

# **AYSO REGION 76 FIELD USAGE FEE FAQ'S**

## **Examination of a Flawed Process<sup>1</sup>**

**1. Q: Does Region 76 believe it's reasonable for the City to charge youth sports organizations a fee at all?**

A: Yes – our city is facing unprecedented economic challenges and just passed the 2009-10 fiscal year budget with an \$18.3 million deficit. Everyone and every organization in Beverly Hills must do what it can to help our city in this time of great need. There is unanimous support among the three main youth sports organizations to help, and Region 76 is more than willing to do its share. However, the ordinance that the City Council passed on July 7<sup>th</sup> is not reasonable – it places a much higher financial burden on youth sports organizations than their participating families can reasonably be expected to bear.

**2. Q: Did the youth sports organizations in Beverly Hills have a chance to meet with the City's R&P Commissioners and Staff to provide input about charging fees prior to the proposal being submitted to the City Council?**

A: No – The first time that any youth sports organizations were made aware of the proposal to assess fees, it was at a meeting with R&P staff in which the proposal was revealed and explained. The initial proposal was done at that point and none of the comments made by representatives of the youth sports organizations in attendance were incorporated into the R&P proposal.

**3. Q: What happened when that original proposal was presented to the City Council?**

A: R&P staff presented the original proposal calling for \$288,000 in fees from youth sports organizations to the City Council on May 13, 2009. Questions were raised at that City Council study session and meeting (at which time the head of the R&P Commission admitted that proper due diligence had never been completed by its staff, and no discussions with youth sports organizations had taken place prior to the drafting of the proposal), the City Council sent the proposed ordinance back to the R&P Commission for further refinement, along with an instruction to include discussions with the major youth sports organizations and the City Council liaisons.

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<sup>1</sup> This is Part 2 in a series of FAQ's ("frequently asked questions"), designed to provide in-depth information to our participants on the subject of field usage fees. Additional FAQ's will be published in the near future, and all of them will be featured on our website, [www.ayso76.org](http://www.ayso76.org).

**4. Q: Did the R&P Commission engage the youth sports organizations in meaningful discussion after the May City Council meeting?**

A: No – The R&P Commission set up a series of separate one hour meetings with each of the four largest youth sports organizations, limiting attendance to no more than three representatives from each organization. The meetings were attended by two R&P Commissioners, two R&P staff members, and the representatives of the youth sports organizations. The R&P Commissioners and staff spent a significant portion of each meeting asking questions about the financial statements and operating practices of each group. There was little, if any, discussion about what a reasonable youth sports fee proposal should include.

**5. Q: Did the youth sports organizations have a chance to meet with the two City Council Liaisons to discuss what the fee proposal should include?**

A: Yes and No – While there were some efforts at informal discussions with individual City Council members, there was no opportunity to make a formal presentation to the liaisons. The Council eventually ignored any input we were able to provide at the meeting on July 7<sup>th</sup>.

**6. Q: How can I help AYSO keep its program intact and keep registration fees as low as possible?**

A: Contact our City Council members and encourage them to amend the ordinance they passed on July 7<sup>th</sup> to match the proposal endorsed by all major youth sports groups in Beverly Hills. We are happy to provide contact information to the Council members in a later FAQ, or separately by email. Let us know if you require any assistance in this regard.

**7. Q: So how can we help AYSO and the other youth sports groups on these very important issues?**

A: For now – just stay in touch with us, and continue to read your emails regularly. We will be organizing a community-wide response in the very near future, and that is where we are likely to need your help.

*[Stay tuned for Part 3 of this series, entitled "It Ain't Broken -- Why Are They Trying to Fix it?" which will follow within the next few days.]*