



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Ralph Clark, Interim City Manager
Sean Clark, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation

Date: March 11, 2022

Subj: Consideration - Acceptance of NCPRA New Initiative Grant Program

BACKGROUND:

The Elizabeth City / Pasquotank County Parks and Recreation Department continues to offer a variety of well-rounded inclusive programs for youth, adults, and senior citizens. A few examples of these programs include athletics, instructional classes such as fitness and art, and camps. Parks and Recreation strives to provide numerous safe, learning opportunities that engage individuals from all backgrounds, denominations, and communities.

In several communities, teenagers lack these opportunities in their areas. Parks and Recreation departments across the nation have seen a major decline in participation from teenagers over the years. Part of this change is due to a lack of care in the teenage community, an interest in non-educational extracurricular activities, and the inability to provide opportunities that capture their interest. In response to the lack of programming for this age group, Parks and Rec would like to expand our program offerings by starting a free Kickball Enrichment Program that engages children ages 11 through 17. Because our teens are an underserved population in our community, Parks and Rec wants to make this program free so that money is not an issue to participate; however, our expenditures for this program will cost us up to \$1,000 this fiscal year. This amount will assist in offsetting the cost of expenses for advertisement in schools, equipment for the kickball league, educational supplies, and food for participants.

ANALYSIS:

In recognizing the need for equipment, supplies, and materials for the children, City staff has identified a New Initiative Grant Program provided by the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association (NCRPA). NCRPA will be awarding up to nine mini-grants to members around our state. There is the opportunity for one \$1,000 grant to be awarded in each of NCRPA Regions. This grant program is designed to enable members and their agencies to begin a new initiative for the community they serve.

This year, the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association implemented a New Initiative Grant Program. This is a non-match grant that only requires a grant report within 30 days of funds being used. All funds must be used for the Kickball Enrichment Program by the end of the grant cycle (May 31, 2022). In hopes of receiving funding, the grant application had to be submitted by November 19, 2021.

The standard procedure for City staff is to present grant applications to the Council before submitting them. We apologize for deviating from this practice in this case; however, the grant deadline approached us before the grant application was available to be placed on the consent agenda. Parks and Recreation had three days to apply, but as a result of submitting before the deadline, the City of Elizabeth City was named winner of one of the nine mini-grants in the amount of \$1,000. With NCRPA's announcement, it is known that Council will have the final say over whether to accept it.

In the event that Council does not approve, NCRPA will be notified and we will pursue alternative funding sources. We request the Council's support for our New Initiative Grant application and acceptance of this funding to begin a youth Enrichment Kickball Program.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

By motion, authorize acceptance of funding for the no-match New Initiative Grant Program in the amount of \$1,000 for a youth Enrichment Kickball Program.