

RECREATION CONFERENCE – SESSION OUTLINE

Session Title:

PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS

SESSION DESCRIPTION (25 words):

Investigate how to negotiate with Community Groups; Learn to set up “Facility Use-Agreements” to codify this “equal value” exchange; and Examine dozens of real-life examples

SESSION DESCRIPTION (Full Text):

Partnering with Community Groups is a “Best Practice” that can result in new programs, new facilities, new volunteers, and increased community safety. We’ll investigate how to negotiate with community groups; We’ll look at how to set up official Facility Use-Agreements to codify the exchange of “equal value” between the two parties; Plus we’ll look at the pros and cons of dozens of real-life examples.

SESSION TARGET MARKET: Recreation Programmers, Agency Directors, Supervisors

Speaker’s Name: Mark Honberger

Total Length: 1.25 hour session

SESSION LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Participants will:

- 1) Investigate how to properly communicate, engage, and negotiate with community groups to the benefit of your agency.
- 2) Be able to set up official Facility Use Agreements or MOUs (approved by the elected governing body) that exchange what the group wants with “equal value” in-kind additional resources.
- 3) Analyze a dozen Real-Life examples, seeing the pros and cons, and be energized to engage their local community groups.



SESSION NEEDS IDENTIFICATION: All agencies have community groups who are requesting free (or at least low cost) services from your agency. Also, all agencies would love to have additional resources, such as programs, facilities, and volunteers. Now, it is truly a great thing when we can exchange the one thing for the other, and call it a “partnership.” The services that your agency can offer have a high value to the community groups, but typically have a low (or no) cost to your agency. Therefore, the resources gained from the community group, can be added to your agency for practically nothing, thereby taking your agency forward towards its mission to meet the needs of your whole community.

MARK’S EXPERIENCE PRESENTING EDUCATION SESSIONS: Throughout his 30+ years in the Parks and Recreation Profession, Mark Honberger has annually provided training presentations on a variety of recreation topics. He has provided training sessions for the California Park and Recreation Society (District Training Events & State Conferences), the Arizona Park and Recreation Association (State Conference 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021), the Nevada Park and Recreation Society (State Conference 2018, 2019), & the New Mexico Park and Recreation Association (State Conference 2019). Additionally, Mark has conducted numerous Team Building sessions for parks and recreation agencies.

MARK’S EXPERIENCE WITH THIS SUBJECT MATTER: Throughout his 30+ years in the Parks and Recreation Profession, Mark Honberger has utilized this idea of partnering with Community Groups in order to bring additional resources to his agency. He will share the methods he has discovered, and put into practice, in order to develop successful and long-lasting partnerships with the community groups in his agency’s community.

SESSION OUTLINE

Introduction of Speaker (2 Minutes)

Introduction of Topic (5 Minutes)

- A) Attention Grabber: Bring out the importance of Partnering with Community Groups. Ask Audience to raise hand to share a reason why they think it is important to partner with community groups. Reward those who answer with a sweet treat.
- a. Gain additional resources for agency
 - b. Gain additional benefit to the community as a whole
 - c. Develop positive relationships with those groups in the community
 - d. Provide a benefit to that specific group your partnering with in exchange for equal value in-kind services.

- B) NEEDS IDENTIFICATION: Discuss the need for this topic and this session. (from above)
- C) Highlight Past Successes.
 - a. New Facilities: disc golf course, historical museum, dog agility course
 - b. New Programs: car show, halloween festival, hunter safety course
 - c. New Volunteers / More Volunteer Hours: park patrol,
 - d. Increased Community Safety: reduced vandalism, less gang activity at skate park

Cover Learning Objectives (3 Minutes)

PRESENTATION OF TOPIC SPECIFICS
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Define Community Groups (3 minutes)

(LEARNING OBJECTIVE #1)

- A) What are they? Who are they? ATTENDEE PARTICIPATION
 - a. youth sports
 - b. business clubs
 - c. arts groups, dog park groups, etc.
 - d. churches
 - e. adult fraternal orgs like elks, moose, etc.
 - f. libraries
 - g. scouts
 - h. commercial entities like stores, fitness centers, etc.
 - i. prisons

This type of partnering takes effort (2 minutes)

(LEARNING OBJECTIVE #1)

- A) The effort pays dividends 10-fold
- B) You don't build a house in a day, we're playing for the long haul

How to communicate with community groups (5 minutes)

(LEARNING OBJECTIVE #1)

- A) Being the "Face of your Agency"
 - a. You represent your agency. For community groups, everything you are (personality, integrity, etc.) tells them whether or not they can work with your agency.
 - b. The personal is indicative of the organization.
- B) Establishing a positive relationship
 - a. If they have concerns, then listen and address it the best you can (don't shine them on)
 - b. They will appreciate your being forthright with them about
 - c. Your let's work together attitude, will make want to work with you.

- C) Finding reasons to visit them regularly
 - a. Get invited to their meetings (or invite yourself) to share about new activity guide, or new goings-on. It is always more impactful to be with them in person.
 - b. Communicate regularly. Even if you can't get to them, you can send regular emails or find other ways to communicate. Unfortunately, this is only with 1 or 2 members.
- D) Setting the vision of what "could be"
 - a. Share the positives, Share the win-win possibilities
- E) Finding a way to "yes" (peel the onion)
 - a. Sometimes folks say "no" because they think "it won't work"
 - b. If you can discover what they see as the hurdle to a "yes", you can usually find a creative solution to get over (or around, or under) that hurdle.

What do community groups typically want from your agency? (2 minutes) (LEARNING OBJECTIVE #2)

- A) Most often, FACILITY RENTALS
 - a. Single event in community center or park
 - b. Monthly board meetings
- B) Other things? Maybe, but facility use seems to be what motivates them most

What can community groups do for your agency? (5 minutes) (LEARNING OBJECTIVE #2)

- A) Volunteer at existing facilities or programs that need volunteer
 - a. Must Track Hours
- B) Put on a program or class
 - a. Typically, this would be something that fits with the group's established mission
 - b. We will share examples
- C) Put in a new amenity at the park or community center
 - a. Typically, this would relate to their mission as well
 - b. We will share examples
- D) Provide a community service that the agency desires to see in their community
 - a. Typically, related to the group's mission
 - b. We will share examples

Finding "EQUAL VALUE EXCHANGE" for the partnership (3 minutes) (LEARNING OBJECTIVE #2)

- A) Find the Dollar (\$\$) value of what the community group is asking for
 - a. Facility rentals values are established by rental fees
- B) Discover the Dollar (\$\$) value of what the community group can offer, in-kind service or product
 - a. For volunteers = Value obtained by Tracking Hours, and applying an appropriate \$/hour
 - b. For program/class with participant fee = Value is agency's percentage of participant fee
 - c. For program/class done for free = Value is what a fee would be for similar program
 - d. For new amenity = Value is what it would have cost for agency to install

- e. For new service = Value is agreed upon between parties, often based on hours
- C) Arrive at an agreed upon exchange of services, that have the same Dollar (\$\$) value
 - a. This is where the negotiating happens
 - b. Your good faith in building a positive relationship, will now add the element of trust that the community group will need to have in your agency
 - c. Be creative

How to ADD VALUE to the exchange: (5 minutes)

(LEARNING OBJECTIVE #2)

- A) These things will make it richer for both parties
- B) The more you can add to the exchange the better it is for both parties

AGENCY CAN ADD THE FOLLOWING:

- C) Advertise in the published Activity Guide
- D) Advertise on Website and/or Social Media
- E) Swim Passes to the pool during the summer (Value is pre-established)
- F) Memberships to agency fitness center (Value is pre-established)
- G) Tickets to the event, or registration for a particular program (staffed event)

COMMUNITY GROUP CAN ADD THE FOLLOWING:

- H) Typically, groups go into the process thinking volunteer hours is what they can do
- I) Use Creativity. They could most likely also do a program/class, a service, and maybe even an added amenity for the park or community center.

Setting up official Facility Use Agreements or MOUs (10 minutes)

(LEARNING OBJECTIVE #2)

- A) In the end, this will be approved by the elected governing officials (Council/Board)
- B) Starts with request from community group for free (or low cost) services, typically facility rental
- C) Find the \$\$ value of what the community group is asking for
- D) Discover what the community group can offer in equal \$\$ value of in-kind service or product
 - a. This is the negotiating we spoke of earlier
 - b. Meet with the groups representatives (not lawyers)
 - c. Be creative
- E) Arrive at an agreed upon exchange of services
 - a. Typically, the group needs to meet to discuss what their representatives have informally agreed upon
- F) Memorialize the exchange by putting into your agency's official contract language
 - a. The elected officials will need to take up the matter
 - b. This will help them look good, by doing something useful for one of the great groups in your community
 - c. This will help your agency look good, by adding resources at no, or low, cost.
- G) Added Benefit the official MOU (or Facility Use Agreement)
 - a. Defensible Response for other groups asking for free facility rentals

- b. The reason that some groups get free rental, is because of the official MOU or Facility Use Agreement. Those that do not want to go that route, will need to be satisfied with paying the established rental rates (typically the non-profit rate, for most groups)

Analyze 12 to 18 different real-life examples (20 minutes)

(LEARNING OBJECTIVE #3)

- A) Showing how to put the above steps into action
- B) Examples will show some obvious and some not-so-obvious partners.
- C) Attendees will be energized to engage their local community groups, and bring in those “ADDITIONAL RESOURCES” to help their agency thrive.

QUESTION AND ANSWERS (10 Minutes)