

Fairfax County Park Authority

LOB #346:

FACILITY RENTALS AND PERMITS

Purpose

This LOB facilitates access to parks for public or private uses in a manner that ensures the requested park use is compatible with the purpose of the park or facility, visitor safety and park regulations are followed, and the cost of service delivery is recovered.

Description

This LOB is comprised of a number of services that regulate and ensure equitable access to parks by individuals or groups that want to use park space and facilities to hold activities, programs, camps, or other events. Requests for park usage are managed via a centralized application and reservation process, and usage is granted via permits.

Picnic Rental Contracts – Includes reservations of 20 open picnic areas, 37 picnic shelters, and 4 amphitheaters, which were rented a total of 2,608 times in FY 2015. The reservations and permits are processed by one merit staff person (Central Services Coordinator), supported by one exempt-limited term staff.

Historic Property Rental Contracts – Includes rentals of nine historic sites for weddings, receptions, parties, and corporate and civic group meetings. The sites include Cabell's Mill, Clark House, Dranesville Tavern, Great Falls Grange, Forestville Schoolhouse, Hunter House, Stone Mansion, and Wakefield Chapel. This program is managed by one merit staff who manages the contracts, supported by two merit custodian positions who clean and maintain the sites, and various seasonal staff who staff the rental events as needed. These facilities were rented 166 times in FY 2015, some involving multiple-day contracts such as performing arts groups and a farmers market at Great Falls Grange, and they also were used to support a number of FCPA programs such as scout badges and staff meetings.

Park Use Permits – These permits (203 were issued in FY 2015) grant non-exclusive park usage rights to groups for a host of activities such as fun runs/walks, community fundraisers, sunrise religious services, high school cross country meets and practices, and many other events. The permit process is managed by one merit staff, the Central Services Coordinator, who coordinates review and approval of requests through the host-site managers. An approved Park Use permit requires payment of a \$25 processing fee.

Business Activity Licenses (BAL) – As per Park Authority policy, any revenue collected by groups using public parkland is subject to paying a portion of that revenue to the Park Authority – the current fee is \$50 or 15 percent of gross revenue, whichever is greater, though any facility rental fees paid by the group may be deducted from the calculation of gross revenue. Certain exemptions apply to certified charitable organizations. A total number of 305 Business Activity permits were issued in FY 2015. Some examples of the activities subject to fees include private outdoor fitness classes, fees from third parties for holding events in the parks, and food or merchandise sales conducted in conjunction with tournaments or events. The Business Activity Licenses are managed by the Central Services Coordinator.

Commercial Photography Permits – Similar to BAL above, this requires a permit fee of \$25 per year to be paid by any photographer conducting commercial business on parkland. In addition, the Park Authority regulates by means of a reservation system, large commercial photography group shoots at specific locations in high demand, thus protecting and preserving general public access to those sites. These permits are managed by the Central Services Coordinator.

Mobile Food Vending Permits – Permits food truck commercial operations in specified park locations in exchange for the greater of 15 percent of gross revenue or \$150 per month. There are ten parks designated for mobile food vending opportunities, with seven vendors contracted in FY 2015. These permits are managed currently by a seasonal staff person.

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Athletic Field and Court Rentals – Most FCPA athletic field usage by youth and adult sports leagues is administered by the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services (DNCS) and governed by the athletic field allocation policy. Other times are made available by the FCPA to user groups for rental fees set by the Park Authority Board. Tennis courts are rented by instructors teaching private lessons, public schools for practices and tournaments, and the general public when they need a specific time and date to play. These rental permits are managed by the Central Services Coordinator. In FY 2015, there were 59 athletic field tournament permits and 51 tennis tournament permits issued.

Benefits

The benefits of this LOB include the following:

- Provides opportunities for public engagement, community gatherings, and family outings at a variety of park facilities
- Regulates and ensures equitable access to parks by individuals or groups
- Offers one stop shopping for customers to obtain permits to use park facilities
- Provides calendar of availability of facilities on the public website
- Manages site rentals in compliance with space limitations and prevents overbooking

Mandates

This LOB complies with Park Authority's Regulation 1.02 Business Activities, Soliciting and Advertising.

Trends and Challenges

The main trends include increased demand and a growing inventory.

The major challenges that this LOB faces include: regulating use of facilities by businesses on public parkland, protecting the resources while allowing for their public use, and aging facilities.

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Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
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FUNDING			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$229,787	\$227,345	\$236,135
Benefits	103,091	104,073	97,582
Operating Expenses	78,140	65,834	52,776
Total Expenditures	\$411,018	\$397,252	\$386,493
Total Revenue	\$387,221	\$447,553	\$354,024
POSITIONS			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	5 / 5	5 / 5	5 / 5
Total Positions	5 / 5	5 / 5	5 / 5

Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
# of Picnic/Shelter/Amphitheater Rentals	2,197	2,400	2,608	2,660	2,713
# of Park Use and Business Activity License Permits Issued	551	503	508	510	515

This LOB promotes and manages facility reservations. As the inventory of facilities for rent continues to grow, so does the number of rentals. Rentals have increased from approximately 2,200 in 2013 to approximately 2,600 in 2015.

This LOB ensures compliance with the Park Authority's regulations related to business activity on public parkland. This LOB promotes education and compliance of this regulation within the community. Permits are applied for and issued to the public so use may be monitored for compliance.