



**Staff Report**

**Date:** October 12, 2023  
**To:** Mayor Brekhus and Councilmembers  
**From:** Maureen Borthwick, Recreation Manager  
**Subject:** Adjustments to the Recreation Fee Schedule

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**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Town Council adjust the Town of Ross Comprehensive Schedule of Fees and Charges by adding an hourly fee of \$55 for the reservation and use of Three Bear Hut, a \$75 custodial fee related to the use of the Three Bear Hut and changing the Ross tennis court access key to a one-year, \$125 fee.

**Background and Discussion**

Adjustments to the Town of Ross Comprehensive Schedule of Fees and Charges are made at the start of each calendar year. Staff did not adjust the 2023 recreation fee schedule thus maintaining the status quo for fees for the upcoming tennis court access key cycle and field rentals.

Tennis Court Access Key

The tennis court access key is currently posted on the fee schedule as \$200 per two-year cycle, renewing November 1, 2023. The tennis court access key fee has not increased in over five years. Access to the tennis court key is reserved for Town of Ross residents and those within the Ross School District jurisdiction. The key provides access to two tennis courts, one paddle court, and four newly lined pickleball courts. With the addition of the *pilot* pickleball lines in March 2023, staff expect an increase in key sales for the upcoming key cycle as well as a likely increase in court maintenance costs. Increased usage due to the pilot pickleball program may require increasing services by an outside contractor from four to five times per month. Staff recommend moving from a \$200 per two-year key cycle to a \$125 per one year key cycle, an increase of \$25 per year, to cover the costs of expected additional maintenance. Additionally, staff anticipate the change to a one-year cycle will help residents retain their original key and reduce the need to purchase replacements. Out of the 172 keys sold during the 2021-2023 cycle, 31 were replacement keys. Costs associated with this change are expected to be modest and pertain to a minimal increase in staff time for purchasing yearly keys and increased promotions for key sales, as well as increasing the frequency of purchasing keys.

### Three Bear Hut Reservation and Custodial Fees

The Three Bear Hut picnic structure at Natalie Coffin Greene Park (NCG) was constructed in 1935-36 by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The structure had been in a state of disrepair for many years until the Town undertook a renovation of the historic structure and surrounding picnic area in 2019. The structure and surrounding picnic area are primarily used for residents and Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) visitors, and Ross Recreation programs. Due to a recent increase in rental requests, staff recommend the addition of Three Bear Hut and its surrounding picnic area to the Recreation Facility Rental Application and Town of Ross Comprehensive Schedule of Fees and Charges to track use of the park facilities and to assist with the costs for associated maintenance. Staff recommend Three Bear Hut and the picnic area rental be priced at a rate of \$55 per hour with a two-hour minimum. The recommended fee is aligned with similar facility rentals around Marin County. Should this be approved, fees will be adjusted by CPI each year as part of the annual adjustment to the Town's Comprehensive Schedule of Fees and Charges. Rental revenue received will be added to Recreation budget account 5182-95.

Staff discussed the addition of Three Bear Hut to the Recreation Facility Rental Application with staff from the Town of Ross Department of Public Works and Town of Ross Police. Below are the staff's general areas of comments.

#### *Parking*

Staff addressed limited parking at NCG with Town of Ross Department of Public Works. NCG has 24 total parking spaces, 18 regular and 2 handicap spaces within the larger lot and 6 regular spaces within the smaller lot. It is also important to note that NCG parking lot is shared with MMWD. As parking is free, it was determined that rental permissions shall be limited to groups under 25 with an encouragement of carpooling. Additionally, parking is recommended to be posted on the rental agreement as first come, first served, and not guaranteed.

#### *Maintenance*

Staff addressed the possibility for increased services, including waste management, trail clearing, and general area upkeep. If necessary, renters shall incur a separate custodial charge to ensure proper disposal of trash and site cleaning has been performed. Renters will be required to sign an additional custodial charge form to authorize the charge. If the site is left in an acceptable condition, i.e., the same or better than found, staff will not apply the custodial charge. The custodial charge of \$75 will be added to the fee schedule and updated on a yearly basis. Staff determined that no additional trail clearing is expected at this time.

#### *Area Impact*

Staff addressed the impact added rentals may have on NCG and the surrounding area. Rental approval will be determined by priority of use, small groups, and will not be available during winter months to allow for area regrowth and maintenance. The following categories will receive

priority of use: Town of Ross employees and programs, Town of Ross residents, non-residents. Priority status will be decided via the rental application.

**Fiscal Impact**

The addition of a rental fee for reserving the Three Bear Hut will slightly increase recreation department revenue. Changing tennis key sales from \$200 for two years to \$125 for one year will also slightly increase recreation revenue over the course of two years. With the expected increase of use at both NCG and Ross Tennis Court, staff anticipate expenditures to slightly rise as the maintenance schedule may increase at both sites. The increase of fees would cover expected expenditures.

**Next Steps**

Should the Town Council decide to accept the Recreation Fee adjustments on the Town of Ross Comprehensive Schedule of Fees and Charges, the following steps would be taken. Staff would amend the existing facility rental application to include Three Bear Hut and the surrounding picnic area and add the new reservation and custodial fees to the 2023 Town of Ross Fee Schedule. Regarding tennis court access keys, staff would adjust the 2023 Fee Schedule to include a yearly key cycle at \$125 per year.

**Attachments**

No attachments