

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. E(4)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT MEETING DATE: September 25, 2001

TITLE: Recreation and Parks Department Mission

DEPARTMENT: Recreation and Parks	PUBLIC HEARING: YES ___ NO <u>x</u>
ATTACHMENTS: A – Resolution B -Excerpts from Year 2000 Report and Year 2020 Report C - Present Mission Information	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard E. Kinney 918-7381

PURPOSE

The Town's Recreation and Parks Department has experienced tremendous growth over the past several years in terms of facilities, programs and community demands. For that reason, the administration has determined that the role or mission of the department should be reviewed so that the operation of the department more clearly meets the needs of the community in regards to leisure services. This matter is brought back before the Board of Aldermen to provide an opportunity to discuss potential focus groups recommended for achieving this assessment.

INFORMATION

The advent of the Carrboro Century Center and new park growth in terms of a new neighborhood park, a potential County district park, the new Smith Middle School Park and increase in demand for new programs creates a window of opportunity to re-assess the Recreation and Parks Department's mission. The Town has adopted a Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Master Plan that guides acquisition and development of the public park system. Census 2000 data on population and housing is now available and more information is forthcoming. This data will provide a foundation for translating human needs and leisure behavior into leisure services required. The Town's present recreation program enjoys national, state and local recognition. However, leisure services cannot remain static and fulfill its potential to best serve the needs of a changing constituency.

The move of the department from Town Hall, new internal accounting/receivables collection, and start-up operation of the Century Center have been accomplished. A six-month operation period for the center will be over at the end of September. The Recreation and Parks Commission will review the rental procedures, fees and other operational procedures of the Center and recommend to the Board of Aldermen changes based on actual historical use data to better serve the community and maximize use of the center.

The review of the department's overall Mission and goals will coincide with this effort and goals developed for discussion at the Board of Aldermen's Annual Retreat. Public Focus Groups are recommended to receive public input on various broad categories of community interests. The recommended groups are:

Youth
Adults
Older Adults

Century Center Interests
Arts and Community Events

It is anticipated that facilitated focus group meetings for Youth, Adults, Century Center Interests and Arts and Community Events can be held on two evenings (November 8 and 12, alternative date November 7). Century Center Interests and Arts and Community Events would be held on the same night since there is probable “cross-over” interest and this same reasoning holds for Youth and Adults. The Older Adults group meeting would be held at the Carrboro Senior Satellite Center on a weekday morning.

Methods of publicizing the meetings would include the Town’s web site, Weaver Street Market Newsletter, and local media. For youth, adults, older adults and century center interests a random mailing could be made along with contacting a selection of present users of the recreation program in each of the categories. El Centro Latino, known arts and community event organizers, churches and other organized groups could be contacted to generally invite them to all and to assist in spreading word of the meetings. Publicity would include a specific effort to reach the African-American and Latino populations.

Recommended Process:

October 2001 – Internal Staff Development. Staff develops program information, staff retreat(s) and formulation of program information, recommended changes and information for public review.

November 2001 – Facilitated Public Input. Meeting with Focus Groups to solicit ideas and suggestions toward defining goals and mission to more clearly meet their leisure needs. These ideas, combined with results of the staff retreat, will form the proposed priorities for leisure services and will be shared with the Recreation and Parks Commission and Board of Aldermen for review.

December 2001 – Recreation and Parks Commission Review. Commission, with staff consultation, develops a proposed mission and recommends goals to be submitted to the Board of Aldermen.

January 2002 – Board of Aldermen Review and Direction. Board reviews recommendation and approves a mission and recommended goals and directs the Town Administration to proceed with development of associated budgetary implications necessary to implement the approved mission and goals.

ADMINISTRATION’S RECOMMENDATION

The administration recommends that the Board of Aldermen approve the attached resolution that directs the administration to proceed with the development of a new mission and goals for the Recreation and Parks Department.