

2020 General Fund/Levy Review -

3. 2020 Personnel Requests: Request for direction on the continuation of Recreation Programming

The August 12th 2019 City Council meeting included a case to “*Adopt Resolution #19-189 to Backfill the Vacant Part-time Recreation Specialist Position*”. The Resolution was supported by three Councilmembers, but did not get the required fourth in favor, and thus Resolution #19-189 was not adopted.

At this time, Staff is seeking direction on how to proceed, relative to recreation services for the remaining quarter of 2019—and moreover for 2020, as any level of recreation programming requires staffing and accordingly has some impact upon the 2020 General Fund Budget.

There appears to be generally three options or alternatives going forward, which are summarized with pros and cons below:

Option 1

Place Resolution #19-189 on the September 10th 2019 City Council agenda as presented on the August 12th agenda.

Pros

- Backfilling the position would facilitate the City's existing recreational programming, including, the summer concerts at The Draw, Art in the Park, fitness programs (E.g. Zumba dance), learn to kayak events, movies in the park, annual Elmcrest Art Fair, etc. Additionally, Ms. Abigail Proulx completed the necessary pre-employment background checks and as of August 28th 2019 remains ready to join the Ramsey team in providing recreation services for residents.
- Most residents view recreation and enrichment programming as a positive and welcome city service. This also includes intangibles like youth diversion, and promotes sense of community.
- The position will provide very important back-up to the Public Works Administrative Assistant; especially for park and facility reservations—another service for Ramsey residents.

- The funding for this position has been accounted for within the 2019 budget.

Cons

- Unspecified

Option 2

Utilize the fourth quarter of 2019 to ‘wind down’ most all recreation programs and inform residents that very limited recreation and enrichment programs will be available for 2020.

(This option is tenable if a Park and Recreation intern is added back for the 2020 budget, to address minimal rec programs to include only the summer concerts and some Art in the Park, not including the Art Fair ect.) This may also entail amending the Strategic Plan to eliminate the recreation program subset within the *“Strategy: Connect the community both physically and socially to destinations, services, and activities.”*

Pros

- Provides a reduction of several thousand dollars for this service in the 2020 budget versus this line item in the 2019 budget.

Cons

- Residents continue to volunteer positive feedback on the diversity of rec programs presently offered – and it is likely there would be dissatisfaction in reduced levels of this service.
- Repeated re-training of a Park and Recreation Intern places significant demands on HR Staff, IT Staff and Public Works Staff – and these hours may be viewed as somewhat unproductive, as the intern(s) are often gone after three months, resulting in a limited return on investment.
- The ‘cost’ incurred by full time regular staff to on-board an intern negates some of the cost savings of an intern over the 20 hour per week Recreation Specialist proposed.

Option 3

Return to attempting to offer recreation and enrichment services to residents, similar to 2018 – utilizing two Park and Recreation Interns.

Pros

- Recreation services remain *similar* to 2019 levels – though only for those periods of the calendar year interns may be found, and are available.

Cons

- Based on the analysis in 2018 (which led to part time Recreation Specialist position for 2019), this would add in excess of \$4,000 to the 2020 budget (over the 2019 level).
- Training of Park and Recreation Interns places significant demands on HR Staff, IT Staff and Public Works Staff – only to be repeated in subsequent years.
- Recreation program administration by interns will result in some errors and omissions in service to residents (versus a Recreation Specialist that has experience in the community), which may result in a diminished view of city services by some.