

NEWS



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTINUING GROWTH, USER DEMAND AND MAINTENANCE NEEDS PROMPT FIRST THPRD GENERAL FEE INCREASE IN NINE YEARS

The Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District has implemented its first general fee increase since 1999. The change took effect Jan. 2. District officials said the increased revenue is essential to keep up with user demand and to continue to offer a high quality of programs, services and facilities.

The increase in fees has had no noticeable effect on registration for winter and spring classes, which began Saturday morning, Jan. 5.

The fee change was adopted by the THPRD Board of Directors June 25, 2007 following an extensive public process. Overall, it will boost district program-related revenues about 25 percent per year when fully implemented in 2011.

To minimize impact on patrons, the district took several steps:

- Increases will be phased in over the next four years, 2008-11.
- The qualifying age for the senior discount has been lowered from 60 to 55.
- THPRD's Family Assistance Program, available to in-district users, has been improved to help more people with true financial hardship.

Doug Menke, THPRD general manager, said the district has worked hard to control costs and postpone the fee increase. But years of tax limitations, rapid population growth, and continuing demand for facilities and services have made it increasingly difficult for the district to keep pace with needed maintenance.

“Higher use of our programs and facilities results in more frequent maintenance. That factor, coupled with numerous utility and energy increases, have driven up our

Fee increase goes into effect (page 2)

overall operating costs," Menke explained. "Because our fees have remained the same for nine years, we have been forced to delay millions of dollars of needed maintenance projects, and the list grows longer every year.

"The fee increase will go a long way toward addressing this issue. It will also ensure long-term financial stability for the district. More important for our patrons, it will enable us to maintain the level of quality that they have come to expect."

Menke added that the increases will merely move district fees in line with market averages. A 2006 study of 13 other park and recreation agencies in the Northwest found THPRD fees to be below market average, he said. Even with the current increases, THPRD will rank no higher than the middle of the group.

"We believe we continue to deliver excellent value for the patron's dollar," Menke said.

Those in financial hardship who live within the district boundaries and qualify may apply to THPRD's Family Assistance Program for help with class fees. The district's position is that no one should be denied participation purely for economic reasons. Program details and applications are available at THPRD facilities, online at www.thprd.org, or by calling 503/645-6433.

Formed in 1955, THPRD is the largest special park district in Oregon, spanning about 50 square miles and serving more than 200,000 residents in the greater Beaverton area. The district provides year-round recreational opportunities for people of all ages. Offerings include a wide variety of classes and more than 200 park sites, 35 miles of trails, eight swim centers, three recreation centers, and 1,100 acres of nature preserve. For more information, visit www.thprd.org.

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