

CITY OF ALBANY
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Agenda date: September 8, 2011

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission
FROM: Penelope Leach, Recreation and Community Services Director
SUBJECT: Recreation and Community Services Budget Changes FY 2011/2012

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Information only

BACKGROUND

“At its meeting of June 21, 2010, the City Council adopted a budget for fiscal year 2011-2012 that projected an operating deficit of \$302,296. At that time, the Council directed staff to prepare a revision of the budget that was balanced, prior to the beginning of the fiscal year 2011-2012.

On April 19, 2011, staff presented data and information on the City’s fiscal position, and conducted round table discussions to elicit ideas for changes that would lead to reduced expenses or increased revenues. These suggestions, along with others offered by employees, contributed to recommend budget balancing strategies for a balanced budget for 2011-2012.

On May 16, 2011 the City Council reviewed the 2011-12 budget balancing recommendations from staff, took public testimony, and provided staff with direction for final budget preparation.”
(Staff report, item 7-2, June 20, 2011, Albany City Council meeting.)

As part of the adopted budget there were modifications made to the following programs/divisions of the Recreation and Community Services Department: (1) the Senior Center’s Congregate Meal Program; (2) the Cable Division; and (3) Teen Services.

Due to the combination of financial support from the Council and the Friends of Albany Seniors and a reduction in kitchen staff hours, the Congregate Meal Program will continue five days per week. Council Discretionary funds were unanimously voted towards keeping the meal program five days per week. Additionally, the Friends of Albany Seniors redirected extra funds to support the meal program as well as assist staff with finding two committed volunteers each day to assist kitchen staff with meal preparation, serving, and cleaning; therefore, reducing part-time staff hours. Staff will continue to provide administrative support relevant to the Older Americans Act grant, oversee the dinner program, staff and volunteers on a daily basis, filling in when needed, oversee maintenance of the kitchen and equipment, and provide training. Friends

of Albany Seniors will continue to sponsor birthday dinners the second Thursday of every month and a number of other special events throughout the year such as Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving and December holidays.

Modifications to the Teen and Cable divisions included a reorganization of Cable staff and reorganization of the programs offered at the Teen Center. For the past four years the City's Cable division had a $\frac{3}{4}$ full-time position as well as a portion of a full-time supervisor position. The full-time supervisor who oversees the Cable division is also the Teen Services supervisor, Jeremy Allen. Jeremy also works with the City's IT division to offer IT support on an as needed bases. By reorganizing how the city provides Teen Services at the same time as reorganizing the Cable division, the City has decreased costs by approximately \$93,000 per year.

Costs decreased by the elimination of a $\frac{3}{4}$ time position in the Cable division and a decrease in part-time staff in Teen Services. Thus far, Jeremy Allen has been able to take over the Cable division without a disruption in services or how the Cable division operates. There remains in the Cable Services budget \$8,000 for part-time and/or contract services to assist with special events and events that need services provided by the Cable division when Jeremy is unavailable. Having Jeremy allot more of his time to the Cable division was possible by reorganizing the City's Teen Services.

Like many cities Teens Services are one of the least cost recovery divisions in a recreation department. This holds true for the City of Albany as Teen Services were 23-25% cost recovery as the number of participants using the City's Teen Services did not support costs. An average of 23 teens participated in the after school program daily. Approximately 5 of those 23 left the program by 4:00pm, approximately 9 participants left by 5pm, and the remaining 9 participants left between 5-6pm each day. There were a total of 31 registered for the 2010/2011 school year; however, not all registrants participated every day. Of the 31 registered most were sixth and seventh graders.

Staff worked with local teen service providers such as the Albany Y and the Albany School District to discuss how partnering could continue the level of teen services for Albany youth and at the same time be more cost effective and decrease redundant services. The City, the Albany Y, and the School District identified three major areas of services for teens: (1) after school care; (2) enrichment programs; and (3) homework/academic support. As a result of working together, the City has turned the Albany Teen Center into an after school enrichment facility offering a number of classes specifically for teens. Jeremy Allen will be giving a presentation on the enrichment program which started this September. The Y is the primary provider for after school care, and the School District is the primary provider for after school homework/academic support. Jeremy will also provide more details about the programs happening at the Y and Albany Middle School. Additionally, \$8,000 of the Teen Services budget remains so that the City can continue to offer Teen Nights once per month. Teen Nights are also being considered as a partnering opportunity with the Y in an effort to offer more than one per month.

By converting the Teen Center into an after school enrichment program, the instructor teaching the enrichment class receives a percentage of those enrolled in the class, thus there is no need for after school part-time staff. The typical breakdown is 60% for the instructor and 40% for the City. The administration of the enrichment program is handled by the City's current Recreation staff, thus, decreasing part-time staff hours at the Teen Center as well as increasing Jeremy's time with the Cable division. However, Jeremy is responsible for creating the enrichment program and continues as the staff liaison to the School District and the Albany Y to ensure the City is taking advantage of all possible partnerships as well as keeping the enrichment program relevant.

To further streamline operations and decrease ongoing costs, the Recreation & Community Services Department will be installing a new software system for class registrations and facility reservations. The new system will save approximately \$5,000 per year in maintenance costs. The most significant change with the new system will be in online registration. The current system requires a fee of 6% per transaction which the participant pays. There is no additional charge for online registration with the new system. The December Activity Guide will highlight the new software and encourage more online registration. Recreation staff receive complaints weekly about the high transaction cost of the current online registration and are confident that once the new system is in place more participants will register online.