



# FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



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

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

**VIA:** Jai Cole, Executive Director

**FROM:** Mike Peter, Division Director  
Business Administration Division

**DATE:** December 8, 2023

### *Agenda*

**Budget Committee  
(Committee of the Whole)  
Wednesday, December 13, 2023 – 5:50 pm  
Boardroom, Herrity Building  
Chairman: Ken Quincy  
Vice Chair: Tim Hackman**

1. Approval of Fee Adjustments to the Published Fee Schedule for 2024 (with presentation) – Action\*

\*Enclosures



If accommodations and/or alternative formats are needed, please call (703) 324-8563. TTY (703) 803-3354

## **ACTION – 1**

### Approval of Fee Adjustments to the Published Fee Schedule for 2024

#### ISSUE:

Approval of recommended fee adjustments to the Park Authority's published fee schedule for 2024.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

The Park Authority Executive Director recommends that the Park Authority Board approve all proposed fee adjustments as advertised.

#### TIMING:

Board action is requested on December 13, 2023, as fee changes take effect beginning January 1, 2024.

#### BACKGROUND:

Park Authority staff reviews fees annually to ensure the agency remains on target to meet financial goals established by the Park Authority Board. As a result of this year's review, a select number of fees were proposed for modification or addition.

On October 25, 2023, the Park Authority Board authorized public notification of the proposed fee adjustments and set the dates for a public comment period (See Attachment 1 for proposed fee adjustments.)

Public notification of the fee proposal and public comment meeting included a press release to news organizations, and advertisement of the fee proposal at staffed park sites and Park Authority headquarters and on the Park Authority's web site. Social media posts also announced the public comment period and meeting. Public comments were solicited during a 30-day comment period (which ran from October 30 through November 29, 2023) and at a virtual public comment meeting held on November 15, 2023.

Public comment on the 2024 fee proposal was limited. Three members of the public attended the virtual public comment meeting with three comments entered into the record. 11 additional written comments were received through email or mail during the 30-day comment period.

Board Agenda Item  
December 13, 2023

Public comment received was less specific on any individual proposed fee- the most common theme in comments was opposition to the overall fee package based on equity considerations and the Park Authority's fee-based structure. Additionally, concerns were raised relating to golf increases and senior fees.

2024 Fee Proposal Public Comment Summary	
# of Comments	Topic
6	Advocacy for a more equitable Park Authority system. Need for additional general fund support and opposition to the current fee-based structure.
3	Opposition to golf fee increases. Request for senior rates for golf courses.
1	Opposition to fee increases. Users need places to go to appreciate nature.
1	Use pricing approach for certain Golf and Rec Center fees to determine customer willingness to pay. Could use revenue to offset equity initiatives.
1	Opposition to fee increases. Continued tax increases and taxes charged by the County are significant. Recommend reductions to make services affordable.
1	Consider a reduced rate and additional classes for seniors.
1	FCCA should eliminate the expiration period altogether for the 25-Visit Fast Pass rather than implement change from two years to one year.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Proposed fee changes are projected to generate approximately \$1,037,528 in additional revenue in 2024.

ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:

Attachment 1: Proposed Fee Adjustments 2024

Attachment 2: Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024

STAFF:

Jai Cole, Executive Director

Sara Baldwin, Deputy Director/COO

Board Agenda Item  
December 13, 2023

Aimee L. Vosper, Deputy Director/CBD  
Ryan Carmen, Director, Golf Enterprises  
Laura Grape, Director, Resource Management Division  
Michael Peter, Director, Business Administration Division  
Cindy Walsh, Director, Park Services Division  
Josh Colman, Business Office Branch Manager, Business Administration Division

# Proposed Fee Adjustments

## 2024



**Fairfax County Park Authority**

# Contents

Organization of the 2024 Fee Proposal..... 3

Current Situation – System-wide Considerations ..... 3

Proposed Fee Adjustments:

Golf ..... 8

Rec Centers ..... 10

Water Mine ..... 14

Reservable Picnic Areas and Amphitheaters ..... 15

Resource Management Division ..... 16

Conditional Fees ..... 17

## **Organization of the 2024 Fee Proposal**

The 2024 Park Authority Fee Proposal begins with the Current Situation – System-wide Considerations, which describes the important factors in the Park Authority’s overall operating environment that influenced the composition of this year’s fee adjustment proposal. (Note that some data presented in this section is current as of August 2023, when this portion of the document was prepared.) This overview is followed by separate sections for each of the specific fee adjustments that are being proposed. Each of these sections briefly outlines important situational factors specific to that business area that influenced the development of the proposed fee adjustments. This is then followed by a summary of the fee adjustments proposed for that business area.

The Park Authority Board maintains oversight approval for approximately 500 facility use/rental fees in its Schedule of Rates, Fees and Other Charges. Although staff reviews the entire fee schedule annually, only new fees and/or those recommended for adjustment are included in the annual fee proposal. Fee adjustments resulting from review of the FCPA Fee Schedule are designated as Park Authority Board approved. Program and administrative fees are not included in this process. Those are designated by Policy 109 – User Fees as director-approved.

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

- Fees generated in the Park Authority’s Revenue and Operating Fund (ROF) pay for nearly all personnel expenses and operating costs at all Park Authority-operated golf courses and Rec Centers; at managed parks for fee-sustained facilities and program operations; and for rental facilities, programs, and store sales at nature centers, visitor centers, historic sites and other parks. Sustained revenue growth is essential to support the ROF and to offset increases in operating expenses. Income from fees must also pay back debt service associated with revenue bonds used to develop golf course facilities.
- Revenue growth is intended, by design, to come from multiple sources, including new facility improvements and expansions, program participation growth, new facility users, cost management and fee increases.
- As a matter of policy, the Park Authority prefers to adopt regular, gradual fee increases rather than infrequent, but larger increases that are more disruptive to its customers. As the Park Authority’s fee policy states “where feasible, comparatively small and regular fee increases are preferred over less frequent, larger increases.”
- Debt obligations for FY 2024 and FY 2025 are \$895,547 and \$935,243 respectively. Final payment for the Park Facilities Revenue Refunding Bonds; Series 2013 (Twin Lakes/Oak Marr) was made in FY 2021.

- The Park Authority's Park Revenue Funds Financial Management Annual Update identifies several significant near-term budgetary impacts, including the following:
  - Employee compensation – market rate adjustment and performance-based and longevity increases, minimum wage increases, competitive pay rate adjustments, and bonuses. The FY 2024 budget included a 5.44% market rate adjustment for all employees, in addition to fully funding performance-based and longevity increases. The Park Authority Revenue Fund is also significantly impacted by the Minimum Wage increases that continue in 2023 and 2024. In addition to the mandatory compensation increases, the Park Authority has had to make several increases to baseline pay rates, including offering signing and retention bonuses for difficult to fill summer positions (lifeguards and camp counselors) to remain competitive with the market. The estimated total for all increases is \$2.7 million in FY 2024.
  - Benefits. In FY 2023, key changes in benefit costs for the ROF included the following:
    - Overall benefits increased \$480,274 or 7.4% to \$6,976,601.
    - Retirement contributions increased \$264,079 or 11.1% to \$2,639,251.
    - Health care benefits for all ROF personnel increased \$187,817 or 8.7% to \$2,342,402.
    - Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) costs for ROF employees were transferred from the county to the Park Authority beginning in FY 2011. The OPEB charge to the ROF in FY 2023 was \$203,124 and is budgeted at \$193,930 in FY 2024.
  - Indirect costs. The county assesses the Park Authority annual charges for indirect costs for provision of legal, human resources and other centralized services. The indirect cost assessment for FY 2024 is \$820,000, unchanged from the prior year.
  - Cost recovery expectations. The impact of the COVID pandemic on the revenue fund in FY 2020 and FY 2021 was significant. Gradual facility/park re-openings and system-wide capacity constraints reduced revenue and net revenue in the ROF. Despite these constraints, stringent spending controls in conjunction with overwhelmingly positive revenue in golf and other outdoor activities, as well as a significant boosts in program revenue allowed the ROF to generate a positive net in FY 2022 and FY 2023. Coming out of the pandemic, the Park Authority's net revenue goals are focused on: 1) meeting the ROF financial obligations (the Park Authority needs to rebuild a 10% reserve for the ROF that was depleted during



COVID) and 2) reinvestment (the Park Authority deferred maintenance estimates total \$170 million, with \$30-\$40 million in Rec Centers alone).

General market conditions and Park Authority use/revenue trends that have also influenced the composition of the FY 2024 fee proposal are outlined below. Measures of the current condition of the local economy that are typically considered in the annual fee proposal include trends in the Washington region consumer price index, the Fairfax County unemployment rate and sales tax receipts for retail sales. The proposal also tracks consumer confidence in the economy by reporting recent trends in the national consumer confidence index developed by The Conference Board. One other measure of local retail activity has been included this year to gauge the progress of recovery from last year's economic downturn resulting from the pandemic. Location analytics firm Placer.ai tracks visits to brick-and-mortar retail locations compared to pre-pandemic levels based on anonymized cell phone location data. The presence of consumers in retail locations is a good proxy for sales and so is included in the retail sales section below.

Consumer price index (CPI). Annual growth in the Washington region CPI during the first half of 2023 was 3.5%. Current inflationary pressures are attributed to recovery from the pandemic-induced economic downturn and related supply chain shortages in some areas, as well as labor shortages in some sectors resulting in wage increases. Cumulative CPI growth in the Washington region over the past two years was 10.1%; three-year CPI growth was 14.1%.

Unemployment. Coming out of the pandemic with peak unemployment rates around 10%, local unemployment now remains low. Fairfax County's seasonally unadjusted unemployment rate for July 2023 was 2.3%, down from 2.6% the previous July. During 2023, the monthly unemployment rate has ranged from 2.1% to 2.7% and has averaged 2.4%. As is the typical pattern, current unemployment in Fairfax County is lower than at either the national or state level (3.8% and 2.7% respectively for July 2023). Within northern Virginia, Fairfax County unemployment remains about 'middle-of-the-pack' – higher than Arlington County (1.9%), comparable to Loudoun County (2.3%) and slightly lower than Prince William County (2.5%).

Retail sales. Fairfax County retail sales tax receipts are a barometer of the health of local consumer spending. Through May, total FY 2023 sales tax revenue increased 3.8% over the prior year. Sales tax receipts are up 0.9% through the month of FY 2024.

The consumer confidence index. The Conference Board's consumer confidence index (CCI) is a national measure of consumer optimism on the state of the economy and is viewed by economists as a leading indicator of the U.S. economy. While the monthly index can be volatile, the general long-term trend

since the Great Recession ended in 2009 had been one of gradually improving consumer confidence until the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Between February and April 2020, consumer confidence, as gauged by this measure, waned 35% (from an index of 132.6 down to 85.7). Significant recovery in consumer confidence began in March 2021 and continued through June when the CCI measured 128.9, less than three percent below the pre-pandemic level of February 2020. However, following the recovery in 2021, 2022 has seen a continued decline in CCI.

The Conference Board's assessment of the current trend through August 2023 notes that "consumer confidence fell in August 2023, erasing back-to-back increases in June and July. August's disappointing headline number reflected dips in both the current conditions and expectations indexes. Write-in responses showed that consumers were once again preoccupied with rising prices in general, and for groceries and gasoline in particular.

- Park Authority use/revenue trends.

Golf. The total number of golf rounds played at Park Authority courses in FY2023 increased 6% from the previous year and revenue increased by 14%. Driving range play slightly decreased by 4% from the previous year, but revenue was flat (-0.1%).

Overall FY2023 golf revenue increased by 9% from FY2022 with the biggest impacts in the following areas: rounds pass (23%), food and beverage (28%), and merchandise (28%).

Rec Centers. Both Rec Center attendance and revenue for FY2023 were up from the prior year. Rec Center revenue has increased by 17% while attendance has increased by 31% from FY22.

Rec Centers showed the biggest impacts in the following areas: memberships & passes (15%), food and beverage (15%), and programs (22%). Amusements are down (-22%) and equipment rentals are down (-31%).

Water Mine. Both revenue and attendance for the Water Mine were down for FY2023 from the prior year by -15%. Almost all categories suffered losses except for rentals, which increased by 76%. Biggest lost areas include food and beverage (-42%) and admissions (-18%).

Resource Management. RMD total revenue was up 12% from FY 2022 as revenue categories continue to recover and grow after COVID. Mainly, this is associated with increase in visitation to RMD sites by 5%. Overall, several categories experienced significant growth over FY 2022, including programs (32%), food & beverage (9%), rentals (6%), and resale (7%). For Lakefront Parks, overall revenue was similar to FY 2022 revenue, while all three parks saw increases in attendance by 6% over FY 2022.

## Proposed Golf Fee Adjustments

1. Greens Fees – Maximum- Staff recommends an increase to greens fees listed below in an attempt to continue to let demand dictate adjustments of fees during the year. Paired with the demand of golf staying constant, the costs of maintaining each course and facility steadily increasing due to inflation and to match course conditioning to each courses' competitive set, an increase in greens fees is deemed as necessary. The current rates shown are based on the previously approved fee increases that went into effect in early September, with limited complaints/impact on current customers. The proposed rates shown are maximums meaning there are a few courses that won't start at those rates but do plan on incrementally increasing dependent on consistent and forecasted demand, as well as the economic and course conditions.

	CURRENT FEE- Maximum Rate	PROPOSED FEE- Maximum Rate
Burke Lake Golf Course		
9 holes - Weekday	\$22.00	\$24.00
18 holes - Weekday	\$29.00	\$31.00
9 holes - Weekend	\$25.00	\$27.00
18 holes - Weekend	\$34.00	\$36.00
Jefferson District Golf Course		
9 holes - Weekday	\$27.00	\$29.00
9 holes - Weekend	\$32.00	\$34.00
Oak Marr Golf Course		
9 holes - Weekday	\$24.00	NO CHANGE
9 holes - Weekend	\$27.00	NO CHANGE
Pinecrest Golf Course		
9 holes - Weekday	\$25.00	\$29.00
9 holes - Weekend	\$30.00	\$34.00
Greendale Golf Course		
9 holes - Weekday	\$27.00	NO CHANGE
18 holes Weekday	\$40.00	\$42.00
9 holes - Weekend	\$33.00	NO CHANGE
18 holes - Weekend	\$49.00	\$51.00
Twin Lakes Golf Course		
9 holes - Weekday	\$34.00	\$36.00
18 holes - Weekday	\$51.00	\$53.00
9 holes - Weekend	\$41.00	\$43.00
18 holes - Weekend	\$65.00	\$67.00
Laurel Hill Golf Course		
18 holes - Weekday	\$89.00	\$95.00
18 holes - Weekend	\$119.00	\$129.00

2. Daily Driving Range Buckets – FCPA has been working through system updates to driving range operations- as part of this update, staff proposes the following adjustments to the daily driving range buckets. Staff recommends increasing the discount rates associated with larger purchases (120 and 160) to be in line with industry standards and recommend eliminating the 200 balls option. These adjustments are more in line with system parameters and industry standards.

	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
40 Balls	\$9.00	NO CHANGE
80 Balls	\$14.00	NO CHANGE
120 Balls	\$19.00	\$20.00
160 Balls	\$23.00	\$25.00
200 Balls	\$26.00	ELIMINATE

\*Daily driving range buckets expire at the end of the day of purchase.

3. Driving Range Pass Fees – Staff proposes to eliminate the driving range pass in conjunction with an overall change to the program.

	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Burke Lake, Oak Marr Golf Complex, Twin Lakes GC, Laurel Hill		
20-bucket pass	\$100	ELIMINATE
40-bucket pass	\$175	ELIMINATE

4. Driving Range Card – Staff recommends introducing a new option for 'loyalty' range sales, replacing the historical 20-bucket and 40-bucket passes (item #3). The 'Driving Range Card' will allow customers to load value onto their card and redeem buckets at a 35% discount off the regular pricing. It will also introduce significant customer convenience, eliminating the current requirement to visit the pro shop for each redemption.

CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
N/A	35% discount off bucket price with purchase of \$100 or more

5. Annual Memberships – Laurel Hill Golf Club. With the increase in greens fees in FY23 and the out of cycle increase in September of FY24, staff recommends an increase in the annual membership rates at Laurel Hill Golf club to stay in line with the increased greens fees and rounds played. The increase below represents a 4% increase- aligning with the previous increase in greens fees.

Annual Memberships – Laurel Hill Golf Club

	CURRENT	PROPOSED
Full Golf Membership - Individual	\$6,000	\$6,250
Weekday Golf Membership – Individual	\$4,500	\$4,750

## Proposed Rec Center Fee Adjustments

1. General Admission - All Rec Centers. Staff recommends the following adjustments to Rec Center General Admission. Though staffing and operational costs for Rec Centers have climbed significantly over the past several years, Rec Center prices have remained steady to gain back customers after COVID and bring in new customers. Admission prices have not been updated since 2017 for adults, 2012 for youths/seniors, and 2019 for family.

### General Admission - All Rec Centers

	CURRENT FEE		PROPOSED FEE	
	Base	Discount	Base	Discount
Adult (non-seniors 19+)	\$12.50	\$10.00	\$14.00	\$11.00
Youth/Student (5-18)	\$10.50	\$6.50	\$12.00	\$7.50
Child (0-4 with adult or senior admission)	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Senior	\$10.50	\$6.50	\$12.00	\$7.50
Family	\$39.00	\$25.00	\$43.00	\$27.50
County Programs	\$7.00	----	\$8.00	----

2. Weekend & Holiday Leisure Pool Admissions – Cub Run Rec Center. Staff recommends the following adjustments to Weekend & Holiday Leisure Pool Admission rate in line with the recommended increases for General Admission.

### Weekend & Holiday Leisure Pool Admissions – Cub Run Rec Center

	CURRENT FEE		PROPOSED FEE	
	Base	Discount	Base	Discount
Adult (non-seniors 19+)	\$14.50	\$12.00	\$16.00	\$13.50
Youth/Student (5-18)	\$12.50	\$8.50	\$14.00	\$9.50
Child (0-4 with adult or senior admission)	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Senior	\$12.50	\$8.50	\$14.00	\$9.50
Family	\$39.00	\$25.00	\$43.00	\$27.50

3. Discount Fast Pass (25 Admissions) – All Rec Centers. Staff recommends the following adjustments to Discount Fast Pass – 25 Admissions rate in line with the recommended increases for General Admission. Staff also recommend modifying the date of expiration from two years to one year.

Discount Fast Pass (25 Visits) – All Rec Centers

	CURRENT FEE		PROPOSED FEE	
	Base	Discount	Base	Discount
Adult (non-seniors 19+)	\$250	\$175	\$275	\$192.50
Youth/Student (5-18)	\$250	\$114	\$275	\$125.50
Senior (65+)	\$250	\$114	\$275	\$125.50
Fairfax County Employees	N/A	\$162	N/A	\$178

\*1-Year Expiration from Date of Purchase.

4. Rec Center Indoor Swimming Pool Base Rates. Staff recommends the following increases to the base rental rates. Base rental fees were last adjusted in 2023.

Rec Center Indoor Swimming Pool Base Rates

	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Swimming Lanes - 25 yd.	\$29	\$29.87
Swimming Lanes - 50 meter	\$57.22	\$58.94
Dive Well – 25 yd.	\$108.28	\$111.53
Dive Well - 50 meter	\$135.04	\$139.09
Entire Pool - 25 yd.	\$315.53	\$325.00
Entire Pool - 50 meter	\$543.14	\$559.43
Entire Pool - Leisure Pool (CRRC)	\$525.69	\$541.46



## Proposed Water Mine Fee Adjustments

1. Water Mine – Single Entry Admission and Group Admission Fees. Staff recommends the following adjustments to Water Mine daily admission and group admission fees to accommodate increased demand, operational costs, and staffing costs. These fees were last adjusted in 2023.

### Water Mine – Single Entry Admission and Group Rate

	CURRENT FEE		PROPOSED FEE	
	<u>Monday - Friday</u>	<u>Weekends/Holidays</u>	<u>Monday - Friday</u>	<u>Weekends/Holidays</u>
	<u>Admission Weekday</u>			
Over 48" Tall	\$16.50	\$17.50	\$16.75	\$17.75
Under 48" Tall	\$13.50	\$13.50	\$13.75	\$13.75
2 Years & Under	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Group Rate (20 or more)	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.50	\$12.50

2. Water Mine – Shade Structure, Funbrellas, & Picnic Area Reservations. Staff proposes the following reservation fees due to increased demand, increased operating, and increased staffing costs. These fees were last updated in 2023. Due to low interest in renting a ¼ section of picnic areas, staff propose they be removed from the fee schedule. Shoofly picnic area has only been rented in half sections for the past three years. Staff recommend introducing Shoofly A, B to price the sections appropriately based on capacity.

### Shade Structure Rental Fees – Water Mine

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
	Full-Day Rental	Half-Day Rental	Full-Day Rental	Half-Day Rental
	<u>Prime<sup>1</sup>/Non-Prime<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Prime/Non-Prime<sup>3</sup></u>	<u>Prime<sup>1</sup>/Non-Prime<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Prime/Non-Prime<sup>3</sup></u>
Ace-High Awnings	\$88/\$59	\$44	\$90/\$80	\$50/\$45
Bunkhouse Cabanas	\$105/\$77	\$66	\$120/\$100	\$75/67
Pete's Bungalow	\$122/\$94	\$77	\$140/\$120	\$90/80

Picnic Area Reservations – Water Mine

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
	Full-Day Rental	Half-Day Rental	Full-Day Rental	Half-Day Rental
	<u>Prime<sup>1</sup>/Non-Prime<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Prime/Non-Prime<sup>3</sup></u>	<u>Prime<sup>1</sup>/Non-Prime<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Prime/Non-Prime<sup>3</sup></u>
Big Auger	\$448/\$336	\$308/\$224	\$450/\$400	\$310/\$225
¼ Big Auger	\$140/—	\$84/\$66	Eliminate	Eliminate
Top Railer	\$448/\$336	\$308/\$224	\$450/\$400	\$310/\$225
¼ Top Railer	\$140/—	\$84/\$66	Eliminate	Eliminate
Shoofly	\$448/\$336	\$308/\$224	Eliminate	Eliminate
Shoofly A,B	----/----	----/----	\$310/\$300	\$185/\$150
¼ Shoofly	\$140/—	\$84/\$66	Eliminate	Eliminate

Funbrella Reservations – Water Mine

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
	Full-Day Rental	Half-Day Rental	Full-Day Rental	Half-Day Rental
	<u>Prime<sup>1</sup>/Non-Prime<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Prime/Non-Prime<sup>3</sup></u>	<u>Prime<sup>1</sup>/Non-Prime<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Prime/Non-Prime<sup>3</sup></u>
Per Funbrella	\$280/\$222	\$145/\$110	NC/NC	\$150/NC

<sup>1</sup>Prime is Weekends (Friday, Saturday & Sunday) and Holidays

<sup>2</sup>Non-Prime is Weekdays Monday through Thursday) excluding Holidays

<sup>3</sup>Half day reservations available: 1<sup>st</sup> three hours after open or last three hours prior to close.

NC- denote No Change.

## Proposed Picnic Fee Adjustments

1. Picnic reservation rental fees. Staff proposes the following adjustments to picnic reservation fees. The proposed fees are based on a combination of increased demand, market rate price and new areas that have been added. One new area at Lake Accotink Park has been identified to be added to the Picnic Department rental area. This allows for increased public utilization of the space and uniformity of processes for all rental spaces at Lake Accotink Park. This space had previously been coordinated through Lake Accotink Park staff and was used for birthday parties and programs.

Facilities	----- CURRENT FEE -----					----- PROPOSED FEE -----				
	Full-Day Rental		Half-Day Rental		2 Hour Time Slot	Full-Day Rental		Half-Day Rental		2 Hour Time Slot
	Prime	Non- Prime	Prime	Non- Prime		Prime	Non- Prime	Prime	Non- Prime	
Lake Accotink Canopy A, B	----	----	----	----	----	\$145	\$145	\$115	\$115	\$100

2. Amphitheater Rentals- Staff recommend increasing the rental rates at the locations listed below based off increased demand and growing costs due to higher maintenance and security requirements. This fee was last adjusted in 2023.

	Amphitheater Rentals			
	CURRENT FEE		PROPOSED FEE	
	<u>Hourly Prime</u>	<u>Hourly Non- Prime</u>	<u>Hourly Prime</u>	<u>Hourly Non- Prime</u>
Mason District	\$40	\$25	\$50	\$25
Franconia	\$40	\$25	\$50	\$25

## Proposed Resource Management Division Fee Adjustments

1. Amusements. Staff recommends adjusting the amusements fees based off increases in demand and operating costs. These fees were last increased in 2023.

	Amusements			
	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
	<u>Monday - Friday</u>	<u>Weekends/Holidays</u>	<u>Monday - Friday</u>	<u>Weekends/Holidays</u>
Train	\$4.50	\$5.50	\$5.00	\$6.00
Carousel	\$3.50	\$4.50	\$4.00	\$5.00

2. Commercial Photography Reservations Fee – Green Spring Gardens. Staff recommend establishing a Commercial Photography Reservation Fee for small groups at Green Spring Gardens and revising current fees to support the increases in administration necessary to meet the increase in demand at this popular site. Administrative photo shoot management costs by Green Spring Garden staff include phone calls, calendar management, photographer check-in, and rule enforcement. The existing fees for all other locations offering Commercial Photography Reservations remain unchanged and commercial photography permits will still be required for all group sizes.

Fee Type	Current Fee	Proposed Fee
Photo Session Reservation (1-11 people)	N/A	\$15/hour (2 hour minimum)
Photo Session Reservation (12-19 people)	\$25/hour (2 hour minimum)	\$30/hour (2 hour minimum)
Photo Session Reservation (20-74 people)	\$50/hour (2 hour minimum)	\$60/hour (2 hour minimum)

## Proposed Conditional Fee Adjustments

The Park Authority estimates the proposed package above to generate \$1,037,528 in new revenue for the Park Authority. Based off the guidance of the Park Authority Board, staff have identified additional fees recommended for adjustment **should external factors significantly increase the Park Authority's expenses beyond currently projected levels.**

The fees included in this section are reviewed and approved in line with the rest of the proposal package. However, these will only be implemented if identified by the Park Authority as necessary to react to external spending increases beyond the Park Authority's control. The fees that would be implemented are identified at each expense increase level below.

In the event conditional fees are identified to be triggered, Park Authority staff will brief the Park Authority Board on impacted fees. Conditional fees would go into effect at the beginning of the new fiscal year, July 1.

In the event conditional fee adjustments are needed, staff recommend an across-the-board increase to all fees included in the fee schedule.

<b>Expense Increase Level</b>	<b>Fee Adjustment</b>
\$1 Million	3.3% Increase All Fees
\$2 Million	6.7% Increase All Fees
\$3 Million	10% Increase All Fees

## Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024

**Name:** Renee Grebe

**Date:** 11/15/2023 7:16 PM

**Comment:** Hi there. I'm online. Is it? Can you guys hear me? Excellent. Thank you. Thank you. I'm Renee Grebe. I'm a Fairfax County resident, but I'm speaking to you tonight as the Northern Virginia Conservation Advocate for Nature Forward. We're formally the Audubon Naturalist Society. We are DC area's oldest independent environmental organization, and we advocate for the protection of open space for healthy communities, for people and nature and strong and equitable environmental policies. And, and good evening to the Park Authority Board members and staff. Thank you for your time tonight to be able to provide feedback for the past two years Nature Forward. And our partners have been advocating for a more equitable Fairfax County Park Authority and the reexamination of the current fee-based system on which FCPA currently runs. And I'm here tonight to continue to let you know that we support the FCPA board in asking the board of supervisors for additional long-term sustainable recurring funding. The general fund to achieve this goal and bring, bring this up because we also acknowledge that as both the FCPA board and staff have that FCPA is a business which is caught in an unsustainable and inequitable financial model that won't change until this mold is broken. As executive director Cole mentioned in the October FCPA board meeting and the donut charts that were shown at the beginning of this meeting tell a clear story of this change over time away from the general fund funding of FCPA over to a primary fee-based revenue raising fees won't break this mold. You know this and we know this, we appreciate that FCPA's equity report won't be presented until the end of January. And that this additional million dollars that the proposed increases in fees will raise is critical now to such an underfunded entity. And so while we cannot support the fee increases, we understand why they're being proposed. This funding problem is big and it can't be addressed in one year. And we just wanna continue to urge the FCPA board to act quickly after the equity study is presented, to be able to continue to request an increase in funding from the Board of supervisors this year, and then each or this coming financial year, and also in each subsequent year until F-C-A-F-C-P-A operations are funded in a way that avoids inadvertently excluding county residents from experiencing the benefits of our local park amenities. Thanks for your time.

## Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024

**Name:** Lydia Lawrence

**Date:** 11/15/2023 7:19 PM

**Comment:** Yes. Yes. Can you hear me? Hi. Yes. Thank you. My name is Lydia Lawrence. I'm a Janesville resident and chair of the Fairfax Parks Coalition. For two years, our coalition has aggressively advocated for and successfully advocated for increased funding for FCPA, for natural resource stewardship, and to become more equitable. Relying on fees for almost 70% of its bottom line has created a system of an equity across our county for SCPA, leaving out our county's most vulnerable residents and prioritizing fee-based enterprises over public services and natural resource stewardship. This, an equitable model can only be broken by breaking away from the dependences on fees. We understand that this can't change overnight, and we've been proud to partner in advocating for additional general fund support for FCPA. We also appreciate that the fees that have been proposed seem to be quite surgical in its precision in trying to address the short term budgetary issues while increasing fees as little as possible. With that said, we strongly urge FCPA to be aggressive in its general fund requests, especially with the equity study and the equity aspects to be released come January, so that we can further ourselves in the process of moving away from this reliance on seeds. Moreover, I urge each Park Authority Board member to please be assertive with your supervisor. Talk to them repeatedly. I hope to let them know how much of an issue this reliance on fees has created for every resident in Fairfax County and for the almost 24,000 acres that the Park Authority owns, so that we can move FCPA towards a more equitable model and to be an alliance with one Fairfax. Thank you.

## Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024

**Name:** Nandini Nadkarni

**Date:** 11/15/2023 7:22 PM

**Comment:** Hi, my name is Nini. I'm speaking for myself. I, I agree with both the previous scholars about over the lines on fees and the main objective of Park Authority as being the environmental steward and natural resource steward. But I have a, a, a little different, a little different thought about two of the departments of groups. It's the golf and maybe rec centers. I think originally when they were created, it was more for business and development reasons, and did the golf business doing for, well, I, I think there is still room to charge more fees and I would highly recommend ACPA to adopt a pricing approach using a data-driven assessment of consumer willingness to pay by testing price elasticity for each location. And I say this particularly for golf because the demand is still there. And from what I know, the price was increased earlier this year and the demand is still very strong, which tells me that customers are willing to pay. In addition, if you look at competition, some of the competition is charging more. So of course it probably varies by location and other aspects of golf course, but it would, it, it, it, it would be prudent to look at some of your data to figure out if there is possibility to increase the fees. An additional point about golfers, at least 40 to 50% of golfers have a hundred thousand or more household incomes. They're talking about a wealthy group of people. Some of the rec centers and golf courses are in neighborhoods that are considered the most wealthiest in the country. And people normally don't drive a lot to go to these facilities, which tells me that people with a higher income are coming to the golf courses and rec centers. So that, so to fit the, the equity initiative, I would highly recommend that you maybe review the golf and some of the rec center fees that can offset some of the equity initiative for CAMS and rec that has been discussed this year. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak with you. Thanks.



## Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024

**Name:** N/A

**Date:** 10/27/2023 4:24 PM

**Comment:** Please do not raise any park fees. Nature provides a way to reduce stress and emotional turmoil - and be healthier. We all suffer from stressful lives - we need places that we can affordable go to appreciate the goodness of our earth - Fairfax can find money for any needs that need to be looked at for price hikes. Stop wasting money on issues that don't generate any benefit.

## Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024

**Name:** James Warrick

**Date:** 10/31/2023 7:22 AM

**Comment:** I am very disappointed that the County is yet again increasing the costs for golfers in 2024.

The past few years have seen the costs for greens fees, golf carts and range balls increased exponentially, to the extent that, even at senior rates, golf is becoming unaffordable for many of the County's senior citizens. At least you do not appear to be increasing existing senior rates for next year. Thank you for that.

However, I strongly urge you to institute daily rates for senior golfers at Laurel Hill. That course alone among all of the Fairfax County courses has NO SENIOR DAILY RATE. Fairfax County should not make Laurel Hill a course unaffordable by the vast majority of senior golfers. That is discriminatory.

I realize that costs are increasing for everyone, but I believe it is in the interest of the game of golf to keep costs affordable for seniors and juniors, along with those who have limited financial resources. Why should golf become a sport only affordable by the wealthiest among the citizens of Fairfax County, and NOT affordable by the lower income citizens of our county? Again, that is discriminatory.

## **Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024**

**Name:** Marianna Cardozo

**Date:** 11/1/2023 8:57 PM

**Comment:** It is strange and distressing to me that FCPA would consider raising fees while simultaneously not offering income-based fee reductions for community members in need. This already flies in the face of equity principles, and raising rates would further create access gaps for community members who would be from park services.

## **Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024**

**Name:** N/A

**Date:** 11/12/2023 1:56 PM

**Comment:** Please consider a reduced rate, and additional classes, for seniors.

## **Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024**

**Name:** Matt O'Brien

**Date:** 11/13/2023 9:10 AM

**Comment:** Recenter Feedback: 25-Visit Fast Pass -- The staff has recommended changing the expiry for these passes, which are paid in advance to Fairfax County, from 2 years to 1 year. This change increases the likelihood that these passes will expire before users have an opportunity to use them. Rather than an expiry period, Fairfax County should consider USPS' approach and market the "Forever Fast Pass" that does not expire. This feature would likely lead to more sales of the 25-visit Fast Pass (with revenue paid in advance), while users would have the peace of mind that their passes don't expire (expired passes frustrate users who paid for them in advance).

## Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024

**Name:** N/A

**Date:** 11/14/2023 6:32 PM

**Comment:** Golf fees. The document with proposed fees is unclear whether there will be senior rates. Also it is unclear what the fee is for a walker. I heard they were eliminating the "walker" rate. That would be a shame since the county should be encouraging healthy exercise such as walking.

## Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024

**Name:** Elaine Kolish

**Date:** 11/15/2023 8:29 AM

**Comment:** I'm here writing to let you know that I support the FCPA Board in asking the Board of Supervisors for additional, long-term sustainable, recurring funding from the General Fund to achieve more equitable access to FCPA resources.

I acknowledge, as you and FCPA staff have, that FCPA is a business which is caught up in an unsustainable and inequitable financial model and that won't change until this mold is broken (as Executive Director Cole mentioned in the Oct FCPA Board meeting). Raising fees won't break this pattern. I appreciate that FCPA's equity report won't be being presented until January 30th and that the additional \$1MM dollars that these proposed increases will raise is critical now to such an underfunded entity. I urge you to act quickly after the equity study is presented to continue to request an increase in funding from the Board of Supervisors, this year, and then each subsequent year, until FCPA operations are funded in a way that avoids inadvertently excluding county residents from experiencing the benefits of our local park amenities. Thank you.

## **Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024**

**Name:** John Dowling

**Date:** 11/16/2023 10:52 AM

**Comment:** Further increases in golf greens fees is going to continue to drive golfers toward private options where pace of play and conditions are better. In particular Twin Lakes fees have gotten too high, no further increases should be planned.



## Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024

**Name:** Renee Grebe

**Date:** 11/16/2023 3:27 PM

**Comment:** Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments on the proposed FCPA fee increases. I provided call-in testimony on 11/15/23, but wanted to provide those comments in writing for the record as well.

I am writing today on behalf of Nature Forward (formerly the Audubon Naturalist Society), the DC area's oldest independent environmental organization. We advocate for the protection of open space, healthy communities for people and nature, and strong and equitable environmental policies.

For the past two years, Nature Forward and our partners have been advocating for a more equitable Fairfax County Park Authority and the re-examination of the current fee-based system on which FCPA currently runs. I'm here tonight to continue to let you know that we support the FCPA Board in asking the Board of Supervisors for additional, long-term sustainable, recurring funding from the General Fund to achieve this goal.

We also acknowledge, as both the FCPA Board and staff have, that FCPA is a business which is caught up in an unsustainable and inequitable financial model and that won't change until this mold is broken (as Executive Director Cole mentioned in the October FCPA Board meeting). The donut charts shown at the beginning of the public hearing on 11/15/23 tell a clear story of this change over time, away from the General Funds and over to primarily fee-based revenue.

Raising fees won't break this mold. You know this. We know this.

We appreciate that FCPA's equity report won't be being presented until January 30th and that the additional \$1MM dollars that these proposed increases will raise is critical now to such an underfunded entity.

While we cannot support the fee increases, we understand why they are being proposed. This funding problem is big and can't be addressed in one year. We urge the FCPA Board to act quickly after the equity study is presented to continue to request an increase in funding from the Board of Supervisors, this year, and then each subsequent year, until FCPA operations are funded in a way that avoids inadvertently excluding county residents from experiencing the benefits of our local park amenities.

Renee Grebe | [renee.grebe@natureforward.org](mailto:renee.grebe@natureforward.org)

Northern Virginia Conservation Advocate

Nature Forward

## Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024

**Name:** Andy Ward

**Date:** 11/19/2023 4:34 PM

**Comment:** Continuing tax increases, excise, property, as examples, hit us hard. The list of taxes charged by the County is almost endless, i.e. 1% on food, is absurd. as we all need to eat. House taxes, gas taxes, highway tolls, excise tax, fees are added to everything we do to live our daily lives. Even our DOG needs to pay a fee for a license, or of coarse, his/her owner. WHEN DOES IT END? Find the money elsewhere and for a change, give the taxpayers a BREAK. The living wage for VA for a single person w/o child is \$19.04. Do you really think an increase is fair? It is NOT. Many young people need to get out and mingle, yet they CAN'T and WON'T with your HIGH prices. Take REDUCTION action for a change. This is provide not only physical health benefits but mental health as well. You are tone deaf, and likely do not read about the state of mental health of our youth and young adults. MAKE IT AFFORDABLE.

## Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024

**Name:** Ting Waymouth

**Date:** 11/22/2023 9:04 AM

**Comment:** When my family and I moved to Virginia in 2021, we bought a house right next to a path leading into Hidden Pond, one of Fairfax County's many wonderful parks. The trails in the woods behind our house were our favorite thing about our new home. We consider ourselves tremendously lucky to be able to walk into our park just a few feet from our door, and we take advantage of it every single day. My children, ages 3 and 6, are privileged enough to be able to explore nature just beyond our backyard, to be able to walk to a playground and a nature center. We have the funds to be able to sign my older daughter up for summer camp programs through the FCPA as well.

Unfortunately, not everyone is as privileged as we are to be able to access beautiful parkland and afford educational programming within walking distance of their homes. On average, wealthier and whiter neighborhoods like mine have much more access to green space than communities of color and poorer communities. Increasing county funding for parks will help transition to a more equitable model of funding where all Fairfax County residents have equal access to high-quality parks and recreational services. Additional funding for staff and for increased ecological stewardship is so important if we want to provide equitable access and educate a new generation of Fairfax residents who care for the earth and its many inhabitants (flora and fauna).

For the past two years, I have been part of advocating for a more equitable Fairfax County Park Authority and the re-examination of the current fee-based system on which FCPA currently runs. I'm writing today in support the FCPA Board in asking the Board of Supervisors for additional, long-term sustainable, recurring funding from the General Fund to achieve this goal.

I understand that FCPA's equity report won't be presented until January 30th and that the additional \$1MM dollars that these proposed increases will raise is critical now to such an underfunded entity. While I cannot support the fee increases due to equity concerns, I understand why they are being proposed. This funding problem is big and can't be addressed in one year. I urge you to act quickly after the equity study is presented to continue to request an increase in funding from the Board of Supervisors, this year, and then each subsequent year, until FCPA operations are funded in a way that avoids inadvertently excluding county residents from experiencing the benefits of our wonderful local parks.

## Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for 2024

**Name:** Andrew P

**Date:** 11/22/2023 9:42 AM

**Comment:** For two long years now, supporters and users of Fairfax Parks have passionately advocated for a more just and equitable Fairfax County Park Authority. We believe at our core that the current fee-based system is fundamentally unfair and exclusionary. I am writing to express my full support for the FCPA Board's plea to the Board of Supervisors for substantial, recurring funding to make our parks accessible to all.

We recognize, as you and the dedicated FCPA staff do, that the current model is broken. It traps this community resources in an endless cycle of rising fees that squeeze out the very families who need these public spaces the most. This cannot continue. Frankly, it is an outrage this policy has been able to continue when there are several other known avenues to take to generate the revenue that has been gained from these fees.

While the January equity report was an important step, we cannot delay in addressing this funding crisis. The proposed fee increases may provide a temporary fix (emphasis on temporary) but we implore you - act decisively when the report findings are presented. Request urgently needed funding from the Board of Supervisors this year, and every year after, until FCPA is funded in a way that opens our parks to all families in this community.

The time is now for bold leadership and a new vision. Together, we can build a Fairfax County Park system that is truly equitable and accessible. But we need you to take the first step.



APPROVAL OF FEE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE  
PUBLISHED FEE SCHEDULE FOR 2024

12/13/23

## KEY DATES

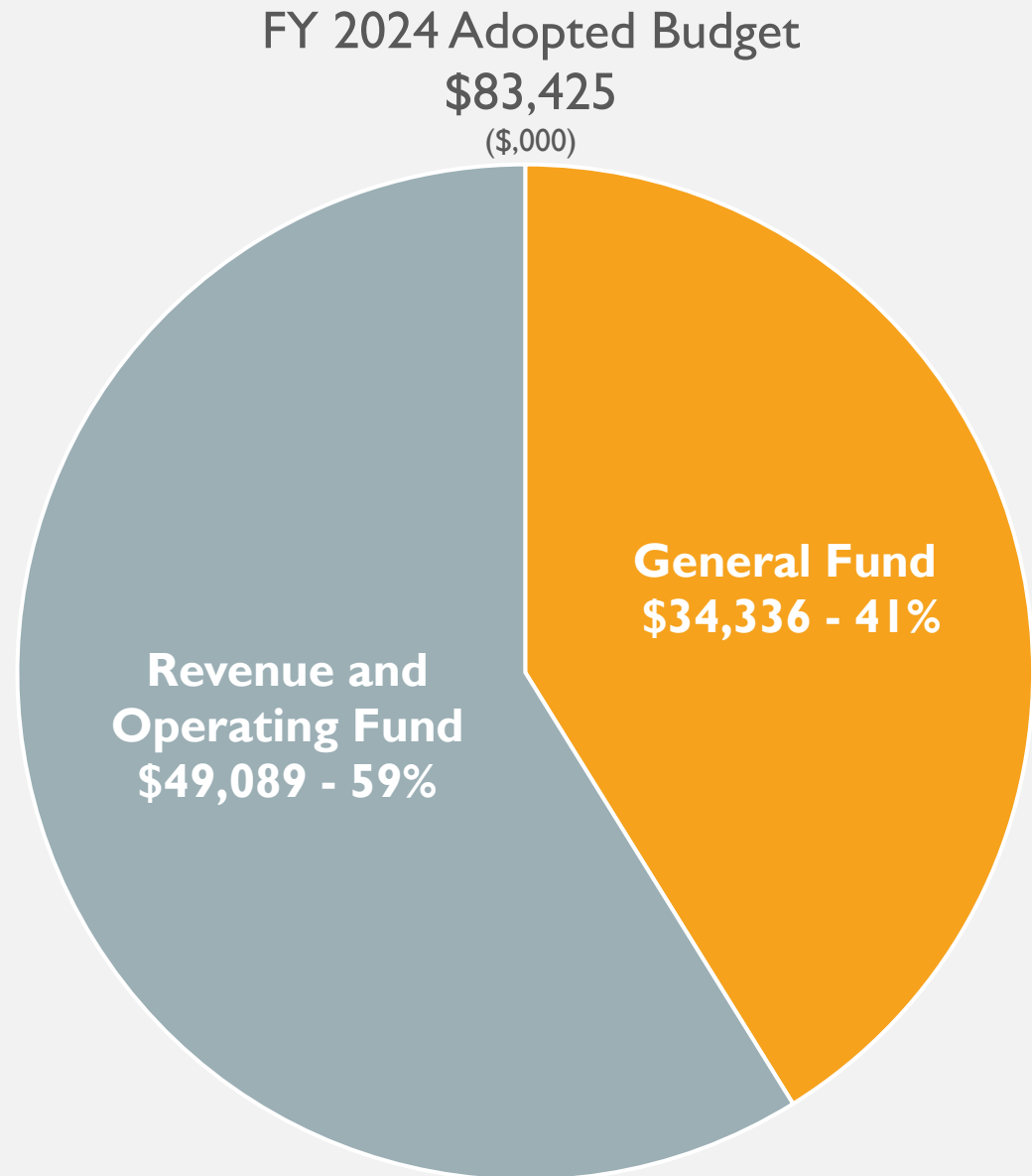
FY 2023 Fee Review Calendar	
Action	Date
Board action to authorize advertisement of fee proposal and set date of public comment meeting	10/25/23
30-day public comment period	10/30/23 – 11/29/23
Virtual public comment meeting	11/15/23
<b>Board action to approve proposed fee adjustments</b>	<b>12/13/23</b>
Fee adjustments take effect	1/1/24

**PUBLIC  
COMMENT  
FEEDBACK**

2024 Fee Proposal Public Comment Summary	
# of Comments	Topic
6	Advocacy for a more equitable Park Authority system. Need for additional general fund support and opposition to the current fee-based structure.
3	Opposition to golf fee increases. Request for senior rates for golf courses.
1	Opposition to fee increases. Users need places to go to appreciate nature.
1	Use pricing approach for certain Golf and Rec Center fees to determine customer willingness to pay. Could use revenue to offset equity initiatives.
1	Opposition to fee increases. Continued tax increases and taxes charged by the County are significant. Recommend reductions to make services affordable.
1	Consider a reduced rate and additional classes for seniors.
1	FCCA should eliminate the expiration period altogether for the 25-Visit Fast Pass rather than implement change from two years to one year.

## PARK AUTHORITY OPERATING FUNDING

- The Park Authority Revenue and Operating Fund makes up ~60% of the overall agency operating budget.
- Revenue and Operating Fund is required to recover all associated costs and financial obligations (100% or greater cost recovery).
- User fees are the primary funding mechanism for the Revenue and Operating Fund.





## BOARD ACTION- 12/13/23

- Park Authority Executive Director recommends that the Park Authority Board approve all proposed fee adjustments as advertised.
- Board Action is requested on 12/13/23, as fee changes take effect beginning 1/1/24.