



April 17, 2024, Recreation and Parks Commission

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Subject: Staff's recommendation for discussion:

- 1.) Implementing rules for Pickleball Play at Lions Park.
- 2.) Implementing rules for light usage on the Pickleball/Tennis Courts at Lions Park.
- 3.) Eliminating the need for locking the gates and selling keys for all courts at Lions Park.

Purpose: To have a discussion with the public and Recreation and Park Commission to come up with the rules so staff can create signage to post at the new pickleball courts.

Discussion: Last fall the City's first ever pickleball courts construction got underway. The contractor quickly ran into cold rainy weather and had to put the project on hold until there was better weather. Construction is scheduled to resume May 6, 2024. Upon completion, the City will have four dedicated pickleball courts and two dedicated tennis courts at Lions Park. All six courts will have new LED lights. This is a new addition to the tennis courts as there were no lights on the tennis courts. Staff need to provide rules and guidelines for participants to follow for pickleball court usage. The tennis courts already have rules and guidelines as follows:

Tennis Playing Rules

1. Tennis shoes only on courts.
2. Courts to be used for tennis only, no bicycles, skateboards, in-line skates or other play allowed.
3. No food or beverage on courts.
4. Unsportsmanlike conduct prohibited.
5. Limit of 3 balls per court when adjacent court is occupied.
6. All courts open to the public on a daily basis except during city sponsored lessons or tournaments.

Tennis Racket Board

1. Players waiting for court must place racket in empty slot closest to the 1st position.
2. Move racket progressively closer to 1st position as player in 1st position occupies court.
3. When your racket reaches 1st position you are next in line and must take 1st court that becomes available.
4. All players waiting must follow above procedures, if you do not you lose your priority in line.
5. An individual or couple may place one racket on board.
6. Time limit when others are waiting; Singles – 1 hour, Doubles – 1.5 hour.
7. Please observe the playing rules as posted.

Analysis: To establish rules for pickleball, staff surveyed similar agencies and came up with recommendations as a starting point for discussion.

- 1.) Rules – Staff recommends having two types of play (Open Play Rotation and First Come First Served Play)
 - a. Open Play Rotation would be open to anyone at any skill level who shows up at any time during these dedicated Open Play Rotation times. Staff recommends Open Play Rotation be scheduled daily from 8:00 am – 12:00 pm and evenings from 5:00 pm – 8:00

pm. Open play allows more people to play during the busiest hours and is designed so ALL can play during these hours. Everyone must rotate, and allow others to join in. No players can stay as a group on a court. Players waiting to play will put their paddle in a paddle rack. If there are less than 8 players waiting to play a 2-on-2-off rotation will be in effect. This means the winning team stays on the court and faces the next two players. If the winning team wins a 2nd time, they must leave the court, and the losing team stays on for one more game (If the losing team wins their 2nd game they must exit the court). This way teams are guaranteed two games when they get on the court. If 8 or more players are waiting to play, then a 4-on-4-off rotation will be used. This means all four players will exit the court once the game is over and four new players will play. If players in groups of four want to rotate in as a group they may do so, they must move their paddles to the end of the paddle rack, so they do not bump other players out of the line.

- b. First Come First Served Play is played outside Open Play Rotation hours. During these times, a planned group of players can stay on one court and are not expected to allow other players showing up to rotate in. However, they may allow people to rotate in, but it's not to be expected or required. If all the courts are full and there are people waiting, there will be a time limit: 1 hour if playing singles; 1.5 hours if playing doubles. These times are assumed to be less popular for pickleball and instruction or drills could be done during these times.
 - c. Private instruction for pay is prohibited without a permit. Those found instructing without a permit will be requested to leave and may be issued a citation.
- 2.) Pickleball/Tennis Court lights will be on a timer so that they can only be turned on between 4:30 pm - 10:00 p.m. Staff recommends allowing players to be able to turn on the lights in 1-hour increments using a dial or button. If possible, a 5-minute warning alarm or flashing lights letting players know the timer needs to be re-set would be ideal.
- 3.) Locks/Keys – At this time staff recommend not locking the Pickleball or Tennis courts. Locks have been used on the tennis courts in prior years with participants buying a key and using it to open the courts, at times the locks would be changed, and new keys issued at a minimal cost annually. Staff feel with the addition of pickleball there will be much more usage of the courts leading to less inappropriate activity and vandalism. This is something that can be revisited if a need warrants.

Options:

- 1. Limit play to First Come First Served Play all the time.
- 2. Have courts available to rent during First Come First Served time.
- 3. Limit the number of days and hours of Open Play Rotation.
- 4. Do not set a time limit during First Come First Served Play in the beginning. We can address it in the future if necessary.
- 5. Lock Pickleball Courts immediately and sell keys as currently done with Tennis Courts.
- 6. Direct staff to take other action and bring recommendation back to future Recreation Commission meeting.

Based on tonight's consideration and feedback, staff will bring back a recommendation including signage language at a future Recreation Commission Meeting.