

FAIRFIELD PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2011

The special meeting of the Fairfield Parks and Recreation Board and the Fairfield City Council was conducted on Monday, September 12, 2011 at the Fairfield Municipal Building, beginning at 6:00 PM, as part of the City Council/City Manager Briefing. Board Members in attendance were: Doug Meece, Bob Myron, Bob Breen, Dr. Stanley Goodman, Don Hassler, and Terry Senger. Mayor and Council Members in attendance were: Mayor Ron D'Epifanio and Councilmen Marty Judd, Tim Meyers, Mike Oler, Mitch Rhodus, Terry Senger and Mike Snyder. City Staff members present were: Arthur Pizzano, City Manager; Mark Wendling, Assistant City Manager; Tim Bachman, Development Services Director; Mary Hopton, Finance Director; Carol Mayhall, Human Resources Manager; Dave Butsch, Public Works Director; Dave Crouch, Public Utilities Director; and Jim Bell, Parks and Recreation Director.

Parks and Recreation Director Jim Bell explained the four different military discounts that were discussed by Parks Board per City Council's directive including status quo, special days to honor active Military personnel, discounted fees and a complete waiver of admission fees. He further explained the Parks Board decision to offer discounts to both reservists and active military. He stated Parks Board directed staff to amend the fees and charges Resolution 11-02 to reflect a 50% discount for the Aquatic Center, Golf Courses, and Marsh Fishing Lake. Mayor D'Epifanio discussed the initial request was a discount for those on home or active duty to come on home on leave and get a fishing discount. Mr. Bell discussed how this decision came further. In response to Councilmember Meyers' question, Mr. Bell responded that there is no data on what it will cost if the fee is waived because they do not know who is coming. Councilmember Senger explained Parks Board decided whatever percentages were decided on would be done for one season and after the results it would be determined to either continue to discontinue the discount. Councilmember Rhodus commented it will be interesting data after a year or two to see how many other people came because of the discount. Parks Board member Doug Meece explained the thought process was to make it equitable across the board, simple so it is able to be implemented by field staff that run these operations on a daily basis, and not disrespect any military in Fairfield whether active or reserve.

Councilmember Meyers asked if it was demeaning to only give a percentage off instead of the whole thing. Parks Board Member Doug Meece explained the board looked at it as showing appreciation, but also showing financial responsibility to the citizens. Councilmember Senger explained that retired military are not included in this discount, only ones who have an active or reserve ID card and can show they are a resident of Fairfield. Councilmember Oler discussed his concern with the simple request turning into a long process, and if someone was home on leave and why something could not be done for these people right away. He commented he does not think enough is being done to show appreciation for those military home on leave and does not think a discount is enough. Parks Board Director Jim Bell explained Parks Board will vote on this measure tomorrow night. City Manager Pizzano thanked the Parks Board for looking at the larger scope of making sure the employees of these facilities adhere to the policy. Finance Director Mary Hopton responded to Councilmember Rhodus' question that anyone on active duty does not pay city income tax. Mr. Bell briefly discussed the current free fishing days for seniors and the special event days at both Marsh Lake and the Aquatic Center. Councilmember Senger clarified the free fish days for seniors are catch and release, but on the military discount days the fish can be taken home. Parks Board members briefly discussed the ID card similarities for active and reservists, which would make it difficult to know the difference.

The special meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.