




# FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



## M E M O R A N D U M

**TO:** Chairman and Members  
Park Authority Board

**VIA:** John W. Dargle, Jr., Director 

**FROM:** Miriam Morrison, Director  
Administration Division

**DATE:** March 5, 2009

### *Agenda*

**Administration, Management and Budget Committee**

**Wednesday, March 11, 2009 – 3:30 p.m.**

**Board Room – Herrity Building**

**Chairman: Ken Quincy**

**Vice Chair: Harold Pyon**

1. Approval – Fee Adjustments to the Published Fee Schedule for 2009 – Action\*

\*Enclosures



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Board Agenda Item  
March 25, 2009

**ACTION -**

Approval – Fee Adjustments to the Published Fee Schedule for 2009

ISSUE:

Approval of recommended fee adjustments to the Park Authority's published fee schedule for 2009.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Park Authority Director recommends that the Park Authority Board approve all proposed fee adjustments as advertised, along with the following revisions:

- 1) include a season pass option to the lakefront park entrance fee proposal;
- 2) add registrants of Park Authority coded-classes to those who would not pay the entrance fee at either lakefront parks or Riverbend Park.

TIMING:

Board action is requested on March 25, 2009, as fee changes take effect beginning April 1, 2009.

BACKGROUND:

Park Authority staff reviews fees annually to ensure that the agency remains on target to meet financial goals established by the Park Authority Board. As a result of the review completed during the fall of 2008, a number of modifications to the adopted fee schedule were identified. On January 28, 2009, the Park Authority Board authorized public notification of the proposed fee adjustments and set a date for a public comment meeting. (See Attachment 1 for proposed fee adjustments.)

Public notification of the fee proposal and public comment meeting included distribution of press releases to news organizations, as well as advertisement and distribution of the fee proposal at park sites and on the Park Authority's web site. Public comments were solicited in writing via letter and e-mail between February 2 and March 3, 2009. A public comment meeting was held on February 18, 2009.

Public comment on the fee proposal was limited to two speakers at the public meeting and 20 e-mails/letters for a total of 22 comments. Fourteen of the 22 pertained to items in this year's fee proposal, while the remaining comments spoke to more general fee issues not addressed by this year's proposed adjustments. A summary of the public

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feedback is provided below. Comments pertaining to specific proposals in this year's package are presented first, followed by general fee comments.

Comments Pertaining to Specific Proposed Fees:

- The Woodson Ice Hockey Club wrote in opposition to the proposed ice rink rental fee increase. 26 members of the club signed their letter.
- Eight comments were received regarding the lakefront park entrance fee proposal – three of the eight were in blanket opposition to the notion of an entrance fee for County residents; the other five recommended adding a season pass alternative to lessen the fee's impact.
- Three commenters, including both speakers at the public meeting, opposed the proposed restriction limiting the number of times per year a group could rent historic properties using the performing arts fee discount.
- One writer expressed general opposition to all proposed fee increases, while another was supportive of the fee proposal as advertised.

General Fee Comments:

Individual comments were received regarding each of the following topics unrelated to the particular adjustments proposed in this year's fee proposal:

- increase RECenter admission fees and swim lane rental fees to pay for increased costs of operation; eliminate age-based price discounts in favor of income-based discounts;
- round all RECenter admission amounts to the next nearest quarter;
- permit free mid-day use of RECenters to elderly residents;
- delay implementing the final phase of the junior/senior discount reduction in golf due to economic conditions;
- provide added purchase incentives for buying 15-round golf passes;
- lower the age of eligibility for golf senior discounts;
- allow buyers to purchase RECenter passes in installments;
- against the timing of the County furlough.

A log of comments received during the advertisement period, including a summary of comments from the public meeting, is found in Attachment 2.

In response to the public comments, staff added a County resident season pass option to the lakefront and Riverbend park entrance fee proposals. The purchase of a season pass would allow entry to all three lake parks and Riverbend Park for one price. Conditions under which the park entrance fees would be applicable have also been clarified. (Revisions appear shaded and in italics on pages 10-11 and 23 of Attachment 1).

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FISCAL IMPACT:

Approval of the fee proposal recommendation is projected to generate approximately \$387,483 in additional revenue in FY 2009 and \$1,089,337 in FY 2010.

ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:

Attachment 1: Proposed Fee Adjustments FY 2009

Attachment 2: Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2009

STAFF:

John W. Dargle, Jr., Director

Cindy Messinger, Deputy Director/COO

Cindy Walsh, Director, Resource Management Division

Barbara Nugent, Director, Park Services Division

Nick Duray, Marketing Services Manager, Park Services Division

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# **Proposed Fee Adjustments**

## **FY 2009**



**Fairfax County Park Authority**

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## **Organization of the FY 2009 Fee Proposal**

Organization of the FY 2009 Fee Proposal follows the format in use for the last several years. A section entitled 'Current Situation – System-wide Considerations' describes the important factors in the Park Authority's overall operational environment that had an effect on the composition of this year's fee adjustment proposal. This overview is followed by separate sections for each of the various business areas for which fee adjustments are being proposed. Each of these sections first outlines important situational factors specific to that business area that had an effect on the development of the fee adjustment proposal. This is then followed by a summary of the fee adjustments proposed for that business area.

### **Current Situation – System-wide Considerations**

- Fees generated from Revenue Fund operations pay for personnel expenses and operating costs at all Park Authority-operated golf courses and RECenters, at lake parks for fee-sustained facilities and program operations, and for rental facilities, programs and store sales at parks run by the Park Authority's Resource Management Division. Fee-generated income must also pay back debt service associated with revenue bonds used to develop golf course facilities.
- Revenue growth needed to sustain the Park Revenue Fund is assumed to come from multiple sources, including new facility introductions, program growth and fee increases. As a matter of principle, comparatively small and regular fee increases are preferred over less frequent, but larger increases.
- Sufficient revenue must be produced annually to meet long-term debt service obligations for park facility revenue bonds, which are repaid with revenues from user fees. Debt obligations also include the Laurel Hill note payable to the County. Debt service payments increased with the addition of Laurel Hill principal payments in FY 2007. The Laurel Hill debt service payments for principal and interest totaled \$765,863 in FY 2008 and will climb to \$784,063 in FY 2009. The Series 2001 Revenue Bond payments were \$1,065,947 in FY 2008 and will be \$1,064,412 in FY 2009. Combining both, Revenue Fund debt payment obligations are close to \$1.85 million annually. The Master Indenture on park facility revenue bonds also includes a requirement that the Revenue Fund maintain a level of net revenue before debt service sufficient to meet 125% of annual debt service payments.
- Inflation is currently at its highest point in the last dozen years, according to recently released figures from the U.S. Department of Labor. July data shows that the Washington-Baltimore consumer price index (CPI) is up 5.7% over the same time last year. CPI growth in the previous two years had been 3.6% annually, making local CPI growth for the most recent two and three-year periods 9.3% and 12.9% respectively. Other U.S. Department of Labor data documents rapid growth over the past year in the cost of energy with one-year increases in the cost of gasoline (+37.5%), utility gas

(+32.8%) and electricity (+8.1%) all topping growth in the overall Washington-Baltimore CPI.

- Other local area economic indicators show a mixed picture of performance. The County's Economic Indicators Report shows that the unemployment rate for Fairfax County employed residents rose to 3.1% in June, it's highest in four years, though still well below the national rate of 5.7%. Sales tax receipts representing retail purchase activity were up only 1.0% during FY 2008, but rose 3.5% for June purchases over the same month the previous year.
- Park Services utility expenses (water, electric and natural gas combined) for FY 2008 were \$3.4 million and comprised 27% of total expenditures. Total utility expenses increased 16% over FY 2007. Growth in natural gas expenditures was comparatively flat compared to the previous fiscal year. However, electricity expenditures jumped nearly 21% to \$1.8 million in FY 2008. Electricity is the single largest Revenue Fund utility expense, accounting for 57% of all utility expenditures in FY 2008 or about \$1.8 million.
- General market conditions for the Park Revenue Fund's main sources of use are mixed, but cautiously optimistic.
  1. RECenter visitation was stable between FY 2007 and FY 2008 and remains so through the first two months of FY 2009. Attendance has not grown appreciably, but has not declined either. RECenter revenues did increase 5.2% between FY 2007 and FY 2008 with revenues from programs (up 6.9%), rentals (up 5.8%) and passes (up 4.1%) contributing strongly; however, RECenter revenue growth through the first two months of FY 2009 has been flat.

National indicators for fitness activity, a key source of RECenter demand, show some signs of improvement but also some impacts from the national economic slowdown. The latest figures from the International Health and Racquet Sports Association show annual net memberships down 2.9%, although industry revenues have continued to grow and are up 5.1% over the prior year. Recent studies cited in the August 1 *Club Industry Fitness Business Pro* newsletter indicate the new membership sales have gone flat in the second quarter of 2008 and that member attrition arising from cancellations and non-renewals has increased 25% in the same time period over the previous year.

2. Lake park attendance was down 5.4% in FY 2008 from the previous year with all main areas of visitation contributing to the decline except boat rentals which were up 2.0%. Visitation has rebounded during the first two months of FY 2009 and is up 7.8% over the same time last year. All areas contributed to this growth except camp site rentals which are down 1.2%.
3. Park Authority golf demand is currently outperforming regional averages. The National Golf Foundation's *National Golf Rounds Report* for July 2008 shows golf

play was down year-to-date in the DC/Baltimore area 3.4% and down throughout Virginia by 2.8%. By contrast, the number of golf rounds played at Park Authority courses was up 1.3% in FY 2008 compared to the previous year and is up 10% in the first two months of FY 2009 versus the first two months of fiscal 2008.

- Fee considerations for FY 2009 take into account that a reduction of the youth/senior discount from 40% to 35% is scheduled to take effect April 1, 2009 as the final of three adjustments to the youth/senior discount level that was approved by the Park Authority Board in 2005. As a result, this year's proposal contains only limited adjustments to golf greens fees and does not propose any increases to RECenter general admission and pass fees in an effort to minimize impact on users in these age groups.
- To address Fairfax County's projected General Fund budget deficit for fiscal year 2010, all County agencies were directed by the County Executive in June 2008 to develop budget reduction options totaling 15% of agency General Fund expenditures. Proposed expense reductions for the Park Authority amounted to approximately \$4.1 million. Entrance fees shown on pages 10 and 21 are meant to offset a portion of these General Fund expenditure losses for services that can be saved by transferring them to the Park Authority's Revenue Fund.

## Golf

### Current Situation

- The National Golf Foundation's National Golf Rounds Report for July 2008 shows golf play was down year-to-date in the DC/Baltimore area by 3.4% and down throughout Virginia by 2.8%. On a national level, rounds played year-to-date through July showed a 1.5% decrease according to National Golf Foundation reporting.
- Park Authority play is currently outperforming regional averages. The number of golf rounds played at Park Authority courses was up 1.3% in FY 2008 compared to the previous year and is up 10% in the first two months of FY 2009 versus the first two months of FY 2008. During FY 2008 there was a slight increase of 2.4% in operating days.
- FY 2008 performance included an 8% increase in revenue and a 4.7% increase in operating expenses. Driving range revenues continued to grow at Burke Lake up 8% and Twin Lakes up 7.3% while range revenues fell slightly at Oak Marr, down 1% and also down at Laurel Hill by 4.7%. All sites contributed to a combined increase of 2.3% in driving range revenues. Green fee revenue increased by 4.9% while Pro Shop sales increased by 10.4% and food services increased by 20%. Increases in food service and pro shop revenues were largely attributed to the full year of operation of the Laurel Hill clubhouse.
- Data from course surveys in the local market indicates that daily fee operators are anticipating raising fees slightly. Some courses indicated that they will hold fees at current rates.
- Increases in 9-hole non-prime time green fees took place across-the-board last year as well as the 9-hole prime time rates at Greendale and Twin Lakes. This year prime time increases are being recommended for both the 9-hole and 18-hole rates at all courses with the exception of Laurel Hill. Recognizing that the senior discount adjustment will take place this year lowering the discount to eligible seniors and juniors from 40% to 35%, no non-prime green fee adjustments are being recommended. These fee adjustments, and continued efforts to build non-prime play through promotions, will help golf to achieve its current revenue goals.
- Last year a per-person "riding" fee was established at Greendale and Twin Lakes, similar to what was already in effect at Laurel Hill. Instituting the riding fee alleviated the operational issue of splitting the cart fee in Parknet and also brought these courses in line with a common practice within the golf industry. This riding fee modification was well received by our customers and will continue. Staff is recommending a slight increase in cart fees at all courses to help offset increases in utilities and cart contract payments.

- Board authorization was received in FY 2007 for a Laurel Hill membership fee increase of up to 20% (\$860). When membership fees were raised in 2007, only \$500 of the authorized \$860 was used. Staff did not recommend any increase for calendar 2008, and carried the unused portion of the pre-authorized 20% ceiling forward to the 2009 calendar year. Staff is now acting upon this pre-authorization and will only increase dues by \$200 for “charter” members while holding the other membership dues at \$4,300. Staff is asking for approval of up to an additional 20% membership increase at this time to allow for a possible increase in calendar year 2010. This authorization is required at this time to allow for calendar 2010 membership adjustments to take place during November of 2009.
- At the 9-hole courses staff is also recommending replacing the “18-hole” round fee designation in the fee schedule with a “replay” fee to adopt terminology more consistently used at 9-hole courses throughout the golf industry. This is simply a change in terminology to reduce consumer confusion and involves no change in current fee levels.

### Proposed Golf Fee Adjustments

1. Prime Time Greens Fees. Staff is recommending the following changes to prime time greens fees. Current fees not listed remain unchanged.

Prime Time Greens Fees – 9 Holes		
	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>	<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>
Burke Lake	\$17	\$18
Jefferson	\$20	\$21
Oak Marr	\$18	\$19
Pinecrest	\$20	\$21
Greendale	\$23	\$24
Twin Lakes – Oaks and Lakes	\$30	\$31

Prime Time Greens Fees – 18 Holes		
Burke Lake	\$24	\$25
Greendale	\$34	\$35
Twin Lakes – Oaks and Lakes	\$47	\$48

2. Power Cart Rentals (Per Person). Staff is recommending the following changes to the per person power cart rental fees at Greendale and Twin Lakes.

Power Cart Rental (Per Person) – Greendale, Twin Lakes		
	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>	<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>
Greendale:		
9 Holes	\$ 9	\$10
18 Holes	\$14	\$15
2 <sup>nd</sup> 9 Holes	\$ 5	No Change
Twin Lakes:		
9 Holes	\$10	\$11
18 Holes	\$15	\$16
2 <sup>nd</sup> 9 Holes	\$ 5	No Change

3. Power Cart Rentals (Per Cart). Staff is recommending the following changes to the two person power cart rental fees at Jefferson and Pinecrest.

Power Cart Rental (Per Cart) – Jefferson, Pinecrest		
	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>	<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>
9 Holes	\$15	\$16
2 <sup>nd</sup> 9 Holes	\$ 9	No Change

4. Accessible Power Cart Rental. Staff is recommending the following changes to accessible power cart rental fees at all sites except Laurel Hill. Proposed fees reflect equity pricing for single rider carts and are based on half the two-person cart fee.

Accessible Power Cart Rental – All Courses Except Laurel Hill				
	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>		<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>	
	<u>9 Holes</u>	<u>18 Holes</u>	<u>9 Holes</u>	<u>18 Holes</u>
Burke Lake	\$10.00	\$18	\$11	\$19
Greendale	\$ 9.00	\$14	\$10	\$15
Jefferson	\$7.50	\$12	\$ 8	
Oak Marr	\$10.00	\$18	\$11	
Pinecrest	\$7.50	\$12	\$ 8	
Twin Lakes	\$10.00	\$15	\$11	\$16

5. Multi-Round Golf Pass Discounts. Staff is recommending the following two changes to the discount structure for golf multi-round passes aimed at increasing play during less crowded non-prime time periods: (1) Drop the residency requirement for non-junior/senior multi-round golf pass discounts during non-prime time. The non-junior/senior discounts of 5%, 10% and 15% would be available to all golfers during non-prime times, but only Fairfax County residents in prime times. (2) Eliminate the discount differential between residents and non-residents for the non-prime time junior/senior pass.

Multi-Round Pass Discounts, Non-Prime Time  
Burke Lake, Jefferson, Oak Marr, Pinecrest, Greendale, Twin Lakes

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
	Resident	Non-Resident	Resident	Non-Resident
5 Round Pass Discount	5%	N/A	5%	5%
10 Round Pass Discount	10%	N/A	10%	10%
15 Round Pass Discount	15%	N/A	15%	15%

Junior/Senior Pass, Non-Prime Time – All Courses

	CURRENT	PROPOSED
Resident Jr/Sr Pass Discount	40%*	35%*
Non-Resident Jr/Sr Pass Discount	20%	35%

\*Note that the change in the resident Jr/Sr pass discount from 40% to 35% is an already approved adjustment scheduled to take effect April 1, 2009 as the final phase of a three-phase reduction in the Jr/Sr discount approved by the Park Authority Board in 2005. At that time the Board approved a reduction of the discount from 50% to 35% to be implemented gradually in three phases over five years.

6. Annual Weekday Membership Fee – Laurel Hill Golf Club. Staff recommends adding a weekday only individual golf membership priced at \$3,000. For the initial offering, we will place a ceiling of 20 members. Membership privileges will consist of the following:

- Unlimited greens fees for the year, including cart, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays
- Unlimited use of driving range and practice facilities
- Advanced tee time privileges (14 days)
- USGA handicap service
- Discounted guest playing privileges
- Members only pro-shop discounts
- Discounted member tournaments and member special events
- Discounted weekend fees

Annual Weekday Membership Fee – Laurel Hill Golf Club

	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Individual Golf Membership	N/A	\$3,000

## Lakefront Parks

### Current Situation

- To address Fairfax County's projected General Fund budget deficit for fiscal year 2010, all County agencies were directed by the County Executive in June 2008 to develop budget reduction options totaling 15% of agency General Fund expenditures. Proposed expense reductions for the Park Authority amounted to approximately \$4.1 million. Included was a \$675,848 reduction in staffing and operating expenses at the Park Authority's lake parks – Burke Lake, Lake Accotink and Lake Fairfax – that would significantly impact operating hours and service delivery.
- To address this loss of General Fund support and mitigate its impacts, the Park Authority has developed a fee strategy that would allow it to preserve a portion of the lakefront staffing and service delivery threatened by this proposed budget cut. The proposed lakefront fee adjustments are shown below.
- Should the County opt not to reduce lake park expenses as proposed or only take a portion of the proposed expense cut, staff would recommend a reduction to the proposed fees based on the extent of the County's adopted budget cut. A scaled back version of the entrance fee proposal would still be recommended to help enable the Revenue Fund to absorb and maintain other services impacted by the General Fund budget cuts.

### Proposed Lakefront Park Fee Adjustments

1. Lakefront Park Entrance Fees. Staff is recommending the following changes to lakefront park entrance fees. ~~At Lake Fairfax Park, park entrance fees would not apply to athletic field users or Water Mine passholders, and campers would only be assessed a one-time entrance fee for the duration of their stay. Park entrance fees would not apply to program participants enrolled in Park Authority-run coded programs listed in Parktakes magazine or other Park Authority-approved permitted classes; nor would they apply to athletic field users or Water Mine passholders at Lake Fairfax Park. Campers at Lake Fairfax and Burke Lake would only be assessed a one-time entrance fee for the duration of their stay.~~

Entrance Fees – Burke Lake, Lake Accotink, Lake Fairfax<sup>1</sup>

	CURRENT FEE		PROPOSED FEE	
	Non-County Resident	County Resident	Non-County Resident	County Resident
Burke Lake				
Passenger Vehicles & Motorcycles	\$8	N/A	\$8	\$4
Large Capacity Vans	\$8	N/A	Delete	Delete
Buses	\$40	N/A	\$40	\$40
Lake Accotink				
Passenger Vehicles & Motorcycles	N/A	N/A	\$8	\$4
Buses	N/A	N/A	\$40	\$40
Lake Fairfax				
Passenger Vehicles & Motorcycles	N/A	N/A	\$4	\$4
Buses	N/A	N/A	\$40	\$40
<i>Season Pass- Passenger Vehicles &amp; Motorcycles<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>\$25</i>

<sup>1</sup>Fees are charged on weekends and holidays, April – October.

<sup>2</sup>Good for season-long entrance to Burke Lake, Lake Accotink, Lake Fairfax and Riverbend Parks.

## Picnic Shelter/Area and Volleyball

### Current Situation

- Use and demand is evaluated at the conclusion of each picnic season to identify potential future additions or deletions to the inventory of reservable picnic areas. In FY 2008, demand for reservable picnic areas and shelters continued to grow with many more requests than could be accommodated at the most popular locations. There were 1,862 rentals in FY 2008, up from 1,530 in FY 2007, a 22% increase. Much of the increase was due to the implementation of a half-day rental option introduced in 2008. Demand was greatest for large reservable areas (capacity 100 or more) with a broad array of amenities, including volleyball courts. Smaller areas in parks with limited amenities were relatively underutilized.
- Based primarily on market demand factors, staff recommends the following:
  - Increase fees at four reservable locations with high demand.
  - Establish rental rates for new shelters scheduled for construction at Lake Fairfax and for a new reservable picnic area being added to the inventory at Riverbend Park.
  - Establish fees for two existing volleyball courts that were previously not available for reservations.

## Proposed Picnic Shelters/Areas and Volleyball Rental Fee Adjustments

Based on the conditions described above, proposed adjustments for 2009 are:

### 1. Full-Day Picnic shelters/area rates

	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>		<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>	
	<u>Prime</u>	<u>Non-Prime</u>	<u>Prime</u>	<u>Non-Prime</u>
<u>Existing Facilities</u>				
Burke Lake Shelters A, B and C	\$325	\$220	\$350	\$250
Clemyjontri Shelter	\$100	\$78	\$125	\$100
<u>New Facilities</u>				
Lake Fairfax Shelters 1 and 2	N/A		\$175	\$125
Lake Fairfax Shelters 3 and 4	N/A		\$125	\$100
Riverbend Picnic Area 1	N/A		\$ 85	\$ 70

### 2. Half-Day Picnic shelters/area rates. (fees effective May 1 – September 30)

	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>		<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>	
	<u>Prime</u>	<u>Non-Prime</u>	<u>Prime</u>	<u>Non-Prime</u>
<u>Existing Facilities</u>				
Burke Lake Shelters A, B and C	\$210	\$145	\$230	\$165
Clemyjontri Shelter	\$ 65	\$ 50	\$ 85	\$ 65
<u>New Facilities</u>				
Lake Fairfax Shelter 1 and 2	N/A		\$100	\$ 75
Lake Fairfax Shelters 3 and 4	N/A		\$ 85	\$ 65

### 3. Volleyball Court rates

	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>	<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>
<u>New Facilities</u>		
Riverbend Park Volleyball	N/A	\$10/hr with picnic reservation; \$15/hr without picnic reservation
Nottoway Park Volleyball	N/A	\$10/hr with picnic reservation; \$15/hr without picnic reservation

## RECenters

### Current Situation

- RECenters are heavily used and continue to be high in demand. Overall attendance remained static between FY 2006 – 2008. Revenue from general and pass admissions increased slightly 4.1%; this growth is attributed to the previous year's fee increase.
- Staff is not recommending an increase in admission fees this year for two reasons. First, the forecast of a regional economic downturn. Secondly, with the implementation of the final phase of the youth/seniors discount reduction, additional adjustments to admission fees would adversely impact these two groups.
- A comparative analysis of public ice skating sessions fees shows that Mount Vernon RECenter fees are significantly below that of other facilities located in northern Virginia and suburban Maryland.
- Increases in operating costs directly associated with rising utilities expenses have reduced the cost recovery of Mount Vernon RECenter.
- Freestyle sessions currently are structured without a discount rate. The proposal reflects an adjustment in both base and discount rates to bring the fees more in line with other specialty skating fees.
- George Washington RECenter has a small room available for rent and is priced comparably to other RECenter rooms of comparable size.
- The other RECenters are more heavily used and have more attractive amenities than the George Washington RECenter.
- The George Washington RECenter rental room price is thought to be too high for the site, resulting in limited rental requests.

**Proposed RECenter Fee Adjustments**

1. Ice Rink Rental Per Hour. Staff recommends an increase in the hourly ice rental to better align with the surrounding market and to aid in the cost recovery of the site. Recommendation is for a continued 10% increase over the previous year.

	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>		<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>	
	<u>Base</u>	<u>Discount</u>	<u>Base</u>	<u>Discount</u>
Ice Rink Rental	\$290	\$265	\$320	\$290

2. Specialty Skating Session Fees. Staff recommends an increase in specialty skate session fees based on a comparison of ice rinks in the local area.

	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>		<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>	
	<u>Base</u>	<u>Discount</u>	<u>Base</u>	<u>Discount</u>
Freestyle Skating	\$9.50	\$9.50	\$12.00	\$10.00
Pick Up Hockey, Stick & Puck	\$10.00	\$8.00	\$12.00	\$10.00
Skate Sharpening- 24 Hour	\$5.00	n/a	\$7.00	n/a
Skate Sharpening-On the Spot	\$7.00	n/a	\$10.00	n/a
Ice Dance Session	\$8.00	\$6.00	\$9.00	\$7.00

3. George Washington Room Rental. Staff recommends reducing the room rental rate to \$30 per hour to stimulate demand.

George Washington RECenter Room Rental, Per Hour

	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>	<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>
Room Rental	\$ 40	\$30

4. RECenter Chaperone Admission Fee. Staff recommends an increase to the Chaperone Fee for non-participating adults supervising children in the RECenters. This fee has not been adjusted since its original implementation in 1996.

	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>	<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>
Chaperone Fee	\$1.50	\$2.00

5. Non-Prime Gymnasium Rental Fee. Staff recommends establishing a non-prime time hourly fee. This fee would reflect a 50% discount of the current Gymnasium Rental fees. Non-Prime time is defined as September – June; Monday – Friday; Opening – 4:00 p.m.

	<u>NON-PRIME TIME HOURLY FEE</u>	
	<u>CURRENT</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u>
<u>Audrey Moore RECenter</u>		
Full Gymnasium	N/A	\$55
1/2	N/A	\$33

	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>	<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>
<u>Lee District RECenter</u>		
Full Gymnasium	N/A	\$110
2/3	N/A	93.50
1/2	N/A	\$66
Court	N/A	\$41.25

6. Tour Group Fee. Staff recommends establishing a tour group fee of 10% discount off current base rate general admission. Tour Groups are defined as large groups (51+) originating outside of Fairfax County.

To avoid confusion, this will necessitate a revision to the group size definition for the existing Facility Group Rate in the Fee Schedule. Staff recommends the following:

CURRENT:

Facility Groups Rate - 12 or more individuals with advance reservation and single payment 25% off daily admission rate

PROPOSED:

Facility Groups Rate - with advance reservations and a single payment, groups of 12 to 50 participants will receive a 25% off daily admission rate

## Tennis Court Reservations

### Current Situation:

- The Fairfax County Park Authority offers almost 200 outdoor tennis courts, many with practice courts, to provide you with quality tennis facilities close to home. All non reserved courts are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Tennis court usage is free at all sites as a walk-on. Tennis courts may be reserved for singles, doubles or groups for a nominal fee. Staff is recommending increasing the reservation fees at all reservable tennis facilities by \$2. These fees have not been raised since 2001.

### Proposed Tennis Fee Adjustments:

- Tennis court reservations. Staff proposes the following:

	CURRENT FEE		PROPOSED FEE	
	Base <u>Rate</u>	Discount <u>Rate</u>	Base <u>Rate</u>	Discount <u>Rate</u>
Singles (1 hour) – Jefferson District & Wakefield Parks only	\$ 9	\$ 5	\$ 11	\$ 7
Doubles (1.5 hours) - Jefferson District & Wakefield Parks only	\$ 12	\$ 7	\$ 14	\$ 9
Tournament, Group & Lesson Fee (per court, per hour) – all park locations with tennis courts	\$ 12	\$ 7	\$ 14	\$ 9

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Discount rate available with proof of county residency. Fees are charged on weekends and holidays, April – October.

## The Water Mine

### Current Situation:

- Staff recommends eliminating the Chaperone Fee for non-participating adults supervising children at the Water Mine. Patrons who formerly were admitted to the facility via the chaperone fee would be required to purchase regularly priced admission as is typical at other similar facilities in the waterpark industry. The Water Mine is the only waterpark in the region to include a chaperone fee in its pricing structure. Chaperone admissions, despite the fact that they are non-swimming patrons, are also counted against the Water Mine's facility attendance capacity limit, restricting revenue potential. By eliminating this fee, this facility would better align with industry practices related to admission policies and aid in the cost recovery of the site.

### Proposed Water Mine Fee Adjustments

1. Chaperone Admission Fee. Staff recommends eliminating the chaperone fee for non-participating adults who enter the Water Mine.

	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>	<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>
Chaperone Fee	\$7.25	Eliminate

## Resource Management Division

### Current Situation

- Historically, the Resource Management Division has operated primarily from the General Fund. As a result, fees for programs and operational activities have remained low. The Division's General Fund operating budget has not increased over the last three years, and has been reduced over the last year. Future potential for expanding programs and services is more likely in the Revenue Fund, which will require the Division to adjust fees more frequently in the future and ensure that fees more closely align with industry comparables for the same services in order to improve cost recovery for Division Revenue Fund operations.
- The Resource Management Division's net revenue contribution has shown steady increase over the past three years (2006=\$212,830; 2007=\$219,669; 2008=\$271,874), demonstrating the potential growth in some key areas in the Revenue Fund (e.g. rentals, programs, etc).
- As the Division continues to move more of its operations into the Revenue Fund, the need to meet revenue fund financial management objectives is imperative. Recommended fee adjustments serve to maintain adequate cost recovery and maintain appropriate market positioning of these fee-based services.

## Frying Pan Farm Park Equestrian Center

### Current Situation

- Frying Pan Farm jump equipment fees have not increased since 1990 and the ring fees have not been increased since 2003. Therefore, fees have not kept up with the increase in expenses and the consumer price index (CPI). Over the last five years the cumulative CPI is 20% and over the last nine years the cumulative CPI is 30%.
- Currently, user groups rent the jump equipment about 20 times per year and outdoor rings about 60 times per year.
- Jump equipment is 15 years old and needs to be replaced. Staff maintenance costs have increased.
- Outdoor rings at comparable facilities range from \$250 - \$850 per day. When the ring fees were increased in 2003 they stayed well below the comparables based on the fact that Frying Pan Farm was operating primarily with General Fund support. Currently, Frying Pan is shifting more of its operation into the Revenue Fund, requiring greater cost recovery.
- Frying Pan Farm is having new stalls built that should be complete by the end of August 2009. These stalls are completely covered and larger than the old ones. Stalls are used most weekends from March to November.
- Stalls at comparable facilities range from \$15 - \$35 per night.

### Proposed Frying Pan Outdoor Equestrian Fee Adjustments

1. Jump Equipment Rental Fee. Staff recommends increasing the jump equipment fee by \$25 to \$100. This is based on the cumulative 30% CPI for the last nine years.

	<u>CURRENT</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u>
Per day	\$75	\$100

2. Upper or Lower Ring Rental. Staff recommends increasing the outdoor ring rental fees by \$75 to \$200. The ring fees are still considerably lower than comparable outdoor rings. As Frying Pan Farm shifts more of its operation to the Revenue Fund it will need to recover more expenses and cannot continue to provide this service at more than half the cost of comparable facilities.

	<u>CURRENT</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u>
Per day	\$125	\$200

3. Outdoor Equestrian Stall Rental. New stalls are being constructed that are larger than the existing stalls that are available for rent. (Existing stalls are 10' x 10'. New stalls will be 10' x 12'). Staff recommends maintaining the existing rental rate for the existing smaller stalls and establishing a fee of \$20 per night for the new, larger stalls.

	<u>CURRENT</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u>
Small Stalls (per night)	\$8	\$8
Large Stalls (per night)	N/A	\$20

## Riverbend Park

### Current Situation

- Riverbend has single person kayaks that are very popular.
- Kayakers must be 14 or older to rent and families would like to kayak together. Parents would like to rent a 2-person kayak to take children with them.
- Riverbend is very popular on weekends and the park entrance is currently staffed on weekends to manage parking due to a high volume of cars.
- Park entrance fees were eliminated in the 1990s at a time when demand was lower and entrance staffing was eliminated as a budget reduction measure.
- Since then, neighboring Great Falls National Park has retained entrance fees. Due to the proximity of the two parks, some Great Falls visitors are now parking at Riverbend and walking to Great Falls, negatively impacting parking at Riverbend which has required the site to again staff the front gate.
- Re-instituting a park entrance fee will also allow the Park Authority to partially offset funding cuts to Resource Management educational programs and services proposed as a part of the County's Fiscal Year 2010 General Fund budget reduction exercise, as well as establish consistency in fees with other waterfront park locations (i.e., Burke Lake, Lake Accotink and Lake Fairfax). In the event the County opts not to take the proposed expense cut or only takes a portion of the proposed cut, staff would recommend a reduction to the proposed entrance fees based on the extent of the County's adopted budget cut. A scaled back version of the entrance fee proposal would still be recommended to help enable the Revenue Fund to absorb and maintain other services impacted by the General Fund budget cuts.

### Proposed Riverbend Park Fees

1. Tandem Kayak Fees. Staff recommends establishing a fee for 2-person kayaks that will be offered as a service enhancement beginning in the spring.

	<u>CURRENT</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u>
2 person kayak (half day)	N/A	\$25
2 person kayak (full day)	N/A	\$35

2. Entrance Fees. Staff recommends reinstating the park entrance fee using the same fee structure proposed for Burke Lake and Lake Accotink parks. These fees are only charged on weekends and holidays from April through October *and would not apply to program participants enrolled in Park Authority-run coded programs listed in Parktakes magazine or other Park Authority-approved permitted classes.*

	CURRENT FEE		PROPOSED FEE	
	Non-County Resident	County Resident	Non-County Resident	County Resident
Passenger Vehicles & Motorcycles	N/A	N/A	\$8	\$4
Buses	N/A	N/A	\$40	\$40
Season Pass- Passenger Vehicles & Motorcycles <sup>1</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$25

<sup>1</sup>Good for season-long entrance to Burke Lake, Lake Accotink, Lake Fairfax and Riverbend Parks.

### Nature Site Room Rentals

#### Current Situation

- Groups periodically use the multipurpose rooms of the nature facilities and offer a donation.
- Historic Properties, Frying Pan Visitors Center, and Green Spring Gardens have fees to cover similar rentals.
- Establishing room rental fees for nature sites provides more consistency and regulation of the use of the rooms.

#### Proposed Nature Site Room Rental Fee Adjustments

1. Nature Center Room Rental Fees. Staff proposes establishing a fee based on similar fees at other FCPA facilities. This fee will be used at the following sites: Huntley Meadows, Hidden Oaks, Hidden Pond, and Ellanor C Lawrence.

	<u>CURRENT</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u>
Per Hour Rate	N/A	\$50
Security Deposit	N/A	\$50
Non- Profit Discount	N/A	20%

## Historic Properties Rental Services

### Current Situation

- Historic Properties Rentals Services (HPRS) was re-organized as of July 2008 to allow the unit to fully recover all operating costs beginning with FY 2009. All staff, utilities and operational expenses are to be recovered from revenue generated by rentals and other revenue producing programs. As a result of the new structure, the focus of the operation is on weekends, eliminating the need for separate fees for weekdays and weekends.
- Community/ Civic groups currently use the Historic Properties for public meetings and are allowed 2 ½ hours free use. The cost of providing this service is approximately \$26,000 per year in staff time, utility expenses, and other associated costs.
- Recently there have been inquiries from performing arts groups to use/reserve the Great Falls Grange for a large number of weekends. This would limit the ability to rent the facility at regular rates, hampering efforts to achieve cost recovery. Equally important, it would limit facility access to other performing arts groups. The performing arts fees are to be used for performances, rehearsals, and auditions only. This rate is not intended for on-going programs. While no change in fees is proposed for performing arts rentals, limitations are being suggested for these types of rentals in order to ensure more equitable facility access.

### Proposed Historic Property Rental Fee Adjustments

1. Private Rental Fees. Staff proposes to remove the weekday rental rates and to use the current weekend rate as the only rate. Staff proposes to rename the rate from Weekend/Holiday to Private Rental Rates to signify that these rates are to be used daily. There were less than 20 weekday rentals for FY 2008.
2. Community/ Civic Groups. Staff proposes to establish a fee for what is currently termed the 'base rental' by community and civic groups to recover expenses associated with facility use.

#### CURRENT

All Sites 2 ½ hour free use  
Additional hours \$50 per hour

#### PROPOSED

All Sites 1<sup>st</sup> hour \$55  
All Sites each hour after 1<sup>st</sup> \$20

3. Performing Arts Fee. Although no fee change is recommended, staff proposes adding a condition that limits groups to four weekends per calendar year at the performing arts rate.

## Alcohol Beverage Permit Fee

### Current Situation

- The alcohol beverage permit fee has been \$100 since December 1993.
- Renting for social events such as weddings and parties necessitate the ability to offer a way to permit alcohol to be served on Park Authority Property.
- A Fee was established to offset the administrative and operational liabilities of allowing alcohol to be served on Park Authority Properties.
- Expenses have increased and CPI has risen more than 30% since the last time the fee was adjusted.

1. Alcohol Beverage Permit Fee. Staff is recommending a fee increase to offset administrative and operational costs.

	<u>CURRENT</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u>
Alcoholic Beverage Permit	\$100	\$150

## Commercial Use of Parkland Permit Fees

### Current Situation

- The number of permits provided for the production of filmed product including television shows, feature films, videos, documentaries, and commercials is increasing over the past five years. We have seen limited interest for parks, historic sites, and natural resource area filming sites move towards dozens of requests for shoots.
- These requests fall into a number of categories and current charges:

Commercial Productions: full pay beginning at \$365 per day for permit and application fees and increasing depending on size and complexity of production, additional permit coordination, availability of site, advance notice, etc.

Non Profit Production: no charge with the exception of permit application fee of \$15 and any expenses that may be necessary to ensure the Park Authority does not have to cover costs for additional staffing, or loss of revenue.

Student Productions: no charge.

Editorial Content Shoots: no charge. Generally news crews, documentaries, or even public service announcements that are editorial in nature, protected by First Amendment rights access protections or espousing worthy safety or stewardship message Filming in Virginia continues to increase.

- A recent study by Virginia Commonwealth University's Center for Public Policy found that more than 8,000 people in Virginia are involved in the movie industry, which brought in more than \$500,000 in economic impact to Virginia in 2004.
- The Park Authority has 24,000 acres available close to the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. We are close enough for those who wish to film in the capital but also need a country location. We also feature a number of unique natural (Scott's Run, Burke Lake) areas that are favorites as well as historic sites that are often requested (Frying Pan Farm Park, Sully, Colvin Run). We have the opportunity to capitalize on these assets and to market them with the area film offices, through an enhanced web presence and through word of mouth from a growing number of satisfied customers.
- The Public Information Office often handles these requests on a very short turnaround, working with site staff to manage the filming and trying to accommodate filmmakers by providing photos of potential sites, direction to other services such as police or health department (i.e., environmental concerns/permits from fake snow), liaison with BOS members (notifying the neighbors of potential gunfire and requiring safety officers on site), etc.
- Commercial use of parkland fees were last updated in 2002. Staff is recommending the following three changes to update this fee structure:

1. Eliminate \$15 application fee. With student, editorial and non-profit activities composing a majority of requests, this fee is cumbersome for customers and slows the approval process down. Elimination of the fee will encourage electronic preparation of applications.
2. Increase daily fee from \$350 to \$500 per day for commercial productions to ensure the Park Authority does not have uncovered expenses. In addition, maintain flexibility in fee structure to adjust this fee in unusual cases (i.e. very large productions, special circumstances or requests).
3. Establish general staff hourly rate at \$35 per hour to be reflective of average staff cost.
4. Establish non-profit daily fee of \$100 for productions. In addition, maintain flexibility in fee structure to adjust this fee in unusual cases (i.e. very large productions, special circumstances or requests).

**Proposed Commercial Use of Parkland Fee Adjustments**

	<u>CURRENT FEE</u>	<u>PROPOSED FEE</u>
Application Fee	\$15	Eliminate
For Profit/Commercial Use	\$350 per day	\$500 per day
For Non-profit Commercial Use	N/A	\$100 per day
Staff Support	\$35 per day	\$35 per hour

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**Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2009**

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**From:** IRAKID2@aol.com [mailto:IRAKID2@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 04, 2009 1:05 PM  
**To:** Parkmail; Judy.Pedersen@fairfaxcounty.gov; Chase, Kirt  
**Subject:** Proposed Fee Changes for 2009

Attn: Judy Pedersen.

Please make the following written comment, available as part of the written record for the public meeting on Wednesday, February 18, 2009, on the proposed fee structure for admission to the Rec Centers. Pages 13 & 14 of the proposed fee structure document.

\*\*\*\*\*

Comment:

In order to increase efficiencies in the day to day operations of the individual Rec Centers, it is proposed that the general admission fee for walk in Patrons be increased from the present \$6.85 for county residents and \$ 9.15 for non-county residents, to an even \$7.00 for county and \$9.25 for non-county.

In other words, "Drop the nickels and dimes," by rounding admission fees up to the next nearest 25 cents. Handling nickels and dimes are by and large a "Royal Pain" for the Front Desk staff and I am sure the staff in the Accounts Office will thank you also.

\*\*\*\*\*

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. If you need to contact me, I can be reached at this email or at: 703-281-6501 ext "O" mornings.

/s/ Carl Enix  
Front Desk Staff, Oak Marr Rec Center (early mornings)

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**From:** GEORGE MAZUZAN [mailto:gmazuzan@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 05, 2009 10:03 PM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Golf Fees

Given the nature of the economy this year, I strongly suggest that the Park Authority postpone for a year the third phase of the discounted jr./sr. non prime time golf fee discount and leave it at 40%.

Times are tough! Thank you.

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**From:** Stephen Keat [mailto:stephenkeat@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 05, 2009 4:27 PM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Comment on Rec Center Fees

Today I read your proposal on Rec Center fees and would like to make the following comments:

The Park Authority needs more resources if it is to maintain and improve on the quality of our Rec Centers. It strikes me as short sighted not to raise fees to give you those resources. Those of us who use the centers on a regular basis could afford to pay 5% more if this was plowed back into upkeep and longer hours. I also note that your pools are heavily used by various swim teams and other organizations--for example the Curl-Burke Swim Club and Fort Belvoir Swim Team. The lane-rental fees are ridiculously low, allowing these teams to rent most of the pool, and forcing the regular paying customers into a few crowded lanes. Let teams pay more toward maintaining your facilities and expanding your hours. Your GW hours are ridiculously short. If you charged the regular users and the teams more, you could afford to keep it open longer hours. Lastly, having Senior Citizen or other age-based discounts makes no sense. Why should a wealthy Senior pay less than anybody else? It would make more sense to have income-based discounts for Senior Citizens.

Thank you for considering my comments. Please acknowledge receipt.

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**From:** marhup2@aol.com [mailto:marhup2@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 08, 2009 6:57 PM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Fee changes for parks

I would like to voice my concern and opposition to any and all fee changes to all of the parks in Fairfax County. Parks should remain free of charge. Thank you.  
Mark Huppert  
Annandale, VA

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**From:** Malenich, Claudia  
**Sent:** Friday, February 06, 2009 2:20 PM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Public Comment

Let's ask for public comment on how to save our county parks, keep employees working, and make the parks attractive to the public.

1. When employees were furloughed on New Year's Eve; you would have been more gracious to furlough them New Year's Day so they could spend time with family and friends.

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**From:** Ketrin Oravec [mailto:oketrin@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tue 2/10/2009 11:10 AM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Proposed Fee Adjustments  
To Whom This May Concern:

Please do not increase the rates at Burke Lake for Fairfax County Residents! I love going to the park now because its an inexpensive way to escape the city and enjoy nature. If fees will be assessed I'll probably stop going.

Please keep it free for county residents!

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**From:** Jeff Warner [mailto:j1warner@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2009 11:31 PM  
**To:** Parkmail; Provdist BOS Email  
**Subject:** Fee Changes  
Dear Supervisor Smyth and Parks Authority,

A couple of weeks ago at Burke Lake Park I was handed a flyer outlining the "Proposed Fee Adjustments – FY2009" for Lakefront Parks. It stated that a County Resident Fee of \$4.00 was being considered for Lakefront Parks. As someone who uses the trail around Burke Lake at least once a weekend (and most times twice per weekend) I must say I am against this fee. This would result in a \$100-\$200 annual fee. While I understand that maintenance of the parks is not free and the need to generate revenue in this particularly difficult time, the resulting fee would be higher than my National Parks Pass (\$80 [http://www.nps.gov/fees\\_passes.htm](http://www.nps.gov/fees_passes.htm)). Having an annual cost for a local park exceed an annual national parks pass seems to be somewhat unreasonable. This structure seems to penalize frequent trail users. I urge you to keep the continue to have the parks free to county residents.

However, if this is not possible has the Parks Authority considered allowing for the purchase of an "annual" pass. \$20 seems to be a reasonable amount to me.

Thank you for your consideration.

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**From:** Lynn [mailto:lajohn425@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 15, 2009 5:26 PM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Fee Proposal for Lakefront Parks

I am writing regarding the proposed entrance fees for the Lakefront Parks. I am a frequent visitor to Burke Lake during the summer to train for a charity marathon walk each fall. A \$4 entrance is prohibitive for county residents who visit the park on more than an occasional basis. I understand times are difficult, and if fees are needed, some thought should at least be given to providing for a resident's summer pass at a set fee.

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**From:** Larry Frank [mailto:lfrank2@earthlink.net]

**Sent:** Saturday, February 14, 2009 5:12 PM

**To:** Parkmail

**Subject:** Fee Changes

Dear Sir/Madam.

I am a Fairfax County Resident (Lawrence Frank, 13500 Coates Ln, Herndon, VA 20171). Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the meeting on 18 Feb due to a business commitment.

I am a member of the local branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann. We are a registered 501C3 organization that sponsors events to promote Irish culture. I think we are the cause of the effort to limit performing arts groups from renting the Grange facility more than 4 times per year.

"Recently there have been inquiries from performing arts groups to use/reserve the Great Falls Grange for a large number of weekends. This would limit the ability to rent the facility at regular rates, hampering efforts to achieve cost recovery. Equally important, it would limit facility access to other performing arts groups. The performing arts fees are to be used for performances, rehearsals, and auditions only. This rate is not intended for on-going programs. While no change in fees is proposed for performing arts rentals, limitations are being suggested for these types of rentals in order to ensure more equitable facility access."

We started using the hall in January 2009. We had requested the hall for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month Jan-May and would like to request the hall Sept – Dec also (we don't normally hold our events Jun-Aug.) "9" does not seem like a "large" number.

The event we hold is called a ceili. It has live music played by a traditional Irish ceili band. The band allows "friends" to sit in and participate in playing. The people who attend dance traditional Irish figure and set dances. We also have performances by local dance schools. The event is open to the public.

Is there any evidence that our use of the Grange has limited access by other performing arts groups? Or, is there any evidence that our use of the Grange is "hampering efforts to achieve cost recovery"? In discussing upcoming dates, we were told that both the April and May Saturdays are open. It would seem that renting the facility to us would help recover costs more than having it closed. We know that we have to request the facility one month at a time and that others may get to it before we do. In fact, we did not have our ceili there in December because the facility was rented.

If the rate we are being charged does not cover the costs of having the facility open, then the rates should be increased for us and others. But setting an arbitrary limit on the use of the facility because others might want it – with no evidence that it is actually inhibiting use of the facility seems unreasonable.

Comments from Fee Comment Meeting – February 18, 2009

Two speakers offered comments at the fee meeting:

1. Jessie Wench spoke as a member of the non-profit Irish cultural group Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann that uses the Grange to hold traditional dances called ceilis. They were told that their group would be limited to four events per year as a result of the HPRS proposal to limit groups using facilities via the discounted performing arts fee rate to four weekends per calendar year. They are asking to use the Grange eight Saturdays per year (at the discounted performing arts rate) and request that the Park Authority not restrict use of community-based organizations such as theirs in favor of higher revenue-producing activities like weddings. Their group cannot afford use of the facility at higher private rental rates. Mr. Wench mentioned the group is willing to help organize an annual fundraiser as an alternative way to raise revenue for the Park Authority.
2. Marty Summerour, Special Events Coordinator for the Folklore Society of Greater Washington also spoke regarding the HPRS performing arts fee proposal that limits groups to four weekends per year at the performing arts rate. She treasures the Park Authority's historic sites and never considered that the Park Authority would restrict their use. She noted that the Grange is also a well known location for the Sacred Heart singing group that is a non-profit that would not be able to afford the private rates to rent the Grange. She expressed a willingness to lend resources to do a benefit/fundraiser in lieu of the proposed restriction.

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**From:** EFitz765@aol.com [mailto:EFitz765@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Tue 2/24/2009 1:13 PM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** golf fees -- do more to encourage multi-round passes  
RE: proposed "multi-round" golf fees ---

You should do more to encourage folks to purchase 15-round/18-hole/prime time golf passes -- maybe buy 15-rounds & get one round free. Or keep the passes at the same rate as in 2008. I know 15% is a nice discount, but think broader/longer term --- give the 15-rounder's an additional "special" incentive to buy 15-rounds instead of 5 or 10 rounds. A special incentive might also increase your "gift certificate" sales.

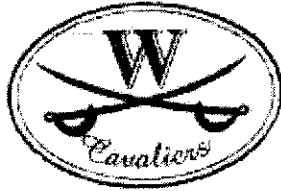
Isn't the idea to keep your frequent golfers coming back?

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**From:** Nobbydomer@aol.com [mailto:Nobbydomer@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 25, 2009 9:38 AM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Golf Fees for Seniors

Fairfax has raised the age for senior golf to 65. This is the oldest age for the entire metropolitan area e.g. Montgomery County age is 60, Herndon is 60; Fairfax National, Virginia Oaks, Penderbrook, military courses are all 60. I am 62 and a 35 year resident and tax payer in Fairfax, yet play all my golf at non-county courses because of this age limit. I'm lucky to have a group of friends (many of them older than 65) who play with me at these other municipal/private courses. We play twice a week and probably 80 rounds a year.

Is there any possibility Fairfax could change the senior age? Are the county courses playing at capacity?



February 20, 2009

**WOODSON ICE HOCKEY CLUB**

3907 Winterset Drive, Annandale, VA 22003

Fairfax County Park Authority  
12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite #927 Fairfax, VA 22035-1118  
Attn: Public Information Office/2009 Fee Comments

Dear Sir or Madam:

The purpose of this letter is to voice our concern over the proposed 10% fee increase for ice rink rentals at Mt. Vernon Recreation Center. Woodson Ice Hockey Club (WIHC) is a non profit public charity that depends on donations, fundraising and volunteers in order to sustain our mission. In each of the past two years, WIHC has contracted for more than \$10,000 in ice time at Mt. Vernon. This expense is our single biggest outlay, representing 50% of the operating budget. Facing 10% annual increases in the cost of ice fees creates a serious financial burden and impairs our ability to bring the sport of ice hockey to high school students in Fairfax County. This proposed increase along with a deteriorating climate of charitable giving makes our future very challenging. Certainly we can all agree that keeping high school students involved in sports results in better grades and fewer disciplinary problems, not to mention learning sportsmanship, teamwork and physical skills. Surely Fairfax County does not want to jeopardize such beneficial programs.

One argument used in favor of the proposed fee increase is that the Washington-Baltimore Consumer Price Index has been rising. Unfortunately that fact is true only through July 2008. Since July, the CPI has dropped steadily with a 3-4% decline from July 2008 through January 2009 (see schedule below). Our local economy is experiencing a significant downturn and Fairfax County should consider the most recent market trends in its decision. In difficult times, it is a common business practice to keep fees fixed at last year's rate. Certainly prices should not be increased more than the current market dictates.

Also, the comparison of Mt. Vernon Ice Rink to neighboring rinks is a difficult task. Mt. Vernon is an older facility with no amenities such as a pro shop, concessions, etc. Furthermore, Mt. Vernon has only one sheet of ice and limited service hours when compared to other facilities. Finally, some items at Mt. Vernon are in need of repair such as the score board and lighting. Indeed some discount for an aged property with failing equipment should be considered.

Over the past two years, WIHC has enjoyed playing ice hockey at Mt. Vernon and fostering positive relationships with our students and Fairfax County Park Authority. We hope to continue this relationship in the future. The current economic climate is unfortunate for everyone, especially charities. For the reasons stated above, WIHC respectfully requests Fairfax County Park Authority to reconsider the proposed fee increase for ice rink rentals at Mt. Vernon Recreation Center.

Sincerely,

Woodson Ice Hockey Club  
Board of Directors and Membership (26 signatures attached)

We, the members of Woodson Ice Hockey Club, designate our agreement with the attached letter dated February 23, 2009 by signing below.

Printed Name	Signature	Date
1. Julia Margulies		2/23/09
2. Jen Bean		2/23/09
3. Keisha Ochs		2/23/09
4. Kathryn Dorn		2/23/09
5. ESTERILAN COOPER		2/23/09
6. KAREN COOPER		2/23/09
7. Carl Lundquist		2/23/09
8. David Maffei		2/23/09
9. Paul W. Maffei		2/23/09
10. Gill Ryan		2/23/09
11. Edwin Weinger		2/23/09
12. Brian Weston		2/23/09
13. Doug Payne		2/23/09
14. ROYCE G. WALTERS		2/23/09
15. LUKE HANCOCK		2/23/09
16. Bob RAZZA		2/23/09
17. Jim Fell		2/23/09
18. Jim Fell		2/23/09
19. Jim Alexander		2/23/09
20. David Dain		2/23/09
21. PAUL SANDI		2/23/09
22. Todd Fell		2/23/09
23. Arthur Bestion		2/23/09
24. Sarah Eskola		2/23/09
25. Katie Miranda		2/23/09
26. Susan Sandt		2/23/09



-----Original Message-----

**From:** Nguyen, Quang [mailto:Quang.Nguyen@fhwa.dot.gov]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 27, 2009 8:57 AM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Membeship & fees

To whom it may concern,

As a long time and frequent membership holder, I would have a suggestion to make about the payment for the four months or for the year under this hard financial time that most of us are experiencing: allow us to have equal installments, instead of the whole amount with the same discount rate. I also know that there are a normal monthly rate too.

Your consideration of my suggestions highly appreciated.

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**From:** edmondskei@cs.com [mailto:edmondskei@cs.com]  
**Sent:** Fri 2/27/2009 7:09 PM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Feedback to: All Board Members  
Submitted at Fri Feb 27 2009 19:08:35 from 68.98.156.196

Comment: Dear Board Members of FCPA;

I've been told that you may be considering instituting fees for park entry in Fairfax County. If this becomes a reality, I would suggest that you also institute a seasonal pass such as the US Government's park fee system so that one might easily gain access often.. yet still pay up front into Fairfax County's park system. I realize that our park system has continuing needs to maintain it so though I love a free park, it takes money to maintain it for the visitors.

An example of an annual pass is: The Interagency Annual Pass - \$80 which replaced the National Park Pass and Golden Eagle Passport, gives the right to pass on 391 park areas nationwide. Locally, there is the Great Falls Park annual pass for \$20. All this may be referenced at this website:

<http://www.nps.gov/grfa/planyourvisit/feesandreservations.htm>

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**From:** Brinley, Noelle S [mailto:Noelle.Brinley@fcps.edu]  
**Sent:** Mon 3/2/2009 11:25 AM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Lakefront Park Fees

I am writing to express my disappointment in the proposed park fees. I am a teacher in Fairfax County and one of my parents notified me about this. Each summer my class meets me at Lake Accotink, a park not very far from our school, but one not many of the parents were aware of. At our annual class summer picnic, the parents get informed about another local place they can go with their children. We bring picnic lunches and visit with each other, We also pay to ride the pontoon boat (fees have gone up on this) ride the carousel and play miniature golf. I often buy ice cream for my class at the end of the day. If a \$4 fee were implemented to visit the parks that we support through taxes, the cost would prohibit me from having the annual picnic there or at nearby Burke Lake. The parks are for people to enjoy. Perhaps raising the fees for optional things would be better than to charge Fairfax County residents to enjoy their own parks!

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**From:** Patti Vegso [mailto:allofus@familyvegso.net]  
**Sent:** Mon 3/2/2009 10:42 AM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** fee changes

hello,

I am writing to let you know how I feel about the fee changes to the county's lakefront parks. I believe that this is completely unfair to county residents. One of the reasons we live in this county is to take advantage of all of the wonderful parks. I grow up in a much more rural area and I am constantly bringing my children to the parks to expose them to nature that they are not able to experience on a daily basis because we are living in a townhouse. My friends and I meet at Burke Lake every Sunday to walk its perimeter.

A once/year fee of a reasonable cost might be acceptable, but having residents of the county pay for each and every visit is an absolutely outrageous and unreasonable burden to put on the county's residents.

Thank you for listening.

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** Jeff Beima [mailto:jbeima@erols.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 02, 2009 3:35 PM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Park fees!

Please keep fairfax county parks available at no charge for all county residents.

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**From:** Cress Malkerson [mailto:mcmalk@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 03, 2009 3:12 PM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Rec Center fees for elderly

Fairfax County is a very expensive place to live for long time residents who retired in years prior to the rapid increases in incomes, house prices, assessments and property taxes. After paying \$5,000 to \$7,000 a year in property taxes on an older home purchased on a income which would today be considered poverty level, it is a hardship to pay the fees currently charged to use Rec Centers. Exercise is extremely important for the elderly. Those retired for many years have meager pensions by today's standards.

Why is it so important that we provide such a high quality free education to the children of residents earning \$150,000 to \$200,000 or even more per year, but insist that our elderly citizens, most of whom have incomes well below \$75,000 a year pay for every service. Why not permit elderly residents free access to Rec Centers for a few hours during the middle of weekdays when they are lightly used by the working and school going population? This should be considered even if it required a subsidy to the Park Authority by the Board of Supervisors.

Consider the larger picture. Every elderly family (they probably have not had school aged children for 20 or 30 years) who sells a home in Fairfax County because of expenses, probably sells to younger people who may have children. A young family with young children will be much more expensive for the County in term of education, parks and recreation costs for many years to come.

Please consider this.

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**From:** Vivian Morgan-Mendez [<mailto:vemmendez@sprintmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 03, 2009 1:31 PM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Public Information Officer/Fee Comment

Dear Park Authority,

We support the proposed fee increases, as well as other measures to keep park facilities operational.  
Thank you.

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**From:** GLENDA WILLIAMS [<mailto:glendak16@msn.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 03, 2009 9:11 AM  
**To:** Parkmail  
**Subject:** Proposed Fee Adjustments - FY 2009

Dear Sir or Madame:

I wish to comment about the proposed entrance fees to Burke Lake. I run this lake every weekend on Sat. and Sun. I propose that you sell a parking sticker instead of the new resident fee of \$4.00 that is proposed for passenger vehicles. Also, a sticker for non-residents that frequently use the park is appropriate - at a slightly higher fee than residents of the county.

If a user fee as you propose is enacted, then we will just park in the residential areas and 'run' into the park to avoid the fee. Or, we will carpool from a nearby location.

Also, why not have days during the year to have volunteers clean up the park? This worked in MN where I recently moved from.

We users of Burke Lake trails pick up branches, trash, etc. to assist in keeping the park up. But a high user fee does not seem fair to encourage the use of the park - especially when people are trying to save money and still enjoy exercise.

I hope you will take into account my ideas.

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