

City of Montgomery
Parks and Recreation Committee Minutes
December 9, 2024

Staff Present

Brian Riblet, City Manager
Tracy Henao, Asst. City Manager
Gary Heitkamp, Public Works Director
Julie Machon, Recreation Director
Connie Gaylor, Clerk of Council

Committee Members Present

Catherine Mills-Reynolds, Chair
Sasha Naiman
Craig Margolis

The Parks and Recreation Committee of Council convened its meeting for December 9, 2024 at 3:30 p.m. with Mrs. Mills-Reynolds presiding.

New Business

Proposed Pickleball Rules-Weller Park

Mr. Heitkamp explained to the Committee that with the construction of the six pickleball courts staff have created a proposed set of rules and guidelines to post at the courts and would like to obtain feedback from the Committee about them. He explained that staff drafted rules that apply to all the courts and then specifically rules directed at group play and open play. The proposed rules are as follows:

Pickleball in Montgomery is inclusive. ALL players and ALL abilities are welcome.

- Courts are open to the public and are available on a “first come, first served” basis.
- No reservations will be taken, unless it is a City sponsored activity.
- Courts are to be used for pickleball play only and are open daily dawn to dusk.
- No glass, bicycles, skateboards, scooters, roller skates, rollerblades, or pets are permitted on the courts.
- Items may not be left on the courts. Any items left behind will be removed.

The City reserves the right to ask individuals who are not abiding by the rules to leave the premises.

Sportsmanship and courtesy are expected at all times.

COURTS # 1 - 4 Group Play Courts (for individuals who want to mix in with other players)

- When courts are full, utilize the paddle rack system for fair play time.
- Waiting players will place their paddle in the paddle rack from left to right.
- Games are played to 11, win by 2. Limit warm up time to 5 minutes.

After each game, the winners may stay on the court to play the next set of players (maximum of 2 games).

COURTS # 5 - 6 Open Play Courts (for people who come to play together)

- When courts are full, utilize the paddle rack system for fair play time.
- Waiting players will place their paddle in the paddle rack from left to right.
- Doubles and singles are allowed.
- Games are played to 11, win by 2. Limit warm up time to 5 minutes.

When others are waiting, all players leave the court after each game to allow the next group of players to play.

Mr. Heitkamp discussed the rule that prohibits items being left at the court. He explained that he felt that groups leaving items, such as storage containers, gave the impression that they managed the courts, and it is the intent that the courts are inclusive to all and not specific to certain groups. The Committee agreed with this and stated that allowing people to place storage containers is not a good practice.

Ms. Machon explained that she researched local and national pickleball court rules, and the proposed rules are quite common throughout the area.

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds explained that these rules were also presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission members who were supportive of them. She added that she felt their feedback was good representation of citizen opinion as one or more of the members currently play pickleball.

Mr. Margolis asked if there had been feedback regarding the existing rules at Dulle or Swaim parks.

Mr. Heitkamp explained that there have been complaints that there was no rule distinguishing between group and family play. He stated that people felt like they could not get a court for just their families to play on without having to work into the larger group play or being told to wait.

Mrs. Naiman asked if the paddle rack system was an actual rack that was hung at the courts.

Mr. Heitkamp replied that yes, racks would be hung at each court along with the signs displaying the rules.

Ms. Machon explained that players would hang their rackets on the rack to show that they were in line to play.

Mrs. Naiman asked if people come to play in groups besides doubles as the distinction was indicated in the rules.

Mr. Heitkamp replied that the addition of the language of doubles or singles was added to the open play rules so that those individuals would have a court they could play on without waiting to be integrated into a group play.

Mrs. Naiman asked if the court rules which state that Park hours are dawn to dusk would still have to be physically locked. She also asked if the other courts were going back to the dawn to dusk rule.

Mr. Heitkamp replied that all courts would follow the dawn to dusk Park rule as the courts are not lit.

Mrs. Naiman made a motion to accept the rules as presented for the Weller Park Pickleball courts. Mr. Margolis seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed.

Camp Registration Cancellation

Ms. Machon explained the City currently does not have a camp registration cancellation policy in place. When the various camp registrations open, many of the camps fill up quickly which typically results in a waiting list. There have been a number of parents who cancel their children's camp last minute with little or no notice. Currently they are given a full refund under all circumstances. This causes camps to not fill up, which in 2024 resulted in lost revenue of over \$3,000, which does not include losses in credit card fees and administrative time. It also leaves camp spots unfilled since kids on the waiting list do not have adequate time to plan to join the camp or may have made other plans by then.

Ms. Machon added that having a camp registration cancellation policy would help mitigate the above issues, giving staff time to manage camp registration cancellations while providing the opportunity to invite other campers to fill the spots to maximize camp participation. This also helps the contracted instructors maximize their revenue, which helps the City attract and maintain highly qualified instructors.

Ms. Machon stated that staff recommends that a camp registration cancellation fee be instituted beginning in 2025 when refunds are requested. The camp cancellation policy proposed would state that families will be permitted to cancel a camp registration and receive a refund or transfer up to 10 days prior to the beginning of camp, but an administrative fee of \$25 will be charged for each child for each camp that is refunded or transferred. After 10 days prior to the week of camp, no refunds will be granted (unless there is a serious medical condition of the camper that is verified in writing and approved by the Recreation Staff).

Mrs. Naiman stated that she thought including the language citing exceptions such as a medical reason, death, and that it would be at the discretion of the City were important to state.

Mrs. Naiman made a motion to approve the policy, including the modified language of the City having the discretion of waiving the rule. Mrs. Mills-Reynolds seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed.

Minutes

Mr. Margolis moved to approve the minutes from October 14, 2024. Mrs. Mills-Reynolds seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed.

Other Business

There was no other business for discussion.

Adjournment

Mrs. Naiman moved for adjournment. Mrs. Mills-Reynolds seconded. The Committee unanimously agreed. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.


Chair