

Harada, Patricia

Subject: FW: Campus El Segundo field space allocation

From: Mancini, Aly <amancini@elsegundo.org>
Sent: Thursday, September 7, 2023 10:05 AM
To: 'Jason McDowall' <jason.mcdowall@gmail.com>; *ALL CITY COUNCIL <allcouncil@elsegundo.org>
Cc: jgant@elsegundoccb.org; bmotta@elsegundoccb.org; jeanettegant@yahoo.com; jstolnack@elsegundoccb.org; dlibs@elsegundoccb.org; kwatson@elsegundoccb.org; George, Darrell <dgeorge@elsegundo.org>; Hester, Arcia <ahester@elsegundo.org>; Brendan Gormley <elsegundorc.bg@gmail.com>; Hester, Arcia <ahester@elsegundo.org>; Cummings, Rachel <rcummings@elsegundo.org>
Subject: RE: Campus El Segundo field space allocation

Good Morning Mr. McDowall,

I understand your concerns and appreciate the need for a swift and permanent resolution. My team has prioritized this and will be working with Mr. Stanford.

I look forward to supporting AYSO and the children of El Segundo.

Aly Mancini | Recreation, Parks and Library Director
CITY OF EL SEGUNDO
350 Main Street, El Segundo, CA 90245
(310) 524-2730



From: Jason McDowall <jason.mcdowall@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 7, 2023 9:30 AM
To: *ALL CITY COUNCIL <allcouncil@elsegundo.org>
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Subject: Campus El Segundo field space allocation

Dear Members of the Council,

I'm writing today to express concern about, and request an inquiry into, the scheduling practices for field utilization at Campus El Segundo.

I understand these fields are managed by our Recreation & Parks department with the mandate that community utilization is prioritized over external or private use. Specifically, I understand the school district and volunteer-led community organizations such as AYSO are at the top of the list.

That's the theory. As a coach of multiple AYSO teams who conducts practices at Campus nearly year round, I have not found this to be the practice. Instead, this is what I have frequently experienced:

1. AYSO requests field space from Rec & Parks for the duration of a season (e.g., Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 4-9, Sep 1 through Dec 15),
2. Rec & Parks confirms availability via email (and presumably adds the reservation block to the calendar).
3. Midway through the season, I show up at 4pm and the gates are locked. Our young players pile up on the sidewalk awaiting entry while I and other coaches frantically reach out to our AYSO leadership and Rec & Parks staff to gain entry.
4. A member of Rec & Parks rushes to the field to unlock the gate. They note that AYSO was NOT on the schedule.

OR, as happened earlier this week:

5. On Tuesday we were at the beginning of our season with our negotiation over field space just recently concluded and confirmed. While in the middle of our practice slot on Tuesday, a club soccer team arrived at the field and claimed priority over the field. They made their field request online and received confirmation. The Rec & Parks staff member at the field checked the official calendar, which did NOT show AYSO on the schedule, but did show the club team. AYSO got kicked off, with multiple teams regulated to significantly less field space.
6. On Wednesday, also while in the middle of a practice slot, an adult league soccer team arrived at the field and claimed priority over the field. Again the local Rec & Parks staff showed other organizations on the schedule, but not AYSO.

If this were a one-time occurrence, I would mark it up to an innocent mistake. But AYSO has been "falling off the schedule" frequently for years.

While it's possible the Rec & Parks department is consciously and nefariously ignoring City guidelines for prioritization and scheduling commitments in favor of private organizations that pay more, I suspect there is a process problem.

My request is for the Council to make an inquiry or audit, specifically as it relates to organizations such as AYSO, into the Rec & Parks process for:

1. how requests are made,
2. how requests are confirmed,
3. how confirmed allocations are entered into the calendar for the duration of the time period of the allocation (e.g., fall season),
4. whether there is more than one calendar or source of truth for field allocation,
5. how organizations such as AYSO can access the calendar for verification (e.g., the version that on-field staff used to justify kicking us off the field on Tuesday and Wednesday) in order to anticipate and pre-empt possible problems,
- 6 and other proposals for how this process can be improved.

What does seem to be clear is the current process is broken and our local community children are harmed. For a city that prides itself on both the efficacy and efficiency of its engagement with businesses and community organizations, as well as the strength and positive impact of youth sports, I believe we can do better.

Regards,
Jason

Jason McDowall
AYSO Coach, Parent, and Resident

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