

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 28, 2014

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER *TY for RY*

FROM: NELSIE L. SMITH, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET *NLS*

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #13: RPCA SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENTS AND THE OUT OF SCHOOL TIME PROGRAM

The Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities (RPCA) department seeks ways to continuously improve program operations and to deliver services in the most efficient and effective manner. As part of this continual improvement effort, staff has conducted a review of utilization trends of various recreation centers across the City. This study has found:

- Enrollment in the Out of School Time Program at the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center has slowly declined over the past several years, from a high of 72 students in 2007/08, to 25 enrolled students currently, with a daily attendance of 15 per day. All of these students attend the Lyles-Crouch Academy. At the same time, the Charles Houston Recreation Center has 90 after-school registrants in the Out of School Time Program. The school system provides daily transportation for students from the Academy to the Lee Center or the Charles Houston Center.
- Enrollment is increasing in the Therapeutic Recreation Program located at the Lee Center. There are currently 24 individuals enrolled in the program. Four individuals are on the program wait list. There is a wide range of disabilities served within the Therapeutic Recreation Program, and demand for this service has grown in recent years. The City, in response has added the Miracle Field and the Sensory Mobile to support the increased demand for service. Construction of a fully inclusive playground on the Lee/Nannie J. Lee center grounds has also commenced. The Therapeutic Recreation Program has a strong volunteer support system through partnerships, collaborations, and fundraising efforts.
- The demand for public meeting space and programs is increasing at the Lee Center. The classrooms/meeting rooms had a reservation use of 2,335 groups in 2013, an increase of 500 from 2012. This represented an attendance of 64,160 users.

Based on this analysis, staff proposes to make several adjustments to improve overall service delivery:

- (1) The Therapeutic Recreation Program operation and offices will relocate to the Nannie J. Lee Center. Therapeutic Recreation staff will continue to manage their entire operation as well as the existing recreational activities and programs at the Nannie J. Lee Center.
- (2) Two additional classroom spaces for programming and rentals will open up at the Lee Center due to movement of the Therapeutic Recreation Program to the Nannie J. Lee Center. This will increase public participation opportunities and revenue for the department.
- (3) All Out of School Time Program activities will be consolidated at the Charles Houston Center. This frees up space at the Lee and Nannie J. Lee Centers, increases efficiencies of Out of School Time Program service delivery (consolidation of these programs will reduce personnel costs). This proposal takes into consideration travel concerns for students currently attending Nannie J. Lee. The Alexandria City Public School System provides transportation of students at the end of the school day to attend RPCA programs, and will transport students from Lyles Crouch (who previously would have attended the Out of School Time Program at the Nannie J. Lee Center) to the Charles Houston Center.

Families of youth wanting to attend the Out of School Time Program at Nannie J. Lee have three (3) options. Each program provides different levels of service and has different registration fees. Costs provided are for the entire school year:

- (1) Attend the Out of School Time Program at Charles Houston (transportation provided by school system) from Lyles-Crouch (\$325 per school year).
- (2) Enroll in the Campagna program (after-school program that focuses on small-group learning activities for kindergarteners through fifth graders) at Lyles-Crouch (registration fees based on sliding income scale varying from \$23 to \$405 per school year).
- (3) Participate in the full inclusion program that will be implemented at the Nannie J. Lee Center by the Therapeutic Recreation Program. This program provides opportunities for participants of all abilities to engage and interact in specialized and structured activities. Individualized and adaptive activities are geared to meet the needs and individual goals of all program participants. This option is included as it would allow a student to continue attending Nannie J. Lee, albeit at a different cost and service level provided (\$85 per month, or \$765 for nine month school year).

Fiscal Impact:

- Consolidating the Out of School Time Program at the Charles Houston Center will realize \$95,000 in part-time employee savings for FY 2015. These savings will be invested in additional program delivery.

- Housing Therapeutic Recreation activities at the Nannie J. Lee Center will realize \$70,000 in seasonal staff employee savings for FY 2015. These savings will be invested in additional program delivery.
- Additional class and meeting room rentals at the Lee Center will realize approximately \$27,000 in additional revenues.