



Response to Questions on the 2016 LOBs

Request By: Supervisor Cook

Relevant LOB(s): N/A

Question: Provide an update on the Park Authority naming rights issue.

Response:

The Naming Rights initiative is a pilot program and is proposed as part of the Fairfax County Park Authority Sponsorship Program. The Sponsorship Program proposal is based on a consultant study which was conducted on corporate sponsorships. The study results suggest that naming rights, signage and branding, hospitality, concessions and promotions are the key focus areas for a Sponsorship Program. In addition, the study found that Park assets can be attractive to sponsors based on the total volume of visitors or participants, the ability to concentrate a large group of people at a specific event (concerts, holiday events, tournaments), the ability to communicate directly with users through the Parktakes magazine, and the ability to target specific demographics at specialty areas (pools, golf courses, ice arenas, water mines).

The Sponsorship Program's potential revenue is unknown at this time. The program will take several years to establish and the range of revenues will vary greatly depending on which sponsorships are sought and achieved in the first years. Naming rights deals can be multi-faceted business partnerships and many sponsors are not content to simply have their names on the front of a building. Sponsorship asset packages will need to be developed and marketed to businesses and flexibility in negotiations will be important. Significant work will be required to achieve steady progress and success.

The Office of the County Attorney has completed their review of the Fairfax County Park Authority Sponsorship Program and has given the Park Authority comments to address in the final draft of the program proposal. The Park Authority Board will be presented with the proposed Sponsorship Program for approval in May 2016. At the same time, staff will provide an implementation strategy for the Program. After the Park Authority Board's approval of the program, the Park Authority will present the information to the Board of Supervisors. If approved, staff will advertise and fill the Sponsorship Manager position. The preliminary timing for the advertisement of the position is June 2016.