

★ **Roll Call Number**

Agenda Item Number

46

January 24, 2011

Date

Communication from the Chair of the Park and Recreation Board regarding 2011 financial assistance program for various Park and Recreation Department programs and facilities.

MOVED by _____ to receive and file.

Approved as to Form:

Ann DiDonato
 Ann DiDonato
 Assistant City Attorney

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
COLEMAN				
GRIESS				
HENSLEY				
MAHAFFEY				
MEYER				
MOORE				
TOTAL				
MOTION CARRIED		APPROVED		
_____ Mayor				

CERTIFICATE

I, DIANE RAUH, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

_____ City Clerk



January 24, 2011

Honorable Mayor
And
Members of the City Council

RE: Financial assistance program

Dear Mayor and City Council Members:

Des Moines Parks and Recreation has a variety of programs and facilities that have a tremendous impact on the quality of life in Des Moines. Every citizen in Greater Des Moines deserves the opportunity to participate in these programs and facilities regardless of their ability to pay.

On May 4, 2009, by Roll Call Number 09-799, the Des Moines City Council approved a reduced fee program for various Park and Recreation Department facilities and programs. This program expanded beyond income verification to self-declare hardship since many people had recently lost their jobs. The expanded program provided for a 50% reduction in fees to families residing in Des Moines who experienced a loss of employment, reduction of work hours, or a reduction of their wages. Applicants that self-declared any of these adverse affects of their income were issued a Fun Pass.

In 2010, the Park and Recreation Department continued to offer the Fun Pass for those in need of financial assistance. The previous Fun Pass program was expanded with an additional tier of benefits and this program was titled "Experience Greater Des Moines." The Experience Greater Des Moines offered those who had their income verified at or below 200% of poverty guidelines the opportunity to participate in Park and Recreation programs and also participation in programs of agency partners such as the Science Center of Iowa, Des Moines Art Center, and A.H. Blank Park Zoo.

Patrons participating in the financial assistance program were issued one of two cards. If a resident's income was verified, the applicant received an Experience Greater Des Moines card. If resident's income was not verified, a Fun Pass card was issued.

The 2011 proposed financial assistance plan consists of participants self-declaring their income at approximately 225% of poverty level and eliminating the Fun Pass.

House Hold Size	Income guidelines of 225% of poverty
1	\$ 24,000
2	\$ 32,000
3	\$ 41,000
4	\$ 49,000
5	\$ 58,000
6	\$ 66,000

Participants who self-declare at a level of 225% of the income guidelines will be eligible to receive:

- Fifty percent (50%) off the following recreation activities and facilities: The First Tee of Greater Des Moines golf lessons, tennis lessons, boat and bike rentals at Grays Lake, pee wee basketball and soccer, youth basketball individual registration, tae-kwon-do, father/daughter dance and park shelters
- Seventy-five percent (75%) off a season swim pass*
- Swim lessons for \$5.00/person for each session of swim lessons*
- Non-profit agencies will use the same guidelines and receive the same percentage off when registering for recreation programs and facilities

* Swimming is a critical need in the community and a lifelong skill necessary to prevent drownings. Swim lessons and season swim passes are reduced by 75% (instead of 50%) to strongly encourage participation in an effort to prevent drownings.

The fiscal impact of the program is estimated to be \$10,000-\$15,000. Partial funding of \$10,500 has been secured from the Friends of Des Moines Parks. Any remaining funds would be subsidized through the Department's operating budget as a loss in revenue.

The members of the Park and Recreation Board are proud to work with a Department committed to meeting the needs of all citizens in Des Moines. The Board appreciates City Council's support of the financial assistance program over the years

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph Galloway
Parks and Recreation Board Chair