

Council Meeting Staff Report

September 14, 2017

Agenda No.: C.

Indexes (Council Goals):

Presenters: Christopher Wilson

Legislative File: 9900-17

Title

Tennis Court Assessment Next Steps

Body

Staff has initiated this project via the Tennis Courts and Sites Assessment as presented at the August 10, 2017 Parks and Recreation Board meeting. The Los Alamos Tennis Club provided a discussion on a history of tennis court usage, present day participation numbers and a look to the sports potential growth. Pickle ball enthusiasts have also provided a clearer picture of their present court needs, number of participants and how fast this sport is growing across the country. In addition, it is clear these courts are an integral part of the neighborhood and community park setting they are found in.

Discussions continue with the LAPS Athletic Director and the tennis coaches. Urban Park tennis courts are used by the boys' tennis program on Mondays through Fridays from approximately February 1st until May 10th. The girl's tennis program practices on a similar schedule at the Mesa Courts located behind Sullivan Field. Both are four court facilities. Each gender has 30-35 players. Tennis Camps begin in June and in August, and have about 50 participants each taking the camp with 12-13 student instructors assisting. Mesa Courts also provide rotating practices for girls throughout the summer.

The New Mexico Activities Association is the governing body for high school sports activities. Presently this body is proposing realignment of the districts and this discussion will certainly impact how and where future team and individual tournaments will take place. A facility having a minimum of eight courts is use to holding these events. Using multiple court sites is unfair to some schools that have only one coach for both genders. Accordingly, district tournaments move to sites with the most courts at one location on a rotational basis. Even if the district team tournament would get eliminated, individual tournaments would have the same issue if the school had only one coach for both genders. Multiple courts at differing locations could still hold tournaments yet due to available coaches, sites that have an 8 court minimum are preferred.

Presently the District staff is discussing the priority of an 8 court tennis facility for these rotating district tournaments as well as potential school property sites. Clarification from NMAA on district alignments will be useful in their overall discussion.

The United States Tennis Association has several layers of management for our LA Tennis Club and its associated members. They are National Southwest Section and finally Northern NM USTA governing bodies. Staff has been in contact with our Community Tennis Representative in Albuquerque to discuss partnerships and requirement for facilities and programs that fit within the association parameters. To date the LA Tennis Club has been able to hold USTA sanctioned events at multiple court locations via a letter approval for this type of tournament.

The LA Tennis Club's preference is to hold tournaments at a 5 court minimum facility. During our tennis courts and sites assessments and discussions with the LA Tennis Club it became clear that a 5 court facility could be completed most efficiently and economically at Urban Park (see Attachment A). If the tennis hitting wall area was converted to a tennis court and the swing-set moved to an appropriate spot, a 5 court facility would be attainable. No neighborhood meetings have been held on this proposal pending the Parks and Recreation Boards meeting discussion planned for the regular meeting of September 14, 2017. There is time to schedule this neighborhood meeting prior to the regularly scheduled Parks & Recreation Board meeting on October 12, depending on the outcome of tonight's meeting.

Incorporating tonight's discussion and appropriate follow-on meetings, the Parks & Recreation Board will conclude the Tennis Court Project with an advisory recommendation for County Council at its October 12 meeting.

Attachments

A - Tennis Court Assessment Documents