

Response to Questions on the FY 2005 Advertised Budget Plan

Request By: Supervisor DuBois

Question: The Department of Community and Recreation Services (DCRS) is proposing to charge fees for use of its athletic fields and facilities. For example, under the DCRS proposal, local youth soccer teams would pay a fee for use of County fields for games and practices. How would so-called “pick-up-game” usage of the fields be treated? For example, when local soccer fields are not being used by youth teams, they are often used for pick-up games played mainly by adults. Many of these fields are used by the same groups of adults on a regular basis. Moreover, adult use of these fields is likely contributing to field wear-and-tear as much or more than organized youth play. If these other users do not also pay fees (which may be impossible to collect), does this not create an inequity?

Response: Currently, DCRS schedules 100 percent of the time designated for community use to the various sports organizations (see the chart below). The sports organizations, in turn, schedule games and practices according to their own needs. If the sports organizations do not use all the time allocated, they are required to return those time slots so that DCRS staff can reallocate the periods to other organizations seeking additional space or waiting on lists to receive space. Sports organizations hold the permits and are ultimately responsible for scheduling practices or games during those permitted times. Generally, if pick-up games are occurring, then there is a likelihood that the sports organizations are not using the space that was allocated to them and are not returning the space for reallocation to “legitimate” organizations.

Availability of Field Space (100 percent of time is based on the following hours of operation)

Monday – Friday	4:30pm to dark	unlit field
Monday – Friday	4:30pm to close	lit field (closing times vary)
Saturday- Sunday	8am to dark	unlit field
Saturday- Sunday	8am to close	lit field (closing times vary)

DCRS employs 5 field monitors for 15 hours a week during field season (April – October). The primary purpose of Field Monitors is to enforce proper permit use. If fields are available for pick-up games, this availability would be a direct reflection of user groups not returning superfluous field space to be rescheduled.