



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: March 22, 2017

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Recreation Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: 2017 Summer Camp Marketing

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive a presentation on the 2017 summer camp marketing initiatives.

DISCUSSION:

Summer programming is a key focus for the Parks and Recreation Department (Department), providing young people ages 3 through 17 opportunities to participate in enriching cultural, educational, sporting, and environmental activities. Over the last several months, the Recreation Division developed exciting and engaging programs including the introduction of new camps for implementation during the 2017 summer season. Each year, staff analyzes the previous year's summer recreation programs, reviewing the total number of youth served, the age range of activities, and program evaluations. In 2016, 6,896 registrations were processed for summer programming generating \$883,201 in revenue for the Department. Staff has prepared for the new season by expanding popular programs, improving customer service through registration services, increasing full-day coverage, and developing marketing materials to ensure a successful summer.

In response to customer feedback, and to assist with the needs of working parents, the Department has expanded the 'Extended Care' program at Casa Las Palmas for selected full-day and half-day camps. This will provide more opportunity for parents who require an early drop-off, and/or late pick-up. A new camp, "Land and Sea Camp," has been introduced for afternoons. Campers in selected half-day morning camps may also register for Land and Sea Camp, creating a full-day experience with mid-day transportation included. Certified and licensed drivers will pick up participants from qualifying half-day morning camp activities and transport them to Land and Sea Camp, where they will participate in an afternoon of activities along Santa Barbara's waterfront.

Other new programs available this year include Chess Wizards Camp, language camps, and a half-day swim camp at Ortega Park swimming pool and Welcome House. In response to high demand, the Department also expanded programs such as Nature Camp, Skate Camp, and a range of science and technology camps.

Effective marketing is important for the success of the Department's summer programming due to the wide range of summer camps provided by other organizations.

The 2017 summer camp marketing campaign focuses on improving online resources to increase awareness to the community of information regarding excellent Department programming. A new website, www.sbparksandrec.org, provides parents access to summer camp information more easily, at any time of day. With a responsive design for easy browsing on small screens, this is a vast improvement in how customers can browse programming on offer. Regular emails to targeted customers encourage them to visit the site or call to register their children in Department camps and activities, and online advertising will be purchased to drive traffic to the new site. Furthermore, social media advertising will be utilized to encourage users to link through to the new website.

Registration commenced March 15, two weeks later than in 2016. The new release date created a two-week window to make materials available to the public ahead of the *Santa Barbara Independent* summer camp guide, and use this publication as additional opportunity to provide information to parents about Department camps. Traditional marketing materials, such as postcards and mailers, will be used in coordination with social media campaigns to generate interest and increase program participation for camps that need additional promotion.

Marketing plan items include:

- Printed and mailed materials to local residents;
- Launch of responsive website for convenient mobile viewing;
- Standardized informational resources for Department customer service staff;
- Social media and online advertising campaigns focusing on new camp offerings and ways for parents to find appropriate information;
- Mobile-friendly marketing emails to summer camp parents that registered the past two years;
- Regular reporting and monitoring of camp registrations that will lead to targeted promotions where necessary.

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