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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 23, 2018

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE LICENSE AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA AND FIGHT FOR CHILDREN
FOR THE ALEXANDRIA BOXING CLUB

On February 13 City Council received the draft license agreement between the City of Alexandria and Fight for Children covering their program, the Alexandria Boxing Club (ABC). In advance of docketing the item for public hearing, the item was pulled from the Consent Calendar with questions regarding a fee for sparring that is outlined in the draft agreement. In response to these questions, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities (RPCA) staff is providing the following background and additional information. The fee issue can be addressed outside of Council's renewal of the license agreement with Fight for Children, so I recommend that Council proceed with approval of the license agreement.

The draft license agreement, does not present any material changes to the previous agreement (September 2015 through September 2017), including the fees associated with the Elementary After-School and Boxing Training Programs. For both programs, fees remain the same. There is no fee for Alexandria youth. All non-resident youth and both resident and non-resident adults pay the associated daily admission, or can purchase a monthly or yearly pass. The previous lease agreement also included requirements for any uses outside of the After-School and Boxing Training Programs, including notification five business days prior to the use for authorization, and that FFC shall follow all other city rules and regulations. In all cases, RPCA's goal is to ensure the safety of all users of the recreation center, and therefore registration/sign-in is required to provide staff with knowledge of who is currently in the building.

In practice, Charles Houston staff and FFC found that the issue of sparring was not adequately addressed in the conditions of the previous agreement, as it was not specifically included as part of either the programs or the uses outside of the programs. Charles Houston staff were receiving requests for sparring visits, without the required advanced notice and without specifications for how to process the visits. More specifically, individuals were showing up "just for sparring" without indicating it was with members of the ABC, and sometimes not even within the ABC operating hours. For that reason, the current draft agreement includes language specific to sparring. Sparring, a one-on-one training session under ABC's Elite Boxing Training Program, provides a highly individualized use of the facility, and therefore the draft agreement requires that participants are assessed the daily admission fee in line with the city's adopted Resource

Allocation and Cost Recovery Policy. The ***Resource Allocation and Cost Recovery Policy*** establishes a rationale for resource allocation and cost recovery, and recommends areas where fees are appropriate. Based on the policy, programs and services that have a high individual benefit should incur no subsidy, are revenue positive, and cover direct costs.

City Council requested that staff provide an assessment of how other facilities handle sparring. Staff reached out to a number of other boxing clubs in the area, and conducted online research of other USA Boxing clubs in the region. There are few other boxing clubs that are run out of public facilities, but both Washington D.C. and Prince George County (MNCPPC) have boxing clubs, and do not assess fees for sparring; nor do they have similar policies in place for cost recovery. There are other USA Boxing clubs in the region (VA, MD, and DC) that require membership in order to participate in sparring. All USA Boxing Clubs require that individuals interested in sparring be active members of USA Boxing (memberships are annual) and have a USA Boxing passport book prior to the activity.

City Council also asked staff to provide a review of any potential impact that eliminating the proposed fee for sparring would have on revenue. Based on the past year, ABC requested access for sparring partners on average once a month (or less). RPCA staff do not believe it is a revenue issue, however eliminating the fee for the individualized use may create an equity issue with other user groups that are charged a similar fee for individualized activities in line with the adopted Resource Allocation and Cost Recovery Policy. Staff will continue to evaluate the process and fees associated with coming in to train as a sparring partner for a member of the ABC, but at this time there is no indication that there is a negative impact on those who choose to spar at Charles Houston.

The fee for sparring activities is similar to the fees all other adult participants pay to participate in the FFC/ABC program at the same time. Additionally, it maintains the equity with this type of use compared to all other adults in individualized programs throughout the city. RPCA will work with Fight for Children and their ABC program to ensure equitable access to the Charles Houston Recreation Center.

cc: Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager
James Spengler, Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
William Chesley, Deputy Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
Laura Durham, Division Chief, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
Keith Gordon, President & CEO, Fight for Children