still believe they qualify under these guidelines, a NRPR recreation center coordinator would assist them with income verification and/or assist them with seeking services through the school and/or community service agencies that would ultimately provide income verification.

- e. NRPR currently has a similar discount program/process already in place at our community pools for general admission. Our pool program, not only targets families in financial need, but also senior citizens and disabled personnel who also qualify for a discount.
- f. The following chart breaks down the Community Center programs on a sliding scale:

PROGRAM/TIER	CURRENTLY	PROPOSED
TIER 1: Community Center After School Program	free	\$50 per month (\$2.50/day) per child \$40 per month (\$2.00/day) each additional child in same family
TIER 2: Community Center After School Program - reduced for youth on the National School Lunch Program, receiving <b>reduced price meals</b> or any other similar assistance program*	free	\$30 per month (\$1.50/day) per child \$25 per month (\$1.25/day) each additional child in same family
TIER 3: Community Center After School Program - reduced for youth on the National School Lunch Program, receiving <b>free meals</b> or any other similar assistance program**	free	\$15 per month (\$0.75/day) per child \$12 per month (\$0.60/day) each additional child in same family
TIER 1: Community Center Summer Youth Program	free	\$100 per month (\$6.25/day) per child \$80 per month (\$5.00/day) each additional child in same family
TIER 2: Community Center Summer Youth Program - reduced for youth on the National School Lunch Program, receiving <b>reduced price meals</b> or any other similar assistance program*	free	\$60 per month (\$3.75/day) per child \$50 per month (\$3.12/day) each additional child in same family
TIER 3: Community Center Summer Youth Program - reduced for youth on the National School Lunch Program, receiving <b>free meals</b> or any other similar assistance program**	free	\$30 per month (\$1.87/day) per child \$25 per month (\$1.56/day) each additional child in same family
Lil Rec'ers	free	\$10 per session
Junior Staff in Training Program for youth ages 14 to 18	free	\$35 per session
Assistance program(s): WIC, FOOD Plus, Department of Economic Security unemployment, Food Stamp Program, Welfare Check Cashing Card, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, National School Lunch Program, Emergency Assistance, Supplemental Security Income, Two Parent Employment Program		
*Assistance programs that qualify participants at 185% or less of the federal poverty level for household income will qualify participant for Tier 2		
**Assistance programs that qualify participants at 130% or less of the federal poverty level for household income will qualify participants for Tier 3		

3. NRPR has several reasons for the proposed 2023 fee increase

- a. The last comprehensive fee increase was 2009. The 2023 proposed fees are **Parks and Recreation-level fees, not market value-level**. NRPR’s proposed fees are commensurate and, in most cases, much lower than other Parks and Recreation departments in the state of Arizona.

- b. **Youth Sports fees:** 23 of 25 **(92%) Arizona Parks and Recreation (PR) departments are charging for youth sports fields.** NRPR's \$2/per hour is **40% lower** than Marana, Oro Valley and Sahuarita PR, which are charging \$5/per hour respectively. This modest fee will help to address the practice of leagues/teams overscheduling fields that go unused and limit the ability for other leagues/teams to schedule field time.
  - c. **Community Center fees:** NRPR's Community Center fees are commensurate with the City of Tucson's (CoT) KIDCO program, which has been charging a fee **for the last 21+ years.** A "fee for participation" will also help reduce the current 18% "no-show" rate for parents signing up their child for a program and not cancelling because there is no disincentive for scheduling and not attending; ultimately taking a slot away from a child who is unable to attend and may be forced to pay a higher price at another community center or a private entity.
  - d. **Beer and Wine Permit:** 21 of 24 **(88%) Arizona PR departments are allowing constituents** the ability to purchase a beer/wine special use permit while renting a ramada. CoT has been allowing this for 10+ years.
4. All NRPR programs, facilities and amenities are funded by the General Fund. The 2023 current fee proposal has two elements:
- a. **Programs specific to youth and recreation:** aquatics, community center and sports fields, etc.
  - b. **NRPR services to Pima County constituents, organizations, vendors and visitors:** Ramada fee, beer and wine permit, campground fee, shooting range, court and skate park rental and special events etc.
5. NRPR is lagging other Arizona PR departments that have a current fee structure in place for youth sports and community centers. Pima County has not built a new pool in 15 years, added new lights to sports fields in 8 years, and has not constructed a new sports field in 15 years. While we are making some progress, we have not kept up with service demand. Implementation of the proposed fees will help to accelerate enhancement of programs and facilities.

c: Carmine DeBonis Jr., Deputy County Administrator