

Source

Mike Hood


TO: City Council
FROM: City Manager and Staff 
DATE: August 6, 2008
RE: Park and Recreation Department's Paquin Towers Recreation Program

SUMMARY: At the August 4, 2008 City Council meeting, the Council requested background information on the Columbia Parks & Recreation Department's Paquin Recreation Program. This report addresses the questions posed and is provided for Council review and consideration during the FY09 budget review process.

Fiscal Impact

YES

NO

DISCUSSION: At the August 4 City Council meeting, the Council requested information regarding the Parks & Recreation Department's programming efforts at Paquin Towers. The specific questions to which answers were requested are listed below in bold typeface.

Other Info.

1. When was the agreement for the City of Columbia to provide social services and activities to Paquin Towers first made?

The City of Columbia and the Housing Authority of Columbia entered into an agreement on October 6, 1970. According to the Agreement, "the parties hereto do hereby agree and declare that it is in the best interest of the City and Authority that City take charge of and operate that portion of the first floor and environs of the Handicapped and Elderly High Rise Apartment Building to be located at Paquin and Waugh Streets." The Agreement has been effect each year since then.

The Agreement does provide the City rent free access to the first floor of the facility. The program space includes: office space, a large multi-purpose room used for crafts and other activities, a ceramic storage room with kiln and a storage room. The kitchen and dining room are available for many activities as well

2. Who were the parties to the agreement?

The Housing Authority of Columbia and the City of Columbia are the parties involved. Since the inception of the programming efforts at the facility, the Paquin Recreation Council was formed to assist with recreation efforts, work with staff and to raise funds for the programs. They do raise a small amount of funds annually through a variety of efforts.

3. Why was it considered a city service responsibility rather than a Paquin Tower management responsibility?

The Housing Authority of Columbia was not in a position or in the business of providing recreational activities. However, the provision of a recreational program was a requirement for the building prior to HUD granting approval for the construction of the building. This Agreement satisfied the federal requirement. This same agreement was entered into for OAK Towers, the J.W. Blind Boone Center and the Bear Creek Center. The Parks and Recreation Department was asked to leave the Blind Boone Center in the early 1990's due to the incumbent administration's desire to operate the facility. A similar request was made at Bear Creek a few years later. The Department moved its programming efforts at OAK Towers to Parkade Plaza (presently located at the Stephens Lake Activity Center) in the mid-1990's given the Housing Authority's stated desire to provide a meal program.

4. What is being delivered by the city?

A variety of recreation programs which include: arts & crafts – ceramics, painting, sewing, open craft time; social activities – bingo, Wii games, coffee chat, Paquin Park activities, billiards, cards and games, movie nights; outings – fishing, local attractions and occasional out of county trips (Jefferson City, State Fair, ballgames); educational – computer classes, gardening, cooking club; fitness – walking groups; special events – Train Show, Easter Egg Hunt, Music Festival, Art Show, Visit with Santa, Santa Hotline, 100 Hat Project (residents make hats and deliver to local shelters). Residents volunteer to help with all activities and events to include other Parks & Recreation events such as Halloween and Heritage Festival. Hickman High School special needs students participate in the ceramic program once a week throughout the school year. University students volunteer and participate in programs. In addition to these recreational activities, the staff provides countless hours of needed information, services, companionship, etc.

5. How has the cost changed over the years?

The program's budget has increased over the years in keeping with the increases afforded other City programs. In FY 08, the full-time Recreation Leader's position was reclassified to the higher classification of Recreation Specialist given the duties the person was performing.

The cost to the participants has historically been low since the facility is subsidized housing and the residents have very limited funds. There are fees for some consumables such as ceramics and acrylic painting. There have been some activities where the price was increased due to higher costs and ended up being discontinued due to lack of participation. Most of the activities have no cost other than staff time. There is a fee for out of town trips.

6. Is the providing of the services through a letter of agreement, a contractual arrangement, or an informal agreement? Who have been the parties to the agreement?

The City of Columbia and the Housing Authority are presently operating under the original Operation Agreement entered into on October 6, 1970. The Agreement does not have an end date but does contain a termination clause which allows either party to terminate the agreement on 90 days notice.

The City of Columbia and the Housing Authority have worked collaboratively over the years to provide this service.

SUGGESTED COUNCIL ACTION: This information has been provided to the City Council for consideration as part of the FY 09 budget deliberations regarding the Paquin Towers recreation programs presently being provided by the Columbia Parks and Recreation Department through an Agreement with the Columbia Housing Authority. No action is need at this time.