



Legislation Text

File #: 16-166, **Version:** 1

Report Prepared by: Joey Chavez Recreation Supervisor

SUBJECT: Request to Lower Swim Lesson Fees

REPORT IN BRIEF

Consider temporarily lowering swim lesson fees.

RECOMMENDATION

City Council - Adopt a motion approving the temporary reduction in the fees charged for swimming lessons, from \$35 to \$10 for lessons during the summer of 2016; and, authorizing the City Manager to execute the necessary documents.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve, as recommended by staff; or,
2. Approve, subject to other than recommended by staff (identify specific findings and/or conditions amended to be addressed in the motion); or,
3. Deny; or,
4. Refer to staff for reconsideration of specific items (specific items to be addressed in the motion); or,
5. Continue to a future meeting (date and time to be specified in the motion).

AUTHORITY

Charter of the City of Merced, Section 200.

CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIES

Youth Programs.

DISCUSSION

On June 16, 2008, the Merced City Council established the rate for swim lessons at \$35 a lesson. In order for the cost of a lesson to be decreased, the City Council must approve a rate change.

The City is offering water safety and swim lessons to the public this summer at McNamara Pool and Merced High School. Three sets of lessons are being offered from June 6 through June 16, June 20 through June 30 (in Fiscal Year 2015-16), and July 11 through July 21 (in Fiscal Year 2016-17).

For the past three summers, City staff has worked with Flip Hassett, on behalf of Swim 4 Jaylin Scholarship Fund, to offer swim lessons at a reduced price. Mr. Hassett wanted to offer swim lessons and water safety instruction to as many youths in the community as possible. He donated

\$6,000 each summer from the fund to offset the City's costs to operate swim lessons. In exchange, he is asked that the swim lesson fees be dropped to \$10 for those summers.

City staff has been in communication with Mr. Hassett throughout the year to secure the same donation again for the 2016 summer. Because staff was assured that the same arrangements would be made as in the previous two summers, they began advertising for \$10 swim lessons and are scheduled to begin taking registrations for the lessons on May 2. On April 19, 2016, staff was informed by Mr. Hassett that he would be unable to provide a donation to offset the cost for this summer.

Without the \$6,000 donation from the Swim 4 Jaylin Fund, all expenses will not be recouped, but the City has also partnered with First 5 of Merced County to assist with the funding of lessons for youngsters ages 5 and under. First 5 has up to \$3,000 available to help offset the cost of swim lessons.

The total cost for three sessions of swim lessons for this year is \$23,928. The donation of \$3,000.00 from First 5 of Merced County, combined with the revenue from \$10 swim lessons for approximately 1,000 children, will offset some, but not all, of the City's expenses. However, we are expecting a savings in several other Recreation expense accounts that will help offset the loss.

The lessons at McNamara are planned for during the day, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., prior to the start of recreational swimming. The sessions at Merced High would be in the late afternoon/evening hours from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Offering lessons at Merced High School and McNamara gives us the ability to offer lessons in different geographic locations and adds flexibility for working parents who can't make the earlier lesson times.

The program has increased participation every year since lowering the cost. Last year was the third year of offering lessons at a reduced price, and the Recreation Department was able to meet their goal of providing lessons to over 1,000 kids. In 2014, the lessons served 945 swimmers, 724 swimmers in 2013, and only 350 swimmers in 2010, when the price was \$35.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

There will be a \$6,000 loss of revenue in 024-1221-360.02-01.