



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: May 28, 2008

TO: Park and Recreation Commission

FROM: Recreation Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Proposal to Allow Alcohol at Louise Lowry Davis Center and Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission:

- A. Concur with the recommendation to allow alcohol consumption at the Louise Lowry Davis Center and Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club; and
- B. Recommend to City Council that Resolution No. 99-120, regarding consumption of alcoholic beverages in certain City-owned public areas, be modified such that consumption of alcohol is allowed in the Louise Lowry Davis Center and Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club recreational facilities.

DISCUSSION:

Interest in reserved use of City-owned facilities for public and private events has increased steadily over the years, as has rental revenue to the Parks and Recreation Department. The Department has 13 community buildings of which 11 are available for reservation. The facilities are desirable because they are affordable and generally well-maintained. Many of them include other amenities such as incredible views or settings, parking facilities, tables and chairs, setup-takedown services, and kitchens.

Resolution No. 99-120 permits the consumption of alcohol or the possession of an open container in certain City-owned public areas, including recreational facilities designated for reserved group use while such areas have been reserved and are being used in accordance with a valid group use reservation agreement or permit issued by the Parks and Recreation Director. Recreation facilities currently included in the resolution are:

- Cabrillo Pavilion Arts Center & Bathhouse
- Chase Palm Park Center
- Casa las Palmas
- Franklin Community Center
- MacKenzie Adult Building
- MacKenzie Lawn Bowls Club

- Ortega Welcome House
- Westside Community Center

Current Policies

In order to minimize the impact to neighbors and provide safe public and private events, facility policies regarding alcohol are implemented in a uniform way at recreation facilities. Policies include:

- Beer and wine only
- Alcohol sales require an Alcohol and Beverage Control permit and City approval
- Alcohol is not allowed at youth oriented parties (birthdays, graduations, rite of passage)
- Music must cease at 9:30 p.m.
- Activities cease at 10:00 p.m.
- Security Guards and monitors may be required by City staff

The scope of event (type of event, number of attendees, type of music, etc.) is also considered when determining whether the event is appropriate for the facility and surrounding neighborhood.

Proposed Request

The Department is interested in allowing alcohol by permit at two facilities, the Louise Lowry Davis Center (Davis Center) and Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club for the following reasons:

- Event requests from the public are exceeding current city facility availability
- Numerous requests are turned away due to facility alcohol use restrictions
- These two venues are similar to other Parks and Recreation facilities where permits are available
- Increased rentals provides revenue opportunity for the City
- The Davis Center was recently remodeled and is a smaller, less expensive venue for smaller family or community events
- Several regular user groups of Davis Center (AARP, Rose Society, etc.) have requested permission to serve alcohol at annual dinners or events and were denied
- Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club Board of Directors unanimously supports the change

Public Meeting

In order to receive feedback from neighboring residents and businesses, a meeting notification letter was mailed to residents and businesses within 300 feet of the property, hand-delivered to residents in the 4 adjacent apartment complexes, and posted at each facility for 1 week prior to the meeting.

The May 5, 2008, meeting was attended by 2 neighbors (one of which is also a lawn bowls member), 2 lawn bowls board members, a member of AARP, and 3 city staff. Concerns expressed by neighbors in attendance:

- Excess noise would occur
- Use of alcohol heightens increased volume levels
- The Moose Lodge, Teen Center, and Soho already have noisy events
- Noisy clients stay in the parking lot after the event
- Event parking may take over street parking for apartment residents
- Request to limit to Friday and Saturday only
- Events would be too big

The 3 lawn bowls members and AARP member – representing user groups from the facilities – enthusiastically expressed support to allow alcohol consumption.

Two letters (by email) were also received from neighbors. They are included as attachments to this report. The letters expressed the following concerns:

- Noise
- Impact on residential parking
- Inappropriate use of parking lot

Solutions to Concerns

Staff offers the following programmatic solutions to concerns:

- Only appropriately sized events would take place at Davis Center
 - The room has only two outlets, so amplification of music would be kept to a minimum
 - Larger events would be asked to move to the Westside Center
- Monitors would walk around the facility to evaluate the noise level during events
- If a need was demonstrated, parking spaces could be reserved in the Davis Center lot for events
- Weeknight events would be restricted to smaller gatherings of a more subdued nature – non-profit dinners, user group mixers, annual dinners, speaker, etc.

Staff will continue to observe the facility use impacts and make adjustments to reduce these impacts that may arise related to this change.

Staff recommend that the Park and Recreation Commission approves the recommendation to City Council that Resolution No. 99-120, regarding consumption of alcoholic beverages in certain City-owned public areas, be modified such that consumption of alcohol is allowed in the Louise Lowry Davis Center and Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club recreational facilities.

ATTACHMENT(S): 1. Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club Board of Directors Letter dated
October 8, 2007
2. Letter from Sharen Oriordan
3. Letter from Stephanie Sacco

SUBMITTED BY: Sarah Hanna, Recreation Programs Manager

APPROVED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director