

- 1) **If the Department hadn't experienced such a large cut to the General Fund, would we still be seeking a rate increase?**
 - a) Yes. Like other private and public agencies, Parks has been subjected to the rising costs of utilities, water, gasoline and supplies. This year alone, Parks has absorbed a 300% increase for the cost of water from the Town of Cave Creek. Although the Department has made every effort to absorb these costs, the Department no longer has the funding structure to continue this business practice. In the past, Parks had been able to count on additional revenue generated by the concessionaires to help the Department through the difficult times. Unfortunately, this year the concessionaires have also faced loss revenue and are struggling themselves.

- 2) **Would the funds received from an increase remain within the Parks Department or would they be allocated to the General Fund?**
 - a) User fees collected within the park would remain within the park system and would not be allocated to the General Fund.

- 3) **Has the department considered using volunteers to fill the gaps left by downsizing?**
 - a) The Maricopa County Parks System would not be a reality without the contributed hours by our highly-prized group of volunteers. Volunteers from around the Phoenix metropolitan area donate their time and energy in all of the parks at the contact stations, nature centers, and campsites. Park hosts are another unique group of individuals who come to Phoenix from all over North America and donate thousands of hours a year to the Maricopa County Parks. Currently, Parks offers several different types of volunteer programs...
 - i) **Park Host Programs** - In exchange for 20 hours of labor a week, hosts get free water and electrical hook-up, dump station privileges, use of laundry machines and a covered site for RVs.
(1) **NOTE:** During FY08-09, Parks had 184 Parks Hosts providing assistance to the park system.
 - ii) **Protect-A-Park Program** - The Protect-A-Park program offers businesses, individuals, and clubs an opportunity to volunteer their time and skills to enhance a County park area that is near and dear to their heart.
 - iii) **Administration Volunteer** — Responsible for assisting park staff with clerical duties including revenue and attendance recording; filing; answering phones; monitoring radio; responding to mail; taking reservations; operating gift shop; marketing; and general customer service.
 - iv) **Trails Volunteer** — Responsible for ensuring users are practicing proper trail etiquette; assist trail users as necessary; provide directions and other information about the trail, park, flora and fauna; clean the trail as necessary; report vandalism to the park staff.
 - v) **Education Volunteer** — Responsible for obtaining interpretive and resource information; answering questions about park features, geography, flora, fauna, and geology; and leading educational programs.
 - vi) **Special Events Volunteer** — Responsible for assisting park staff with special events as needed. This may mean staffing an informational booth, directing traffic, or greeting visitors.

vii) **Maintenance Volunteer** —Responsible for park facilities including cleaning and maintaining park buildings; collecting trash; and landscaping, as needed by park staff.

4) Has the department considered paid advertising within the parks (i.e., benches, pavilions, roadside signs, park maps, etc.)?

- a) The Department is currently working with their legal advisors to develop a Corporate Sponsorship and Partnership Agreement that will allow them to release Request for Proposals (RfP) for such opportunities. Such an agreement will allow the Department to pursue:
 - i) Sponsorship for trail maintenance in exchange for trail markings at each mile and trail heads depicting the name of the sponsor.
 - ii) Sponsorship of educational or recreational programs at the nature centers, amphitheaters or throughout the parks where the name of the sponsor is depicted.
 - iii) Sponsorship of RV/camp sites where the site is maintained or improved upon and the name of the sponsor is depicted.

5) Has consideration been given to offering County employee's discounts for the parks?

- a) A.R.S. 38-601 states that county employees shall receive the salary provided by law, and shall not, under any pretext, receive any salary or emolument in excess of the salary so provided.