



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB Item # 3
December 9, 2021

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mike Riley, Director of Parks *MR*
John Nissel, Deputy Director of Operations *JN*
Miti Figueredo, Deputy Director of Administration *MF*

FROM: Kristi Williams, Chief, Public Affairs and Community Partnerships Division *KW*
Haviz Adejo, Park Permits Office Supervisor *HA*

RE: Montgomery Parks Fiscal Year 2022 – Park Permits Fee Schedule

ACTION REQUESTED:

Approve permit fees as proposed for M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks Athletic Fields

BACKGROUND:

In accordance with the Department’s Policy on User Fees, the Permitting Office of the Public Affairs and Community Partnerships Division, which manages permits for athletic fields, presents user fee recommendations to the Planning Board.

Prior to developing the proposed user fee schedules for facilities or programs, permitting staff conducts surveys of other local jurisdictions' user fees for similar facilities. This information, together with input from department staff and usage patterns for athletic fields are used to draft the recommended schedule of fees.

Two new fees developed by permitting and operations staff have been included in this updated fee schedule. The first, a scoreboard usage fee, was developed to address higher utility costs. The second fee, a “VIP” or Historical Use fee, was developed to address permit violations in our Historic Use practices.

Once approved by the Parks Director in October 2021, Parks staff will inform the Office of Community Use of Public Facilities and the Recreation Department of the proposed fee changes. Fee increases for their agency are deferred until July 1, 2022, to align with their budget planning cycle.

Also, notification of the proposed fee changes will be sent via email to all athletic field permit holders registered on ActiveMONTGOMERY and notice will also be posted on the ParkPermits.org home page, as well as the athletic field permit page on CUPF’s website. Staff will request written feedback from all the above groups before the Planning Board’s hearing date so any comments received can be incorporated into the final staff packet. All groups notified will be informed of the Planning Board presentation date and the opportunity to testify.

Regular and timely fee adjustments are necessary to keep our fees competitive with comparable public and private facilities or programs and/or to respond to market influences that affect our costs.

In FY19, the only comparable year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Park Permits Office generated \$1,522,154.50 in annual revenue for the Park Fund through the rental of athletic fields. Below is the breakdown.

Local Park Fields: \$600,782.81
 Reg/Rec Fields: \$511,556.78
 Synthetic Fields: \$409,815.07
\$1,522,154.50

Cost recovery goals vary depending on the level of individual versus community benefit for the type of athletic field. A cost recovery goal of 125% has been established for Reg/Rec and synthetic fields, and 70% for local park fields. With the current permit fees, staff only attained 70% cost recovery for Reg/Rec fields, and 100% for synthetic fields, and 58% cost recovery for local park fields.

Type of Field	Cost Recovery Goal	2019 Cost Recovery	% Short of Goal
Regional/Recreational fields	125%	70%	55%
Synthetic fields	125%	100%	25%
Local fields	70%	58%	12%

The Department maintains over 300 ballfields on parkland. In FY19, more efforts have been initiated by Montgomery Parks to better maintain the upkeep of athletic fields in the county. In recent years, Montgomery Parks has added four positions to the Athletic Fields Team to focus on providing safer, healthier turf in park sites through site-specific and preventive maintenance and staff training. This team, under the direction of the Athletic Field Program Manager, focuses on improving the identified deficiencies within our athletic field inventory. By using specifically trained and highly skilled staff, combined with innovative techniques, efficient maintenance and renovation equipment, athletic field maintenance is being performed to produce sustainable fields that enhance turf growth while reducing pests and diseases under today's heavy usage patterns.

The additional revenue generated from these proposed fee changes will be sent quarterly to the Athletic Fields Team. This will be a supplement to their operating budget and will go directly into the enhancement of park athletic fields. This will aid in providing a safer and better-quality athletic field to user groups thus heightening the user experience.

Athletic Field Permitting, Fee Increase Proposal

Per the Department Fee policy, the Planning Board must approve all fees. For the Board to make sound decisions, it is imperative that significant documentation is provided.

The fee packet will provide information about the facility, the current fee information, the proposed fee and increase in revenue for the new fee and justification for the increase.

Each new fee must be accompanied by a comparison chart. This enables the Planning Board to see briefly what comparative fees are and where the proposed new fee is in the spectrum.

Regional Fee Comparison – Athletic Fields (As of October 2021)

Jurisdiction	Fee Charged	Comments / Recommendation
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Fairfax County, VA	\$50/hour for unlit natural turf field \$100/hour for unlit synthetic field \$25/hour for field lighting <u>Player fees</u> \$8/player for rectangular field \$5.50/player for diamond field \$30/player for all sports (Non-Res) \$50/team for tournaments <u>Application fee</u> \$50 application fee is required	Natural turf field is equivalent to Montgomery Parks' Local fields.
City of Alexandria, VA	\$63/hour for unlit natural turf field \$115/hour for lit natural turf field \$115/hour for unlit synthetic field \$165/hour for lit synthetic field	Natural turf field is equivalent to Montgomery Parks Reg / Rec fields
Howard County, MD	\$8/hour for unlit natural turf diamond field (Youth Leagues) \$24/hour for unlit natural turf diamond field (Adult Leagues) \$14/hour for unlit natural turf rectangular field (Youth Leagues) \$24/hour for unlit natural turf rectangular field (Adult Leagues)	Natural turf field is equivalent to Montgomery Parks' Local fields.
Frederick County, MD	\$110/week/season for unlit natural turf field (Res) \$165/week/season for unlit natural turf field (Non-Res) \$240/week/season for lit natural turf field (Res) \$360/week/season for lit natural turf field (Non-Res) \$45/day/season for field lighting (Res) \$70/day/season for field lighting (Non-Res) \$100/request (Scoreboard at the Chuck Foreman Synthetic Field) <u>Security deposit</u> \$100/field	Natural turf field is equivalent to Montgomery Parks' Local fields.
Arlington County, VA	\$35/hour for unlit natural turf field (Res) \$70/hour for unlit natural turf field (Non-Res) \$55/hour for lit natural turf field (Res) \$110/hour for lit natural turf field (Non-Res) \$105/hour for unlit synthetic field (Res) \$210/hour for unlit synthetic field (Non-Res) \$130/hour for lit synthetic field (Res) \$260/hour for lit synthetic field (Non-Res)	Natural turf field is equivalent to Montgomery Parks' Local fields.

<p>City of Gaithersburg, MD</p>	<p>\$15 - \$25/hour for unlit natural turf field (Res) \$20 - \$35/hour for unlit natural turf field (Non-Res) \$60 - \$160/hour for synthetic field (Res) \$70 - \$185/hour for synthetic field (Non-Res) \$25 - \$50/hour for lighted field</p>	<p>Natural turf field is equivalent to Montgomery Parks' Local fields.</p> <p>Fees vary based on group type (i.e. commercial or individual/non-commercial)</p>
<p>Anne Arundel County, MD</p>	<p>\$10/hour for natural turf field (Youth Leagues) \$20/hour for natural turf field (Adult Leagues) \$150/hour for Synthetic fields in Summer season (June 1 – Aug 14 Accredited Youth & Adult leagues) \$200/game for Joe Cannon Stadium (College Res) \$315/game for Joe Cannon Stadium (College Non-Res) \$105/game for Joe Cannon Stadium (High School Res) \$205/game for Joe Cannon Stadium (High School Non-Res) \$150/game for Joe Cannon Stadium (Adult Res) \$265/game for Joe Cannon Stadium (Adult Non-Res) \$75/game for Joe Cannon Stadium (Youth Res) \$135/game for Joe Cannon Stadium (Youth Non-Res)</p> <p><u>Fee/player</u> \$3/player</p>	<p>Natural turf field is equivalent to Montgomery Parks' Local fields.</p> <p>Joe Cannon Stadium is equivalent to Povich Stadium field</p>
<p>Washington, DC</p>	<p>\$40/hour unlit natural turf field (Res) \$60/hour unlit natural turf field (Non-Res) \$50/hour lit natural turf field (Res) \$75/hour lit natural turf field (Non-Res) \$50/hour unlit synthetic field (Res) \$75/hour unlit synthetic field (Non-Res) \$60/hour lit synthetic field (Res) \$90/hour lit synthetic field (Non-Res)</p>	<p>Natural turf field is equivalent to Montgomery Parks' Local fields.</p>

Baltimore City, MD	<p>High Usage Fields \$10/hour (Youth before 6 p.m.) \$18/hour (Youth after 6 p.m. and weekends) \$25/hour (Adult before 6 p.m.) \$40/hour (Adult after 6 p.m. and weekends)</p> <p>Other Grass Fields \$8/hour (Youth before 6 p.m.) \$15/hour (Youth after 6 p.m. and weekends) \$22.50 (Adult before 6p.m.) \$35/hour (Adult after 6 p.m. and weekends)</p>	Natural turf field is equivalent to Montgomery Parks' Local fields.
Prince George's County, MD	<p>\$10/ hour for unlit Grass fields (Youth Leagues) \$20/ hour for lit Grass fields (Youth Leagues) \$20/ hour for unlit Grass fields (Adult Leagues) \$40/ hour for lit Grass fields (Adult Leagues) \$125/hour for Bowie Baysox field (Youth – Res) \$150/hour for Bowie Baysox field (Youth – Non-res) \$175/hour for Bowie Baysox field (Adult – Res) \$200/hour for Bowie Baysox field (Adult – Non-res)</p>	<p>Natural turf field is equivalent to Montgomery Parks' Local fields.</p> <p>Bowie Baysox field is equivalent to Povich Stadium field</p>

Local Park Athletic Fields

- Over 70,000 hours (about 8 years) of use per year
- Available March 15 – November 30 for permitted and walk-on use
- Permitted use reserves time for play, practices and games by individuals, leagues and other organized groups

Description	Current Fee	Previously Approved Effective Date	Proposed Fee
Local Park Athletic Field Permits	\$9/hour	April 7, 2016	\$10/hour, youth groups \$13/hour, adult groups FY24 \$15/hour, adult groups

Additional Revenue: \$115,750 in FY23 and \$145,751 in FY24

Effective Date: Implemented July 1, 2022

Justification for Increase: Fees for our local park athletic fields have remained unchanged since FY16 while the costs of maintenance, materials and utilities have continued to increase. Even at the proposed fee increase, our fee for the use of local park athletic fields remains among the lowest hourly rate for an athletic field available in the counties we researched in Virginia, Maryland and the District, including Anne Arundel County, Arlington County and Prince George's County. The increase is being recommended to bring our local park athletic field permit fees closer to the regional average fee currently being charged. We are

deferring the increase until the start of the 2022 fall season to allow user groups to incorporate and reflect the increase in their budgets and fees.

Regional/Recreational Park Athletic Fields

- Over 22,000 hours (about 2 and a half years) of use per year
- 43 regional and recreational fields
- Available April 1 – August 15 and September 1 – November 30 for permitted game use only
- Permitted use reserves time for games and tournaments by leagues and other organized groups

Description	Current Fee	Previously Approved Effective Date	Proposed Fee
Regional/Recreational Park Athletic Field Permits	\$18/hour, youth, unlit \$33/hour, youth, lit \$27/hour, adult, unlit \$42/hour, adult, lit	April 7, 2016	\$20/hour, youth, unlit \$40/hour, youth, lit \$30/hour, adult, unlit \$50/hour, adult, lit

Additional Revenue: \$54,850

Effective Date: Implemented July 1, 2022

Justification for Increase: Fees for our regional and recreational fields have remained unchanged since FY16 while the costs of maintenance, materials, and utilities have continued to increase. Even at the proposed increased rates, our fees for the use of regional and recreational park athletic fields remain amongst the lowest hourly rate for an athletic field available in the counties we researched in Virginia, Maryland, and D.C., including Anne Arundel County, Arlington County, and Prince George’s County. By waiting until the start of the 2022 fall season to increase the fees, user groups can incorporate the increase in their budgets and fees.

Stadium Athletic Fields (Povich)

- Over 1,600 hours (about 2 months) of use per year
- Available April 1 – August 15 and September 1 – November 30 for permitted game use only
- Permitted use reserves time for games and tournaments by leagues and other organized groups

Description	Current Fee	Previously Approved Effective Date	Proposed Fee
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Stadium Athletic Field Permits	\$18/hour, youth, unlit \$33/hour, youth, lit \$27/hour, adult, unlit \$42/hour, adult, lit	April 7, 2016	\$35/hour, youth, unlit \$55/hour, youth, lit \$60/hour, adult, unlit \$80/hour, adult, lit FY24 \$50/hour, youth, unlit \$70/hour, youth, lit \$100/hour, adult, unlit \$120/hour, adult, lit
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Additional Revenue: \$5,550 – FY23 and \$9,230 – FY24

Effective Date: Implemented July 1, 2022

Justification for Increase: Povich field is maintained at a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) level for collegiate games and tournaments, which is higher than other regional and recreational fields. The facility also provides better amenities for users and spectators. The bleachers are plastic chairs instead of the conventional metal at other regional and recreational fields, there are restrooms within the fenced area of the field, and the facility has in-ground dugouts. Even at the proposed increased rates, our fees for the use of a stadium facility remain less than those charged for Bowie Baysox Stadium in Prince George’s County and the Joe Cannon Stadium in Anne Arundel County. By waiting until the start of the 2022 fall season to increase the fees, user groups can incorporate the increase in their budgets and fees.

Scoreboard Fee

- Some Regional/Recreational fields have been updated with scoreboards.
- Available April 1 – August 15 and September 1 – November 30 for permitted game use only
- Permitted use reserves time for games and tournaments by leagues and other organized groups

Description	Current Fee	Previously Approved Effective Date	Proposed Fee
Scoreboard (Reg/Rec fields)	N/A	N/A	\$100/request

Additional Revenue: \$1,000

Effective Date: Implemented July 1, 2022

Justification: User groups will have the ability to use scoreboards during games and tournaments. Montgomery Parks must recoup electricity and equipment costs. By waiting until the start of the 2022 fall season to increase the fees, user groups can incorporate the increase in their operating costs. By waiting until the start of the 2022 fall season to increase the fees, user groups can incorporate the increase in their budgets and fees.

Field Lighting Fee

- 24 Regional/Recreational Parks have field lighting with 5,000 hours of use per year
- Available April 1 – August 15 and September 1 – November 30 for permitted game use only
- Permitted use reserves time for games and tournaments by leagues and other organized groups

Description	Current Fee	Previously Approved Effective Date	Proposed Fee
Field lighting	\$15/hour	FY10	\$20/hour FY24 \$25/hour

Additional Revenue: \$25,000 – FY23 and \$50,000 – FY24

Effective Date: Implemented July 1, 2022

Justification: Field lighting fee has remained unchanged since FY10 while utility costs continue to increase. Even at the proposed increased rate, our field lighting fee remains amongst the lowest hourly rate in the counties we researched in Virginia, Maryland, and D.C., including Anne Arundel County, and Arlington County. By waiting until the start of the 2022 fall season to increase the fees, user groups can incorporate the increase in their budgets and fees.

Historic Use Processing Fee

- About 800 historic use permits are processed by staff for Spring/Summer and Fall athletic field seasons
- Established major leagues benefit from this because they are provided guaranteed use of athletic fields for their sports programs
- Major leagues are defined as leagues with more than four teams

Description	Current Fee	Previously Approved Effective Date	Proposed Fee
Historic Use Processing Fee	N/A	N/A	\$50/permit

Additional Revenue: \$40,000

Effective Date: Implemented July 1, 2022

Justification: Historical Use is a preferential action to established major leagues. This preference provides the major league with a guarantee of first right-of-access to their preferred athletic fields, before the fields are made available to be reserved by other leagues on a first-come, first-serve basis.

This guaranteed field time is valuable to major leagues. For sports program location/facility consistency, these leagues depend on being able to use the same athletic fields for the operation of the programs offered.

This new fee will help us meet our equity challenges when major leagues want to permit unneeded fields on a “just in case basis.” Thus, prohibiting other less-established leagues from reserving their empty fields. By waiting until the start of the 2022 fall season to increase the fees, user groups can incorporate the new fee into their operating costs.

Summary of Projected Revenue Per proposed increases Per year fee is implemented	FY23	FY24
PACP Division		
Local Park Athletic Fields	\$115,750	\$145,751
Regional/Rec Park Athletic Fields	\$54,850	
Stadium Field	\$5,550	\$9,230
Scoreboard	\$1,000	\$1,000
Field Lighting	\$25,000	\$50,000
Historic Use Processing Fee	\$40,000	\$40,000
Total additional revenue	\$242,150	\$245,981

-END-

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Fee Increase Memo-Permits.PACP-12.9.21 Meeting

Final Audit Report


2021-12-02


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