
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

Parks & Recreation Department

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Parks and Recreation Commission

Staff Report

January 21, 2021

Recreation Reset / Recovery Planning Workshop

- Exhibit 1 - Recreation Reset-Immediate Action Plan (*Staff Report Jan. 7*)
 - Exhibit 2 - Recreation Reset-Immediate Action Plan (*Presentation Jan. 7*)
 - Exhibit 3 - Preparation Activity for January 21 Workshop
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To: Parks & Recreation Commission

From: Ryan Daly; Operations Transition Team Manager

Date: January 14, 2021

BACKGROUND

Throughout 2020, the COVID-19 global pandemic impacted the Parks & Recreation Department. Operational restrictions from COVID-19 placed on services, rentals and programming led to a projected (and realized) decline in earned revenues. This required the suspension of most Recreation Division operations and led to the elimination of several staffing positions within the Department.

City Leadership recognized the importance of recreation programs and services to the Mercer Island Community's quality of life and began planning for restoration. In late October, a staff team facilitated by consultant Emily Moon started work on a "reset" plan for the City's recreational programs and services, including the Mercer Island Community and Event Center (MICEC). This work was to include a review of past offerings and policies, establish future needs, and implement a cost recovery model for ongoing financial sustainability.

At the January 7 Parks & Recreation Commission (PRC) Meeting, commissioners received a Staff Report: Recreation Reset-Immediate Action Plan (see Exhibit 1) and were initially engaged in this "reset" process. Consultant Emily Moon provided a presentation (see Exhibit 2) highlighting

the unique opportunity the PRC has to recognize financial realities and reestablish the Recreation Division within a sustainable model.

The PRC's role in this recovery/reset planning process will be to receive community input, discuss and deliberate, focus on policy level decision making, and provide advice and recommendations to the City Council. This work will guide future Department efforts and establish ways to meet the recreational program, facility, and service needs of the Community.

Prior to the January 21 PRC Workshop, commissioners were provided a memo, Preparation Activity for January 21 Workshop (see Exhibit 3), which contained instructions for an assignment to be completed individually prior to the meeting. In tandem, the PRC was provided the P&R Commission Cost Recovery Pyramid Assignment to facilitate response. Results of the exercise will be placed in a matrix for review at the workshop. This individual exercise was designed to inform the conversation regarding resource allocation and cost recovery.

MEETING OVERVIEW

The PRC will engage in conversations about the development of a cost recovery model, discuss preferred outcomes for the Recreation Recovery/Reset Plan, discuss goals for the overall Recreation Division, and begin to identify cost recovery targets and pricing strategies.

Commissioners will contemplate who benefits from various recreational services – the community in general, or the individual or the group receiving the service. That progression will inform a process of establishing various tiers of cost recovery which could then be associated with a degree of benefit. Through the meeting associated presentation, the PRC will receive the City's past (2019) funding sources for recreation and MICEC services and how those correlate with national trends, as well as examples of other cities' cost recovery targets. This presentation will be added to the Commission Packet following the meeting.