



Corporate Report

NO: R123

COUNCIL DATE: May 17, 2004

REGULAR

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: May 11, 2004
FROM: Interim General Manager, FILE: 1810-01
Parks, Recreation and
Culture
SUBJECT: 2004-2005 Fees & Charges - Parks, Recreation &
Culture

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That Council approve adjustments to Parks, Recreation and Culture Fees and Charges for 2004/05 in accordance with this report; and
- That Council instruct the City Clerk to bring forward the necessary by-law for the requirement readings.

BACKGROUND

The annual fees and charges schedule for the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department were previously approved by the Commission with the understanding that they had the delegated authority from Council to do so. Upon further review it is now apparent that the annual fees and charges schedule requires Council approval under a by-law. We therefore bring this report forward with a by-law to follow through the City Clerk's office.

DISCUSSION

In order to meet September deadlines for the Fall Leisure Guide, we are forwarding this report to Council for approval. A general 2% increase in fees and charges are proposed for 2004/2005 effective September 1, 2004 as per the Council approved 2004 budget.

At the last Parks, Recreation & Culture Commission meeting on April 28, 2004, the Fees & Charges Schedule was presented for review and comment. It should be noted that the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission supported the 2% fee increases and were also in agreement with the exceptions to the 2% increase as outlined in the attached Commission report (Appendix). The proposed increases have been discussed with various user groups as part of the preparation of this report.

There were two areas where Commission requested more information regarding:

- the Ticket Service charges for the Arts Centre
- the Dance Floor Set-up and Strike at the Arts Centre

Ticket Service Charges

A total of ten lower mainland venues were surveyed where most facilities combine the service charge with an improvement fee and in all but one case this combined fee was higher than the City's \$1.45 recommended. Many facilities use Ticket Master which charges up to \$8.75 per ticket. The exception is the Shadbolt Centre in Burnaby where the service fee is \$1.00 - \$1.15 plus a 2% credit card fee. The last time ticket service charges were increased was September 2002. Since the cost of living percentage increases are so small on this fee, the decision has been to make the increase every two years instead of annually from the current \$1.40 to \$1.45 per ticket.

Dance Floor – Set up and Strike Fee

The Set-up and Strike Fee was recommended by staff as a reimbursement to the City to pay the extra cost to set-up and take down the portable dance floor for events in the Main Stage or Studio Theatre. As not all user groups use this floor it was excluded from the base rate rental. The fee proposed of \$315.24 recovered the cost of three (3) staff for two (2) hours for set-up and take down each for a total of twelve (12) hours. If the floor was scheduled for two back to back events then the cost would be split amongst the two groups. The Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission questioned both the requirement and amount of the extra fee that was being proposed.

Since the April Commission meeting, staff have begun benchmarking this proposed fee increase with other local venues and require more time to prepare a proper analysis given the different hourly rates, changes and minimum rental duration. We therefore have withdrawn the proposed set-up and strike fee and after further analysis will look to revisit the fee, if warranted for the 2005/06 Fees and Charges schedule. The financial impact of the Arts Centre Budget will be in the order of between \$3,000 - \$4,000.

Staff therefore recommend that Council only consider the ticket service charge increase at the Arts Centre and defer the request staff put forward for the set-up and strike fee to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission from April 28, 2004.

CONCLUSION

Surrey Parks, Recreation & Culture programs and services provide diverse opportunities for leisure experiences in the community. Approval of the recommended 2004/05 Fees and Charges will allow the department to meet budget expectations and remain generally in line with the market rates for the lower mainland. Promotional materials for the fall are currently being designed for the Fall Leisure Guide and Council approval is required to move forward with communicating the new rates as part of the guide.

We therefore recommend that Council approve the 2004/05 Fees and Charges schedule as outlined in this report which were adjusted by 2% in accordance with the approved 2004 budget and the exceptions as detailed in the attached Parks, Recreation & Culture Commission Report.

Gerry McKinnon
Interim General Manager
Parks, Recreation and Culture

Attachment

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