



Legislation Text

File #: 17-121, **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 for the City's Water Safety and Swim Lesson Programs During the Months of June and July 2017

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 2017; and, authorizing the City Manager or Assistant 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 to lower the cost of the swim lessons for the programs being offered during the summer of 2017, 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 5 through June 15, June 19 through June 29 (in Fiscal Year 2016-17), and July 10 through July 20 (which is in Fiscal Year 2017-18).

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 youth 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 has asked that swim lesson fees be dropped to \$10 for those summers.

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 and upcoming years. Without the \$6,000 donation from the Swim 4 Jaylin Fund, all expenses will not be recouped.

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 will provide up to \$3,000 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 from First 5 of Merced County, combined with the revenue from \$10 swim lessons for an estimated 1,000 children, will offset some, but not all, of the City's expenses. However, due to expenses being less than anticipated this fiscal year, the loss of revenue can be mitigated. The expense and revenue associated with providing swim lessons will need to be evaluated when recommending a fee reduction in future years.

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 cannot 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.