

Memorandum 10-49 Community Schools/Community Recreation

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Memo 10 - 49

To: Walt Wrede, City Manager

Thru: Sheri Hobbs, Personnel Director

From: Mike Illg, Community Recreation Coordinator

Date: 3/10/2010

Re: Community Schools/ Community Recreation

The City of Homer Community Schools program has a long history, operating for over thirty years with the last four years under the administration of the City of Homer while previously under the administration of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. The program offers many recreational opportunities and community-based educational classes and programs. In addition, Community Schools partners with other organizations and entities providing large one day community service events such as the Safe Kids Fair, Bike Rodeo, Harvest Carnival, and the Ski Swap.

With the recent 2007 program transition from KPBSD to the City of Homer through the approval of a city-wide vote [Ordinance 06-39(S)(2)], the Community Schools program has continued to provide high quality recreational and leisure activities to the local residents while continuing to seek ways to reduce operational costs and provide affordable programs for participants young and old. With the goal of improving services, I would like to propose three recommendations for the Community Schools program, that in my professional opinion would enhance the functionality, purpose, grant/funding opportunities and community participation of the program.

City of Homer Community Recreation

First, I recommend changing the program name from the City of Homer Community Schools Program to the City of Homer Community Recreation Program. While the program is still physically located in the local schools, the Community School participation and revenue intake accurately displays that the majority of our program functionality is overwhelmingly recreationally based. As we continue to offer life-long learning opportunities, these classes do not offer any credit or certification similar to that of a local college or school district. Essentially all of our classes are technically "recreational" in nature. There is some misconception that Community Schools is an academic institution creating confusion as to how it relates to the mission of the City of Homer whereas offering recreational opportunities is within the city's function. Another important factor to consider is that by changing the operational name from "school" to "recreation", this should improve the chances for recreational grants/funding for the program. It has been difficult to apply for recreational grants when the program name (Community Schools) does not concur with the application guidelines and these are the grants (recreational) that are most applicable for the mission and purpose of our program.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

What is a public park? A public park is any area or portions of areas dedicated or designated by any Federal, State or local agency primarily for public recreational use.

What is public recreation? Public recreation includes activities that take place at a public park/facility - sports, physical activities, exposure to natural surroundings, arts and culture, to name a few. These activities may be passive or active and may be performed at will by the visitor or be organized by a public agency.

My second suggestion that is relevant to the proposed name change is for the Community Recreation Coordinator to work with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission. The Commission currently works in an advisory capacity relating to local parks and trails. Under the Homer City Code, the Parks and Recreation Commission duties are to act in an advisory capacity to the City Manager and City Council on problems development of parks and recreational facilities. Because the Community Schools program is essentially a recreational program offered by the city, this additional input from the Parks and Recreation Commission would be a complimentary fit considering the strong correlation between public parks and public recreation.

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This merge has the potential to enhance community participation, direction, advocacy, awareness, improvement of services, grant opportunities for the City's public park and public recreation programs and create the opportunity for community members to become more involved by pursuing important volunteer roles within the community of Homer providing ownership and direction for our services, programs and mission. This move is also on par with the recent move of Community Schools/Recreation coordinator working part time within the parks division during the summer months.

Community Recreation Logo

An important function of the Community Schools/Recreation program is informing and delivering our information to the public. We often try to "sell" our programs and activities and with the right strategy and distribution, we strive to keep our name in front of our targeted audience (repeat participants and new participants). My third proposal in conjunction with the previous proposals is to create a City of Homer Community Recreation logo. This logo will assist us with "branding" our services, improve our image and enhance our ability to attract more participation and awareness for our programs. The logo could be affixed to potential promotional items, shirts, advertisements, catalogs, etc. depicting professional services while potentially helping the program to increase participation and revenue.

Recommendation:

1. Approve the name change of Community Schools to Community Recreation.
2. Authorize the Community Recreation Coordinator to meet with the Parks and Recreation Commission to receive input on the program.
3. Authorize the development of a Community Recreation logo.

Related Ordinances **Memorandum - Related Ordinances:** [Ordinance 10-16 Amending HCC 1.43.010 Changing the Community Schools Program to Community Recreation Program](#)

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