



CITY OF COMMERCE AGENDA REPORT

Item No. _____

TO: Honorable City Council
FROM: City Manager
SUBJECT: PRESCHOOL PROGRAM 2020-2021
MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

RECOMMENDATION:

The Parks and Recreation Department is respectfully requesting City Council's consideration to approve the modified Preschool Program for school year 2020/21 and specifically recommends Option A.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Commerce, Parks and Recreation Department has had a rich history of providing preschool programs for children four years and under. The Preschool Program that has been offered by the Parks and Recreation Department has been in existence since the 1970s. Over the course of many years, thousands of children from Commerce have partaken in the program and have gained valuable skills to assist them as they move forward into kindergarten and beyond.

This past school year, the Parks and Recreation Department offered three levels of preschool programming. The first level was considered Tiny Two's (2 years of age, with parent participation), followed by Tiny Tots (3 years of age) and Preschool (4 years of age). All programs were offered at all four parks within the City of Commerce. Classes are typically held between 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. and from 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Depending on the level of preschool, classes for the students consist of two to three times a week. Each class also consists of one to two preschool teachers, all of which have been exceptional instructors for many years with the Parks and Recreation Department.

The program philosophy and purpose is to provide a rewarding social experience while preparing each student for kindergarten. Each class consists of age appropriate lesson plans, arts and crafts, pro social activities, physical fitness programs, an opportunity for the

students to interact with each other and the opportunity to attend educational field trips throughout the school year.

The highlight of the school year has been the end of the year annual Preschool Graduation which takes place at Veterans Park. On average, over 500 family and friends attend the graduation. However, this year's graduation had a much different feel as it was conducted virtually and only immediate family could attend. Despite the change in this year's graduation, all who attended and watched from afar were very appreciative and praised staff for continuing the tradition.

Instead of the in-person class, staff has provided the recommended option (Option A) to conduct a Preschool Program via Zoom. The program would include up to 8 students and would need the assistance of each family to assist with the Zoom class. Participants would be given a take home packet that would include, a weekly lesson plan, supplies for projects and directions on what to expect during each Zoom classroom experience.

As an alternative, and as a result of the new norm and the requirements to conduct community based programs, Option B has been prepared which would be modeled after day camp and focus on 3 and 4 year old children in order to prepare them for kindergarten. All protective measures would be taken to ensure the safety of the tiny participants as well as staff. Classes would be conducted at Rosewood Park and would consist of no more than 8 students per class. Should there be an overwhelming need for additional classes and Council approves, staff would be prepared to conduct additional classes on different days and times.

FISCAL IMPACT

Below you will find the cost associated with the two proposed options and a third option to forgo a preschool program this school year.

Option A – Virtual Preschool	
3 & 4 year olds	
Virtual Class	
8 students per class	
45 minutes of instruction	
2 days a week	
Cost breakdown	
2 Instructors	\$7,300
Supplies	\$3,500
Total	\$10,800

Option B - Little Camp Preschool	
3 & 4 year olds	
In Person Class	
6 – 8 students per class	
1.5 hours of instruction	
2 days a week	
Cost breakdown	
2 Instructors	\$11,000
Supplies	\$3,500
Total	\$14,500

Option C	No Preschool Program for school year 2020/21
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If the city council opts for either Option A or B, there would be a projected savings in the amount of \$121,435 from what the City normally budgets for the program.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council can take the following actions:

1. Approve staff's recommendation, Option A.
2. Revise staff recommendation.
3. Provide staff with further direction.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC GOAL

The proposed action supports the Community Quality of Life focus area under the following Guiding Principle:

Guiding Principle 4: Support and evaluate community services, programs and events that promote healthy and quality of lifestyles for our residents. Enhance public safety and social services through innovative programs that meet the need of the residents and business communities.

Respectfully submitted: Edgar P. Cisneros, City Manager
Recommended by: Greg Alaniz, Director of Parks & Recreation
Fiscal Impact reviewed by: Josh Brooks, Acting Director of Finance
Approved as to form by: Noel Tapia, City Attorney