



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item Meeting of March 15, 2014

DATE: March 12, 2014

SUBJECT: Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Procedures for Approval and Implementation of Diamond Field Enhancement Projects and Pilot Project.

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approve the DPR proposed procedures described in this report for approval and implementation of diamond athletic field enhancement projects funded by the Field Fund.
2. Authorize the DPR to move forward immediately with an initial Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 pilot of the diamond athletic field procedures with \$85,000 currently reserved from previous fiscal years for field enhancements.

ISSUES: DPR assesses an annual fee on youth and adult affiliated sports leagues playing on County fields, which, according to County Board directive, is deposited into a trust and agency account called the "Field Fund" account. Based on a recommendation from the Arlington County Sports Commission, DPR is proposing a new process that would direct diamond field fees to fund enhancements to the County's diamond athletic fields. This annual funding will be determined by the total amount of Field Fund fees assessed on diamond field sports from the previous fiscal year (projected at approximately \$50,000 annually). Field Fund fees for sports played on rectangular fields will continue to be directed to the addition of synthetic turf fields as adopted in the FY 2013-2022 Capital Improvement Plan.

BACKGROUND: As part of the FY 2011 budget process, the County Board adopted an \$8 fee for residents and a \$20 fee for non-residents to be applied as a youth assessment fee for all official affiliated youth sports leagues playing on Arlington County rectangular and diamond fields. The Board directed that funds collected from this assessment be used in Pay As You Go capital improvement programs for the upkeep and replacement of the County's athletic fields. This fee is assessed per season.

County Manager:

BMD/mjs

County Attorney:

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23.

Staff: Michael Peter, Department of Parks and Recreation

Funds were collected starting in FY 2011 with the understanding that they would be directed to field enhancements. When the FY 2013-2022 Capital Improvement Plan was adopted, all of the assessed funds were collected in the new Field Fund and were allocated for the conversion of an existing rectangular grass field to a synthetic turf field.

As part of the FY 2014 budget process, the County Board approved an adult affiliated team assessment fee of \$100 per team per season, with proceeds dedicated to the Field Fund. The Board further directed that the use of this fee will be determined through a process involving the Sports Commission and other stakeholders to be completed prior to submission of the next biennial Capital Improvement Program.

The needs for diamond and rectangular fields are inherently different. Representatives of affiliated teams playing on rectangular fields have requested that rectangular Field Fund fees continue to be allocated towards the synthetic field program. The Sports Commission has asked that a different, collaborative process be developed to recommend diamond field enhancements and projects for adult leagues.

To recognize this different process, the Sports Commission asked that Field Fund assessments from diamond fields be segregated beginning in FY 2014. DPR also agreed that funds collected for the first three years of the overall assessment fee program would be distributed through a slightly modified initial process

DISCUSSION: Approval from the County Board is requested for the following process:

- The Arlington County Sports Commission will organize diamond field fund proposals from all interested contributing groups and then recommend projects. DPR staff will work with the Department of Management and Finance to ensure that the process for vetting proposals is fair, transparent, and open.
- Unspent monies will carry over each year.
- DPR staff liaisons will collaborate with the Sports Commission on final projects and will provide all available information (including potential operating budget impacts) to help in making the final recommendations. If a project is chosen that conflicts with County plans for a specific field, then DPR staff will inform the Sports Commission as to why that project should not move forward.
- DPR staff liaisons will provide an amenity price list to the Sports Commission for consideration when evaluating proposals and this price list will be updated at least annually.
- The Chair of the Sports Commission will submit final Commission recommendations to the DPR Director for consideration in November or December of each year. DPR will review these requests and submit an independent recommendation to the County Board for annual approval early in the next calendar year.
- DPR staff will be responsible for maintaining the financial records for the field fund.

DPR staff will oversee any approved projects and use County contracts as required to perform work. All approved projects will be completed within the calendar year after County Board approval and after consideration of the advice and recommendations of the Sports Commission.

The Sports Commission and DPR have agreed that funds collected for the first three years of the overall assessment fee program (approximately \$398,686 as of FY 2013) would be proportionally distributed based on the number of field users paying into the fund. With approximately 21% of these funds coming from diamond field use, a one-time amount of \$85,000 will be made available for an initial recommendation process. Since this is currently available in the Field Fund, DPR is requesting permission to move forward with a pilot of this new diamond field process to commence immediately with the County Board reviewing recommended proposals at the June 2014 meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT: The Diamond Field Enhancement Program will be facilitated by existing County staff who will be working no additional hours for this program. There will be no net tax support invested in the installation of the projects. However, as these enhancements are added to the DPR inventory of items and facilities to maintain, there may be additional net tax support needs based on necessary repairs, replacement, and other maintenance issues.