



Item No. 22 Town of Atherton

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT – REGULAR AGENDA

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MICHAEL KASHIWAGI, COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

DATE: MARCH 19, 2014

SUBJECT: REINSTATEMENT OF DAY USE PERMITS AT HOLBROOK-PALMER PARK

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the reinstatement of Day Use Permits at Holbrook-Palmer Park.

BACKGROUND

Prior to January, 2012, gatherings at the park of groups between 10 and 49 people were required to purchase a day use permit. This permit provided the permittees with a guaranteed picnic location to hold their gathering. It allowed Park Staff awareness and some control on how many people were allowed for park use on any given day. This was an important tool with weekend events. As an example, if there was a large wedding planned for the day and someone came in and requested a picnic area for a large group, it might be denied based on the number of wedding guests to mitigate interference with the larger event.

In 2011, staffing levels were reduced and in 2012, permitted events at the Park were cancelled. Without staff to enforce the Day Use requirements at the Park, permits could no longer be issued. When permitted events returned to the Park, albeit on a limited basis, there was still no dedicated staff on the weekends to enforce the Day Use permitted uses, therefore the permits were still on hiatus.

During that period, groups were left to “fend for themselves” for open areas in the Park. Usage of picnic areas was on a first come, first serve basis. This often led to abuse of the Park facilities due to overuse, huge outdoor events taking place with no oversight, and event conflicts which at times caused altercations.

In December 2013, the City Council approved an additional ½ time contracted Parks Worker to perform park maintenance on weekends and an events contractor to bring back the full menu of

facility rentals at the Park. With these contracted employees now in place, staff feels it is now appropriate to reinstate the Day Use Permit.

ANALYSIS

The fee for the Day Use Permit was previously set at a flat \$100. The Permit was required for groups of more than 9 and less than 50 people. Groups of 50 or more people were required to rent an available venue such as the Carriage House (with the included North Meadow lawn area package). Rules requiring adherence to park regulations on park hours and noise were clearly spelled out to the permittees.

The Park and Recreation Commission discussed the possibility of returning the Day Use Permit at their meeting on March 5. The Committee worked with staff to make the following recommendations to Council for their consideration:

- Fees
 - Change the fee from the previous \$100 to \$50 for residents and \$75 for non-residents.
- Rules
 - Hours to remain the same (consistent with Town ordinance).
 - Group size requirements (more than 9, less than 50) to remain the same.
 - Noise restrictions to remain the same (consistent with Town ordinance).
 - Insert language into the new permit prohibiting alcohol use under the Permit.
- Fine
 - The past fine for failure to obtain the permit or breaking of the rules in the permit language was \$100 and is to remain the same.

Staff believes that the control that will be exercised with the implementation of this permit is more important than the revenues that will be generated by it. This permit will allow our event contractor and Town staff to closely monitor the amount of people and types of usage that go on in the Park, especially on weekends. It will also assure permittees that they have a clean and supervised area in the Park on a given day without having to camp out or show up at pre-dawn hours to reserve a space.

Some of the areas in the park that might be reserved as Day Use areas (depending on planned use) and could be permitted include:

- The picnic table area in the North Meadow.
- The picnic table area adjacent to the playground.
- The water tower lawn area.
- The baseball field (off season).
- The Main House lawn area.



PARK DAY USE PERMITS

March 19, 2014

Page 3 of 4

- A section of the big turf area.

Some examples of acceptable uses of a Day Use Permit would include:

- Group picnics
- Family gatherings
- School/corporate outings
- Children's parties

In the past, it was a rare occurrence that more than one group would apply for a day use permit on a given day, and there never was more than two-day use groups issued permits on any given day.

Our contract events manager keeps a running list of all anticipated park attendance on any given day and will assure that total park attendance will not interfere with our parking capacity.



Currently, there is no governed oversight of the type of group function that can take place in the park. If this permit is reinstated, large groups who show up without a permit to use the park will be asked to leave if their use and/or time of use will interfere with the day's permitted activity. If the use and/or time of use will not conflict, the group will be required to obtain a permit.

If authorized for reinstatement, staff would return with an amendment to the fee resolution to cover the set fees for the Day Use Permit.

FISCAL IMPACT

The revenues for the Day Use Permit were tracked in the past under the “miscellaneous use fee” of the budget. That fee brought in approximately \$3,400 per year (at \$100 per permit). Based on the fees proposed by the Parks and Recreation Commission, staff estimates gross Day Use Permit revenue at \$2,000.

Per the events management contract, this revenue would be shared with the event services provider.