



MEMO

Engineering Department

To: Health and Recreation Committee
From: John Neumeier, Director of Public Works/City Engineer
Date: 12/16/2024
Re: Requested contributions from clubs for use of city fields and facilities

Background information:

The city is fortunate to be able to partner with many youth groups that provide recreational opportunities outside of our offerings, including but not limited to Kaukauna Youth Baseball, Kaukauna Ghost Fastpitch, Kaukauna Raiders Football, River Surge Soccer Club amongst others. The city owns and maintains several parks with athletic fields that allow these groups and Kaukauna Recreation programs to succeed. Staff has been reviewing the costs and communication elements of these partnerships and we have met with each group and let them know our intention to request certain contributions and changes in communication.

City staff is requesting financial or in-kind contributions to help reimburse the expenses incurred to prepare and maintain facilities and fields for game play. Staff is recommending requesting contributions each fall based on the previous year expenses incurred. We are also asking that when a rentable park/pavilion facility is occupied due to tournament/field use, that the club will also reserve and pay for the rental fees of said park. It should be noted that clubs already do make valuable financial and in-kind contributions to the City and additions/improvements to our parks and those contributions could be used to offset the ask each fall.

Club communication with city staff can also help reduce costs and reduce excessive staff time preparing fields. City will be requesting clubs use an online system to reserve fields and indicate the intended use (game or practice) to automate and document how the parks department will schedule staff each day; a small fee is proposed. Finally, we are requesting clubs to take out a special events application for each facility they will use each year. This will help communicate when tournaments, league games, and other events may be occurring within the City and the clubs would be asked to provide a certificate of insurance to cover these events.

Strategic Plan:

The improvements and policies being discussed will help us work toward a goal of improving quality of life, increasing park usage, and will help work toward being a community of choice. The changes will also help show financial responsibility to City taxpayers.

Budget:

We anticipate being able to complete more park improvements with either additional financial contributions, or with in-kind projects, without increasing parks budgets to cover the same.

Staff Recommended Action:

Direct staff to request financial contributions based on each club's field/facility use and actual expenses incurred, approve communication policy changes as discussed, and work with clubs to develop a memorandum of agreement to better define roles and responsibilities moving forward.