



Legislation Text

File #: 060021, Version: 0

Downtown Plaza Rental Fee (NB)

On-site staffing for all permitted events on the Downtown Plaza is proposed to provide an increased level of cleanliness and site security.

During a three-month trial period, a Parks maintenance worker and a monitor from Cultural Affairs have staffed every permitted event taking place on the Downtown Plaza. It is felt that this configuration has significantly improved the level of service and security to those who have rented and attended events at the Downtown Plaza. This program is similar to the Park "Ambassadors" that are found in other communities; however, the proposed program is a part-time program for permitted events only. Prior to implementation of this "pilot project" a staff person basically met the group at the Plaza at the beginning of their event but did not remain to provide assistance throughout the event.

With the increased use of the Downtown Plaza by renters and the general public in the past year, the restrooms, performance stage and Plaza areas in general, require more concentrated attention during events than has previously been provided. Care and upkeep of the Plaza for each permitted event will include parks' maintenance staff sweeping off the stage area, cleaning the restrooms, and picking up litter and trash removal before, during, and after an event. The Cultural Affairs Monitor will oversee the work of the Parks maintenance staff and any sound and lights technician(s), provide customer service as needed to both the renter and general public, assure compliance with city policies and ordinances and handle any disruptions or emergencies by calling for assistance from Gainesville Police Department or other City services as needed.

Providing on site staff will require an increase to the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department's personnel budget. To recover these costs, it is requested that the City Commission authorize an increase to the current Plaza Permit Fee for both non-profit and for-profit organizations that wish to rent the Plaza. A review of several other cities found that an hourly use fee for a performance stage or area to provide these services is not unusual.

Currently the cost of a Plaza rental is \$25.56 for one hour or all day, plus a \$200 refundable damage deposit. Staff is proposing an hourly rental fee of \$50.00 per hour, plus tax, (if applicable) for rentals where no admission is charged or \$60.00 per hour, plus tax, (if applicable) for events where admission is to be charged and/or where there is any other form of compensation or commercial value to the renter. Included within the hourly rate is a fee of \$40 to cover the cost of both the Parks maintenance staff as well as the Cultural Affairs staff who will be on-site during the entire time of the event.

These fees are in accordance with rental classifications previously approved for other park facilities and will be due when the reservation is booked so staff can be scheduled in a timely fashion, and will be used to offset staffing costs for each Downtown Plaza event.

Additional personnel costs due to staffing each permitted event would be offset by revenues generated by the new fees. For example: 100 hours of rental revenue equals \$4,000 in personnel costs and \$1,000 in administrative/miscellaneous expenditures, such as, restroom supplies, garbage liners, truck usage, etc.

The City Commission approve a new rental fee for agencies renting the Downtown Plaza effective May 22, 2006, as follows: \$50.00 per hour plus tax, (if applicable) for rentals where no admission will be charged or \$60.00 per hour plus tax (if applicable) where admission is to be charged and/or where there is any other form of compensation or commercial value to the renter.

Alternative Recommendation: The City Commission deny the rental fee increase request. The "pilot project" to provide enhanced services will be discontinued immediately since these were unbudgeted services.