



*City of South Gate  
Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting  
September 9, 2021*

# **STAFF REPORT**

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 1**

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**To:** Honorable Parks & Recreation Commission  
**From:** James Markel, Acting Recreation Supervisor  
**Date:** August 30, 2021

**Subject:** Annual Sports and Aquatics Division Report

**Recommended Motion:** Motion to Receive and File

**Report Summary:** The Sports and Aquatics Divisions were greatly impacted by Covid guidelines. Due to the severity of restrictions all Sports and Aquatics programs came to a halt and ceased programming for the first 6 months of the pandemic. During this time staff was relocated to assist with the Covid Hotline call center, food distribution, and Human Services Association programs that were developed during the crisis. As restrictions began to ease, we were able to provide more program options with limited in-person activities returning late 2020.

Due to the pandemic, staff was forced to create alternative methods of programming and activities to engage the community. During the most restrictive phases of the guidelines, staff developed Virtual Recreation programs. The Aquatics division led the way with the Virtual Aquatics Center which provided free resources and activities, while the Sports division also developed a Virtual Recreation Center with links to activities that provided sports and recreation for all.

The lone event for Sports and Aquatics was the Water Safety drive-through. The event was a complete success with Aquatics staff providing Water Safety goodie bags to over 300 vehicles. Patrons had the opportunity to come to the park, get some free items, and say hi to their favorite lifeguards. Bags included face masks, hand sanitizer, a mini-first aid kit, coloring book and crayons.

In September 2020, the Fitness division opened the Outdoor Fitness Zone. The OFZ was initially open Monday-Thursday, though operating hours increased as restrictions subsided. The OFZ was free for all community members and consisted of strength and exercise equipment, functional training equipment, a full set of dumbbells, and multiple Olympic and adjustable benches. During the month of October, the Sports Center expanded programming to include free outdoor Step Aerobics, Boot Camps and Family

Fitness classes. Between the OFZ and the multiple group exercise classes, the Sports Center was able to provide exercise activities for 75-100 people daily.

Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions, Adult and Youth Sports programs were suspended completely during 2020. Once restrictions allowed in 2021, staff began a Youth Drills and Skills class. We started with 2 class times and the purpose was to develop basic fundamental skills for baseball and soccer. The classes were well received and because of their popularity multiple class sessions were offered. Each class had a maximum of 10 kids and every session sold out.

During the Spring of 2021 the Swim Stadium successfully completed phase 1 of reopening. Aquatics provided drowning prevention and aquatic therapy programs for registered individuals. Swim instruction returned for Youth and Adult private/ semi-private/ group lessons. Over 1000 people registered during this initial phase. Staff went above and beyond to abide by County protocols and guidelines to ensure safety. Currently, the Swim Stadium has returned to normal operations and is now offering all programs pre-covid.

The Sports Center reopened in May 2021 to limited activities and access. The basketball gym and bicentennial room were reconfigured to accommodate exercise equipment while maintaining maximum physical distancing. During this period the Sports Center also began youth karate, tennis, and volleyball. All three classes were popular and filled up quickly. Once guidelines were amended staff was tasked with putting everything back to normal. During July 2021 the Sports Center returned to normal operations and operating hours.

The Sports and Aquatics divisions continue to find solutions and alternatives to the restriction barriers that are constantly changing and/or being updated.