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CITY OF YACHATS

**PARKS AND COMMONS COMMISSION
SPECIAL WORK SESSION**

April 24, 2017

Minutes

The April 24, 2017 special work session of the Parks and Commons Commission was called to order by Chair John Moore at 1:00 pm in Room 1 of the Yachats Commons. Members present: John Moore, Dean Shrock, Michael Hempen, Scott Gordon, Ruth Bass. Absent: Derek Ojeda. Audience: 1.

I. Commons Room Rental

Commission Chair Moore passed out a draft of use categories for the Commons, which he created, from inputs from many sources. Moore noted five categories and summarized their definitions: Community Use, Private Use, Standard Use, Waiver of Rental Fees, and By Donation. Moore noted he had originally included waiver for the Friends of the Yachats Commons but not for events by other organizations sponsored by the Friends (for insurance or other purposes).

Moore stated their goal is to have a simple system that is equally applied. Shrock emphasized the great need to standardize rentals. Moore noted the city needs to recuperate utility and facilities maintenance costs.

Moore asserted the standard rate is competitive with the Adobe, the Overleaf, the Newport Events Center, and other local venues. Community events would be charged 25% of the standard rate. Gordon posited the Commons is a tax supported community facility, unlike hotels and private venues, and people in the community who want to use the facilities for community-related events should not be charged for rental. Moore asked Gordon how bills would get paid if groups were not paying rent. Gordon suggested commercial rates could be raised.

Moore clarified the current rate policy is based on a full-day rate being the equivalent of 5 hours at the hourly rate.

A. Waivers

Commissioner Gordon raised concern about a blanket statement of no waivers for Friends' subsidiaries being too restrictive and proposed an option for a group to apply to the Commission or the City Council for a waiver. Gordon identified the conditions under which he would be in favor of granting a waiver (charitable organization, all volunteer run, makes a donation to the city, for the exclusive benefit of the city, all monies go back into the organization). Shrock expressed concern about granting waivers for events on weekends where there is a greater likelihood of having a paying customer.

The Commission did not have data on how many groups were currently getting fee waivers.

Gordon asked about the status of the Yachats Academy of Arts and Sciences (YAAS). Gordon noted YAAS has the following differentiating features from other organizations:

- a. YAAS is all-volunteer run.

- b. YAAS' exclusive purpose is for the benefit of the City.
- b. Typically has twelve monthly committee meetings and twelve presentations each year.
- c. Typically does not pay speakers.
- d. Historically YAAS has not paid rental fees and are bumped to another room if another paying customer comes in.
- e. Last year, YAAS gave a \$400 donation to city and a \$100 stipend to the Commons Facilities Manager.

Moore noted the proposed fees would result in \$15 an hour for an event in the Commons and \$9 for a smaller meeting room. Shrock noted \$30 for ten or twelve events (\$300 or \$360) is less than the \$400 YAAS currently donates.

The Commission debated whether they should have a method for applying for waivers. Moore stated if there were to be exceptions, it would be addressed by the Commission. Moore asked commissioners if they wanted a formal clause in the fee schedule noting the option of getting a waiver. Gordon suggested they could accept waiver requests without making a formal statement. Anderson reported she had seen an example of a city park charging a nominal fee for reserving space but offering space for free if room was available during a given week. Moore stated he had considered a standby option. Bass noted standby systems present problems for accounting, and Shrock noted this approach would interfere with groups from advertising in advance.

The Commission agreed to only grant waivers to the Friends and View the Future and not allow groups sponsored by the Friends or View the Future to have fees waived.

B. 501 Building as Backup

Moore posed an option where a renter could get space in the 501 Building at the same room rate for the Commons if the Commons rooms were booked.

C. Deposits and Cancellations

Manager Davies noted the current deposit rates combined with pay-in-advance rules result in users having to outlay substantial sums before an event. Moore proposed cutting the refundable deposit to \$100 per full-day or multi-day event. Moore posed 50% of the rental fee to be collected up front, full refund if more than 30 days prior, 50% refund if cancel between 14-30 days prior, and no refund if cancel 13 or less days prior. Gordon asked how often damage deposits are retained. Moore stated this situation was rare.

D. Set-up Fees

Moore reviewed current policy on set-up time. More noted that set-up time is not charged "unless the space would have been rented to another renter during that time." The Commission agreed that language needs clarification. The Commission discussed typical set up situations, such as is done for craft fairs and shows.

Bass proposed charging set-up fees during the summer and offering free set-up as a perk for booking events in the winter.

E. Seasonality

Gordon noted how weekend events in the winter provide significantly greater benefit to the city by bringing in visitors when business is slow, and weekend events in the summer months profit

1 more from having a larger base of visitors already in town. Shrock noted his workshops are
2 often charged less during the off-season. The Commission discussed accounting for
3 seasonality as offering a discount during the winter or charging a premium during the summer.
4 Bass agreed seasonal rates are reasonable. The Council discussed methods of assessing a
5 seasonal rate difference, such as seasonal rate multipliers, specific holiday surcharges, and
6 whole season blocks. Moore clarified seasonal rates would only apply to commercial ventures.
7 Shrock suggested having a fee for setup could essential be the rate increase for summer.
8

9 Gordon explained trends in hotel use during the calendar year. The Commission agreed that
10 from Memorial Day through the end of September, a group would pay the hourly or daily rate for
11 any set-up conducted before 5pm the day before the event starts.
12

13 **G. Nonprofits Functioning As Businesses**

14 Shrock noted some events are conducted under the auspices of a church yet charge admission
15 fees, big vendor fees, and fees for table usage. Moore noted such a group would fall under
16 nonprofit rates.
17

18 **H. Room 3**

19 Shrock, Bass, and Moore pointed out that Room 3 is subpar to other rooms in the commons.
20 Shrock suggested Room 3 have a lesser room rate. The Commission debated raising the rate
21 of Room 8 versus lowering the rate of Room 3. Gordon suggested lowering the Room 3 rate just
22 for the Community classification. Bass argued the lower Room 3 rate should apply categorically.
23 The Commission agreed to drop Room 3 rates to \$35 day/\$7 hour for Community use and \$120
24 day/\$24 hour for Commercial use.
25

26 **I. Equipment Rental**

27 The Commission concurred rental rates for tables and equipment be enforced. Bass noted Pipe
28 and Drape needs to be added to the available equipment list. Bass noted it could be rented per
29 8-10 foot section. Moore suggested getting more information on reasonable rates for Pipe and
30 Drape rental and adjusting the fee schedule to incorporate this item at a later date.
31

32 The Commission discussed whether items donated by a group or individual would be exempt
33 from rental charges in perpetuity.
34

35 **J. Other Considerations**

36 The Commission discussed expanding the examples indicated in the schedule to include
37 funerals and changing e.g. (for example) to i.e. (that is). Moore suggested adding a "catch-all"
38 of "all other uses" to either Community (Standard) or Private Use category. The Commission
39 decided to add "all other uses" to the Private Use category definition.
40

41 Gordon suggested removing "event is to make profits" from the Standard Use description.
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46 Moore clarified the new schedule would go into effect upon Council approval, and all existing
47 reservations would stand as originally contracted.
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49 With no further business to discuss at this time, Moore adjourned the special work session at
50 2:35 pm.
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Chair W. John Moore

Date

Minutes prepared by H.H. Anderson, April 28, 2017