



MARIN COUNTY PARKS

Preservation • Recreation

**MARIN COUNTY
PARKS**
PRESERVATION • RECREATION

February 24, 2015



Linda Dahl
DIRECTOR
GENERAL MANAGER

Board of Supervisors
County of Marin
Marin County Civic Center
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903

**SUBJECT: REQUEST TO CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPT
A RESOLUTION SETTING A NEW FEE SCHEDULE FOR
USE OF MARIN COUNTY PARKS**

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Dear Board Members:

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Open the public hearing.
2. Close the public hearing.
3. Adopt resolution setting a new fee schedule for the use of Marin County Parks.

SUMMARY:

On February 3, 2015, your Board set today, February 24, as the date for a public hearing to consider adoption of a new fee schedule for the use of Marin County Parks. A public hearing is necessary prior to your board's consideration of a new fee schedule.

The new fee schedule will reflect an overall decrease in fees charged for visitor use at county parks, and will also make the fee structure for privately sponsored special events more transparent and consistent while ensuring that the department is reimbursed for unanticipated staff and other costs.

Entrance Fee Reductions

When Measure A was passed, Marin County Parks made a promise to reduce entrance fees to make parks more affordable. This fee change has been under study for the past six months and consists of the following elements:

- Bicycle and walk-in entry fees will be eliminated. The current \$2 fee has been a challenge for staff to collect and enforce. Additionally, elimination of these fees promotes healthful exercise, reduces motor vehicle travel to the parks, and frees up parking spaces for other park visitors.
- Summer weekday fees will be reduced. While many county parks are filled to near capacity on summer weekends, summer weekday use is often low. By reducing summer weekday fees from \$8 to \$5 and charging a \$5 summer weekday fee on Fridays (compared to the current weekend fee of \$10), the department seeks to encourage and increase weekday use. This fee reduction also has the effect of encouraging park visitation by those who are economically disadvantaged.

Special Event Fee Changes

With the reorganization of the department's operations staff, there was a need to revise the department's special event permitting procedures to ensure that special events are permitted in a manner that is clear and consistent. In the course of revising the procedures, staff found it necessary to adjust certain fees and, in some cases establish fees or deposits for certain requirements or staff services that were not clearly spelled out in the old procedures. The following are a few of the changes associated with special event fees:

- Special event fee of \$400 - \$800 is changed to a \$250 application fee. This change goes hand in hand with the increased security deposit described below. The intent of this change is to reduce the standard fee while increasing the responsibility of the permit holder to cover costs such as portable toilets, security / law enforcement, and Parks staff costs, which have sometimes fallen to the department. One hundred dollars (\$100) of the application fee is nonrefundable, and is intended to prevent speculative holds on dates that prevent other visitors from reserving picnic sites. Speculative holds are fairly common under the current fee structure.
- Increasing security deposit from \$250 to \$1,500. The new procedures require the permittee to hold the number of attendees to a pre-established limit, ensure that attendees follow park rules, provide an adequate number of portable toilets, provide law enforcement if needed, and provide parking attendants if needed. If the permittee does not meet these requirements and Marin County Parks must call in or provide services, and/or repair damage to the park, the associated costs will be deducted from the deposit.

- Changing the commercial vendor fee from 15 percent of sales to \$75 per vendor. The 15 percent of sales fee was challenging to track and was rarely applied due to the difficulty of obtaining the information, or accurate information, from the permit holder after the event. The new fee will be easier to implement consistently.

A complete list of all fee changes can be found in Attachment A. If your board approves the new fee schedule, it will go into effect on July 1, 2015.

On January 15, 2015, the Marin County Parks and Open Space Commission voted unanimously to recommend the new fee schedule to your board.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Staff estimates that the recommended action could result in lower General Fund revenues of approximately \$11,000 per year. However, lower fees could result in increased visitation and therefore offset this expected revenue loss. To the extent necessary, Measure A funds would be used to meet the current admissions/parking fee budget, revenue number 4631914, of \$352,740.

REVIEWED BY:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Finance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County Counsel | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A |

Superintendent Max Korten is the principal author of this report.

Respectfully submitted,



Ronald Miska
Assistant Director