



TOWN COUNCIL – AGENDA REQUEST FORM

THIS FORM WILL BECOME PART OF THE BACKGROUND INFORMATION USED BY THE COUNCIL AND PUBLIC

Please submit Agenda Request Form, **including back up information, 8 days prior** to the requested meeting date. **Public Hearing requests must be submitted 20 days prior to requested meeting date to meet publication deadlines** (exceptions may be authorized by the Town Manager, Chairman/Vice Chair).

MEETING INFORMATION

Date Submitted: October 15, 2021

Date of Meeting: November 4, 2021

Submitted by: Matt Casparius

Department: Parks & Recreation

Time Required: 20 minutes

Speakers: Matt Casparius

Background Info. Supplied: Yes: No:

CATEGORY OF BUSINESS (PLEASE PLACE AN "X" IN THE APPROPRIATE BOX)

Appointment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Recognition/Resignation/ Retirement:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Hearing:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Old Business:	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Business:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consent Agenda:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nonpublic:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>

TITLE OF ITEM

Proposal to Increase Athletic Field Rental Rates.

DESCRIPTION OF ITEM

Review of current fee charges to rent athletic fields in Merrimack and a proposal to increase those fees to bring them up to market rate.

REFERENCE (IF KNOWN)

RSA:	Warrant Article:	_____
Charter Article:	Town Meeting:	_____
Other:	N/A	

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED (PLEASE PLACE AN "X" IN THE APPROPRIATE BOX)

Projector:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Grant Requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easel:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joint Meeting:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Seating:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Laptop:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	None:	<input type="checkbox"/>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name:	<u>Matt Casparius</u>	Address	<u>116 Naticook Road</u>
Phone Number	<u>603-420-1661</u>	Email Address	<u>mcasparius@merrimacknh.gov</u>

APPROVAL

Town Manager: Yes No: Chair/Vice Chair: Yes No:

Hold for Meeting Date: _____



Town of Merrimack

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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MEMO

TO: Paul Micali, Town Manager

FROM: Matt Casparius, Director of Parks & Recreation

DATE: October 15, 2021

SUBJECT: Proposed fee increases for Athletic Field Rentals

Hi Paul,

Last winter, one of the questions that came up during my budget presentation to the Town Council was related to the fees that the Town charges to use our athletic fields. The Town Council asked us to compare our fees to other communities to get a sense of the market and see whether we should be looking to raise those fees. As far as I can tell, our fee structure was last changed 11 years ago in 2010.

The Town of Merrimack does not currently charge any Town based league (those with 80% residents) any fees to use our athletic fields. For all out of Town based groups or those with less than 80% of their participants as residents; they currently pay a flat rate of \$30.00 per day per field. If the field has lights on it; then the fee is \$125.00 per day per field.

I will point out that historically the Town of Merrimack doesn't get a lot of revenue from these non-resident groups. Most of our field usages comes from the MYA, Merrimack Men's Softball and a couple of other Merrimack based sports organizations. Of the rentals that we do get, most of them are Adult Sports organizations who are renting our fields on a regular basis. In a normal year, we would typically generate around \$6,500.00 a year from those rental groups which is nowhere near enough to cover the costs that DPW spends to maintain the fields each year. For Martel & Twardosky Fields; DPW spends \$13,000 just on those two fields each year.

Across New Hampshire there is a tremendous shortage of athletic fields available and in Merrimack's case; all our fields are pretty much booked 7 days a week from April thru October. One of the problems with that is that our fields never get any sort of time to rest and be repaired and as a result they are in fair shape but not great shape.

On the following page, you will see the breakdown of how various NH communities are renting their athletic fields.

Town	Athletic Field Rental Fee No Lights	Athletic Field Rental Fee With Lights
Amherst	\$25.00 / Hour	\$75.00 / Hour
Atkinson	No Charge	No Charge
Claremont	\$25.00 / Hour – Non-Profit \$157.00 / Hour - Tournament	\$131.00 / Hour – Non-Profit \$157.00 / Hour - Tournament
Goffstown	\$50.00 / Hour	N/A
Jaffrey	\$150 / Team – maxed at 3 hrs/ week for 8 weeks	N/A
Keene	\$75.00 / Half Day; \$150.00 / Full Day + \$1500 fee per season	N/A
Manchester	\$25.00 / Hour	\$25.00 / Hour plus user pays monthly electric bill.
Merrimack	\$30.00 / Day	\$125.00 / Day
Milford	\$15.00 / Hour / weekdays – Residents \$20.00 / Hour / weekdays – Residents \$30.00 / Hour / weekdays – Non-Residents \$35.00 / Hour / weekdays – Non-Residents	N/A
Nashua	\$40.00 / 2 Hour Block – Nashua Yth Org’s \$50.00 / 2 Hour Block – Adult Org’s	\$50.00 / 2 Hour Block – Nashua Yth Org’s \$100.00 / 2 Hour Block – Adult Org’s
Raymond	No Charge	No Charge
Salem	\$50.00 / 4 Hours – Residents – Profit Based Org \$75.00 / 8 Hours – Residents – Profit Based Org \$95.00 / 12 Hours – Residents – Profit Based Org \$100.00 / 4 Hours – Non-Res – Profit Based Org \$150.00 / 8 Hours – Non-Res – Profit Based Org \$190.00 / 12 Hours – Non-Res – Profit Based Org \$30.00 / 4 Hours – Residents – Non-Profit Based \$55.00 / 8 Hours – Residents – Non-Profit Based \$75.00 / 12 Hours – Residents – Non-Profit Based \$60.00 / 4 Hours – Non-Residents – Non-Profit Based \$110.00 / 8 Hours – Non-Residents – Non-Profit Based \$150.00 / 12 Hours – Non-Residents – Non-Profit Based	*Add \$100 per field per day for lights to base cost.
Sandown	No Charge	No Charge

One of the things you will notice is that Merrimack is the only community that charges their rental fees as a flat rate for the entire day. All the other Town's that charge a fee; charge for a specific block of time (Per Hour, Per 2 Hour Block, Per 4 Hour Block, etc.). When you take all of this under consideration, we are significantly under charging groups to use our athletic fields compared to other communities.

In January and February 2021; the Parks & Recreation Committee had this topic on their agenda and invited all the Sports Leagues that pay to rent our fields to either attend the meeting or submit comments. We did not receive any comments nor did any organization attend either meeting. During those two meetings, we came up with the following recommendations that we would recommend implementation starting in Spring 2022.

While a lot of the Town's list their fees by the hour; we don't ever get anyone that rents for a single hour and quite honestly its more work on our end to schedule by the hour. Most of our groups are booking from 6:00 pm until dusk on weeknights and on the weekends, they are booking from 8:00 am until either 8:00 pm (without lights) or until 10:00 pm on our lighted fields. In this aspect, I like the way that the City of Keene and the Town of Salem schedule their rentals in 4-Hour, 8-Hour and 12-hour time blocks.

PROPOSED FEE STRUCTURE:

Fee Type	Time Block	Merrimack Residents	Non-Residents
Half Day	8:00 am to 12:00 pm OR 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm	\$50.00	\$100.00
Full Day	8:00 am – 8:00 pm	\$75.00	\$150.00
Full Day + Lights	8:00 am – 10:00 pm	\$100.00	\$200.00

To give you an example of how this would play out utilizing this proposed fee structure and comparing the costs that one of our existing permit holder groups that utilizes our fields to host tournaments in Merrimack.

Currently this group uses Martel & Twardosky Field almost every weekend from 8:00 am until 10:00 pm at Martel and 8:00 am to 8:00 pm at Twardosky for this tournament. This organization currently pays \$125.00 per day for Martel and \$30.00 per day at Twardosky for their tournament. If we apply our revised pricing structure, they will now pay \$200.00 for Martel field and \$150.00 for Twardosky for a total of \$350.00 per day as opposed to \$155.00 per day that they pay now.

It is my feeling that this will bring us to market rates as well as go further to cover the cost of maintaining our fields.