



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

A-38

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Parks
Department No.: 052
For Agenda Of: December 8, 2009
Placement: Set Hearing for January 5, 2010
Estimated Tme: 1 Hour
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: --
Vote Required: Majority

1208-16 09-01031

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Daniel C. Hernandez (568-2461) *DCH*
Director
Contact Info: Daniel C. Hernandez (568-2461)

DEC 08 2009

SUBJECT: Proposed Fee Adjustments for Cachuma Lake, Jalama Beach, and the Day Use Parks

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors set hearing for January 5, 2010 to:

- a) Receive staff report regarding:
 - a. The designation of certain campsites at Cachuma Lake and Jalama Beach camping parks as premium campsites and establishment of premium camping fees for these sites at both camping parks;
 - b. The establishment of peak season camping fees for Cachuma Lake and Jalama Beach camping parks, along with some other minor adjustments to trailer fees at Cachuma Lake;
 - c. Other recommended fee adjustments for the day use parks.
- b) Approve the Notice of Exemption from the California Environmental Act (CEQA) for the setting of fees.
- c) Approve and adopt resolutions approving the Park Commission recommended fee adjustments at Cachuma Lake, Jalama Beach, and the group picnic areas in the day use parks.

Summary Text:

On September 24, 2009 the Park Commission approved the attached proposed fees. Based on a recently conducted market survey on certain camping and user fees at Cachuma Lake and Jalama Beach, as well as user fees within the day use parks (group picnic area reservation fees, Goleta Pier boat launch fees, Goleta Beach catamaran storage fees, New Cuyama pool use fees, and Orcutt Community Park fees). it

is recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve recommended adjustments of these fees to provide consistency with fees charged by similar jurisdictions in the market area for these programs and services.

It is estimated that these fee adjustments will generate approximately \$124,000 in additional revenue in FY 2009-10 and approximately \$248,000 in additional annual revenue, starting in FY 2010-11. This increased revenue will help offset the normal rising costs of business for the Department (salaries/benefits, services & supplies, utilities, fuel, etc.) as well as adhere to the budget principles adopted by the Board of Supervisors on October 27, 2009, specifically revenue and cost recovery. The adjustments will also help maintain related service levels impacted by the 7% reduction (\$256,993) of General Fund contribution in fiscal year 2010-11.

If approved by the Board of Supervisors, the fee adjustments would take effect on January 1, 2010.

Revenue Estimates

For FY 2009-10, it is estimated that the proposed fee adjustments will result in \$70,000 in additional revenue at Cachuma Lake, \$32,000 in additional revenue at Jalama Beach, and \$22,000 in additional revenue at the day use parks, for a total of \$124,000 in additional revenue for the Parks Department during FY 2009-10.

For FY 2010-11, it is estimated that the fee adjustments will result in \$140,000 in additional annual revenue at Cachuma Lake, \$64,000 in additional annual revenue at Jalama Beach, and \$44,000 in additional annual revenue at the day use parks, for a total of \$248,000 in additional annual revenue for the Parks Department in FY 2010-11 and in subsequent fiscal years.

Background:

Premium Campsites at Cachuma Lake and Jalama Beach Camping Parks

Within the two camping parks, Cachuma Lake and Jalama Beach, certain campsites have proven to be more desirable to visitors than other sites within the campgrounds. In a review of data on campsite usage, staff was able to identify sites that were rented over 100 times during FY 2007-08. There were 20 campsites at Cachuma Lake and 12 campsites at Jalama Beach that had this frequency of usage during the fiscal year in which the data was examined.

The popularity of these particular campsites is probably due to a combination of factors including location, view, proximity to other amenities (such as restrooms, stores, concessions, etc.) and other factors that make them more desirable for campers. Upon closer review of these sites, it was apparent that lake and ocean views and easy access to the water are most likely primary factors in making these sites more attractive to our campground customers. For example, the beachfront sites at Jalama Beach are the most requested and popular sites in the campground and would therefore support a higher overnight camping fee due to the higher demand for these sites.

Other agencies have a system in place where premium sites have been designated and higher fees are charged for their use. Lake Casitas in Ventura County has designated their premium camping sites as "executive" or "deluxe" sites and charge an additional \$10/night premium on top of the regular camping fee for these prime locations.

In addition, the Parks Department has the ability to perform upgrades to the designated premium sites to provide additional amenities and improvements to further enhance the desirability of these sites.

It is therefore recommended that the regular overnight camping fees be increased by \$10/night for those sites designated as premium sites (20 sites at Cachuma Lake and 12 sites at Jalama Beach).

Attachment 1 shows the regular camping fees alongside the recommended new premium camping fees. Attachment 3 provides a comparison of the recommended fees Cachuma Lake and Jalama Beach with comparable campgrounds in the central coast region.

Differential Fees for Peak Season Camping at Cachuma Lake and Jalama Beach Camping Parks and Adjustments to Trailer Fees at Cachuma Lake

Peak Season Camping Fee Adjustments

In a review of other agencies' camping fees, staff has found that it is common practice to charge differential fees for overnight camping during peak season as compared to non-peak season. In fact, surveys of the Parks Department's closest competitors (Lopez Lake, Lake Casitas, and Lake Nacimiento) reveal that each of these jurisdictions charges differential fees for peak season camping. The differential fees range from \$4 more per site at Lopez Lake to \$5 more per site at Lake Casitas and Lake Nacimiento during the peak season. It is therefore recommended that peak season camping fees be established at a rate of \$5 more than current regular camping fees at Cachuma Lake and Jalama Beach. The recommended peak season rates would take effect during the period of April 1 to September 14, with the reduced (regular) fees being effective from September 15 through March 31 (non-peak season).

Trailer Storage and Towing Fee Adjustments

In addition, a recent survey of public and private campgrounds indicated that the current fees charged at Cachuma Lake for monthly and annual trailer storage were substantially below market rate and another trailer customer service provided at Cachuma Lake (trailer towing) is currently provided free of charge, whereas other jurisdictions charge a small fee for this service. It is therefore recommended that monthly trailer storage fees be increased from \$75 to \$90, annual trailer storage fees be increased from \$700 to \$850, and a new trailer towing fee of \$10 be established at Cachuma Lake.

Attachment 1 shows the regular camping fees alongside the recommended new peak season camping fees as well as the current trailer fees compared to the recommended trailer fees adjustments.

Attachment 3 shows comparative fees for peak season use from other campground agencies as well as a market comparison for trailer fees.

A comprehensive market comparison/analysis of all camping fees was completed two years ago, with the Board of Supervisors approving fee adjustments based on this analysis in October 2007. In addition, in March 2009, the Board approved adjustments to boat launch/boat washing fees at Cachuma Lake to help offset the cost of the quagga mussel prevention program at the lake.

Revised Day Use Park Fees

Group Picnic Area Fee Revisions

In a review of other park jurisdictions, it was determined that most other park agencies do not have a lower tiered fee structure for group picnic areas for 0 – 25 persons, as the Parks Department does, but, rather, charge one fee for sites that accommodate 0 – 74 persons. Therefore, it is recommended that the two smallest fee tiers for our group picnic areas (0 – 25 persons; and 26 – 74 persons) be consolidated to 0 – 74 persons and the fee be set at \$60 for this broader tier.

Goleta Pier Boat Launch Fees

Staff also examined what other jurisdictions currently charge for pier boat launch fees and found that our current fees for this service (Regular - \$15; Senior - \$9) were below market rate. It is therefore recommended that these fees be increased to: Regular Launches - \$16; Senior Launches - \$10, which will bring them more in line with current market rates (see Attachment 4).

Goleta Beach Catamaran Storage Fees

Based on many inquiries the Parks Department has received regarding the possibility of storing catamarans at Goleta Beach, the Department is recommending that this much-demanded service be made available to the public and that fees be established to cover the cost of providing this new service. Adequate space is currently available at an area that could be designated for storing these vessels on the western end of the beach. There is no conflict with the current restaurant concession lease at Goleta Beach (Beachside Restaurant) in providing this service.

Recommended storage fees would be \$200/month and \$2,000/year, which is less than the fee the City of Santa Barbara charges for the same service at its West Beach location. (See Attachment 4).

New Cuyama Pool Use Fee

The pool in New Cuyama has been open to the public since August 2009. For the first season, the Department did not charge a fee for users because we wanted some time to gauge the amount of use by the public and determine the most effective way to implement a fee collection system as well as the appropriate fee to charge.

After the first season, staff has been able to monitor usage patterns and become more familiar with the operation of the pool. It is therefore recommended that a pool use entry fee of \$2 be established for next season. This fee is consistent with the fee that is currently charged at the Cachuma Lake pools and is also comparable to what other aquatic centers and community pools charge (see Attachment 4).

Orcutt Community Park Field Use and Reservation Fees

With the addition of the 26-acre Orcutt Community Park to the County Parks system in February 2009, the Parks Department assumes the responsibility of scheduling and prioritizing the use of the developed recreational fields (baseball and soccer) in this park. With demand for field use exceeding the inventory of available developed recreational fields in the Orcutt area, the Parks Department has developed a Field Use Policy for the park, which determines the priority for use and allocation of the recreational fields based upon criteria that grants local nonprofit/youth organizations priority use of the fields in the scheduling process.

Currently, youth sports organizations in the Orcutt area utilize field space at a number of locations within the Orcutt Unified School District and compensate the school district through their league and registration fees by way of a donation to the district. The Parks Department's currently enters into agreements with interested youth sports groups, which grants them priority through their respective seasons while providing the Department the opportunity to recover its costs associated with the field use activities by these organizations. These fees are set through the Field Use Policy and paid through our existing special use fee policy.

The youth sports groups agreements gives them priority use of the fields during their respective seasons. Fields can also be reserved by other community groups, organizations, and individuals, if not previously scheduled, per an existing agreement with a youth sports organization. The proposed \$15/hour field use fee would apply to those other organizations and users who do not have a seasonal use agreement but would like the opportunity to reserve a play field.

The proposed fees that will be assessed are based on the Department's operational and administrative costs, which include staff time for booking and processing the field reservations, field preparation and set-up, field clean-up, equipment replacement costs, etc. The proposed fees shown in Attachment 2 and will be incorporated into the Department's group area reservation fee schedule.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts: N/A

Fiscal Analysis: N/A

Special Instructions:

1. Clerk of the Board to date stamp and post Notice of Exemption (with attachments) and forward copy to the Parks Department/Administrative Office, Attn.: Sonia Thompson.
2. Clerk of the Board to return a fully-executed copy of the adopted Resolutions and Minute Order to the Parks Department/Administrative Office, Attn.: Sonia Thompson.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Proposed Fee Adjustments at Cachuma Lake Recreation Area, Jalama Beach Camping and Group Reservation Areas at Day Use Parks
- Attachment 2 – Market Comparison of Campground Fees
- Attachment 3 – Market Comparison of Group Reservation Areas at Day Use Parks
- Attachment 4 – CEQA Notice of Exemption – Cachuma Lake Recreation; Jalama Beach
- Attachment 5 – CEQA Notice of Exemption – Goleta Beach
- Attachment 6 – Resolution for Cachuma Lake Recreation Area and Jalama Beach Camping Area
- Attachment 7 – Resolution for Group Reservation Areas at Day Use Parks

Authored by:

Daniel C. Hernandez, 568-2461

cc: Michael F. Brown, County Executive Officer
Jeff Stone, Parks Department
Mike Ledbetter, Deputy County Counsel
John Jayasinghe, County Executive Office

