

AGENDA

INFORMATION UPDATE

May 26, 2020

4:00 PM,



I.. INFORMATION UPDATE

Parks Commercial Use



**INFORMATION ONLY
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Mayor Torre and City Council

FROM: Austin Weiss, Parks and Open Space Director

THROUGH: Jeff Woods, Parks and Recreation Manager
Diane Foster, Assistant City Manager
Sara Ott, City Manager

MEMO DATE: 5/22/20

MEETING DATE: 5/26/20

RE: Commercial Use of Parks for Fitness/Wellness Classes

Parks Department staff has developed a program to allow local businesses that are aligned with health, fitness and wellness, to use public parks as an alternative space to conduct classes. This request would be on a temporary basis and is currently being considered through the end of July, with potential for an extension pending program evaluation.

As the community begins to open back up from the COVID–19 restrictions, local fitness and wellness businesses are looking for opportunities to provide safe classes for the community. Holding these classes in an outdoor environment provides more space to allow for greater social distancing, and better air movement also creates a safer experience for both the participants and the instructors. Parks staff feels that managing these park requests can be achieved by utilizing the existing Parks permit system.

The City of Aspen is playing a critical role in helping the community recover from both the health and economic impacts of the virus. One of the dynamics we have all seen is what a vital role parks, open space and trails have played in providing the community an opportunity to get outside, get some exercise and to simply relieve some stress. The Parks Department manages over 30 parks within the City of Aspen, many of which could provide a temporary location for health and wellness businesses to re-open and resume their role in creating a healthy community.

Parks staff has developed guidelines that we think can meet the needs of the local fitness/wellness business, while limiting the impacts to the general public and park users. We also feel that it is important to note that we see this program implemented on a trial basis and would be initially offered through the end of July. We also feel that the program should be limited to the first half of the day and be available between the hours of 8:00am and 1:00pm. During the COVID-19 restrictions, we have seen heavy public parks usage

in the afternoon and into the evening, as the community takes advantage of opportunities to get out of the house. The following are guidelines for the program:

- Businesses must submit a “Special Use in Parks During COVID–19” request form.
- Classes limited to 9 participants and 1 instructor.
- Classes must be held between the hours of 8:00am and 1:00pm.
- Permit does not grant sole use during classes. Park remains open to the public at all times, and larger parks may accommodate more than one permit at time.
- Permittee is responsible for disposal of any trash that is generated by the classes.
- Amplified sound is not permitted.
- Use is limited to the following parks:
 - Ajax Park
 - Fox Crossing
 - Francis Whitaker
 - Glory Hole Park
 - Hillyard Park
 - Jenny Adair
 - Koch Lumber Park
 - Molly Gibson
 - Newbury Park
 - Paepcke Park
 - Rio Grande Park
 - Willoughby Park
 - Triangle Park
 - Yellow Brick Lawn

Staff recommends a review of the program in mid-July to determine whether or not to extend it through the remainder of the summer and into the fall. This program is intended to meet a need during the COVID–19 crisis and is not intended to be implemented beyond that period.

Staff feels that the financial impacts of this program will be minimal. The existing fee structure for commercial use of a park would typically charge \$197.00/day. Staff recommends waiving the traditional park permit fees and simply charge a one-time permit process fee of \$50.00 for each application for this trial program. This fee would cover two months of park use.

The Parks Department recognizes both the challenging circumstances that our local businesses face during this difficult time and the important health aspects provided by the public spaces we manage. It is our hope that this program helps the local health and wellness businesses cope better with these challenging times and facilitates better access to classes for our community.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS: