

Addressing Brokering of Golf Tee Times at County of Los Angeles Golf Courses

The County of Los Angeles (County) is home to the largest municipal golf system in the nation. The County Department of Parks and Recreation (Department) oversees twenty public golf courses in eighteen facilities throughout the County, which provide an accessible and enjoyable golfing opportunity for residents and visitors. In fiscal year 2022-2023, a total of 1.2 million rounds of golf were played at County facilities.

The National Golf Foundation has identified the Los Angeles area as one of the most popular golf markets in the United States. There exists a high demand for golf tee times, which out paces the supply of available time slots at affordable LA County golf facilities.

The golfing community has expressed concerns regarding the brokering of tee times at LA County facilities and across other LA County municipalities operating golf courses. Brokering involves a private party, the broker, reserving one or more tee times and advertising them to the public for an additional fee. Once the tee time has been sold, the broker then cancels and rebooks the tee time under the player’s name. The result is unequal access to tee time reservations, especially for prime times, at LA County golf courses.

MOTION

SOLIS _____

MITCHELL _____

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BARGER _____

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The Department formed a special committee of the Golf Advisory Committee (GAC) to develop solutions to address the brokering of tee times. The Committee consists of community members, golf stakeholders, and County of Los Angeles golf course operators. In collaboration with GAC and several municipalities, including the City of Los Angeles, City of Pasadena, and City of Long Beach, the Department identified policy changes to address the challenge of tee time brokers.

One of the key recommendations from the Committee is for the Department to update its reservation policy to address the deposit and reservation system. Requiring a non-refundable reservation deposit and cancellation fee will deter brokering of tee times and support increased availability of times slots at LA County golf facilities. To support increased access to the game of golf, the cancellation fee will support the Department's Junior Golf Program, which provides free golf lessons to hundreds of junior golfers each year. The program aims to foster the development of young golfers and promote the sport's growth among youth.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Find that the proposed actions are not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act because they are activities that are excluded from the definition of a project by section 21065 of the Public Resources Code and section 15378(b)(5) of the State CEQA Guidelines. The proposed action to update reservation policy to address the deposit and reservation system is an organizational or administrative activity of government which will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment.

2. Adopt the attached resolution (Attachment A) approving the Department of Parks and Recreation's establishment of a new golf tee time non-refundable Reservation Deposit and Cancellation Fee, effective August 1, 2024.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation, or her designee, to execute any amendments to Golf operation agreements, approved as to form by County Counsel, if necessary, to implement the Reservation Deposit and Cancellation Fee and allocate revenue generated from the Reservation Deposit and Cancellation Fee to fund the County's Junior Golf Program.

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RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A NEW GOLF TEE TIME NON-REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT AND CANCELLATION FEE

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks and Recreation has identified the need to combat tee time brokering issues at County of Los Angeles owned golf courses; and

WHEREAS, the Department has conducted thorough research and consultation with stakeholders to develop an effective solution; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Golf Tee Time Non-Refundable Deposit and Cancellation Fee is designed to deter brokers from abusing tee time reservations, thereby ensuring fair access to tee times for all golfers; and

WHEREAS, recent benchmarking of Department of Parks and Recreation fees with fees charged for similar services by neighboring parks and recreation organizations throughout the County of Los Angeles indicates establishment of the proposed new fees are warranted for cost recovery purposes; and

WHEREAS, these fees do not exceed the cost of the services provided by the County and are reasonable in comparison to other municipal and public agencies; and

WHEREAS, this resolution aligns with the goals of the County's Strategic Plan to promote operational efficiency and ensure equitable access to County resources;

WHEREAS, the proposed fees are exempt from "Proposition 26," California Constitution, Article XIII C, section 1(e)(2), exception for fees for services and products provided and section 1(e)(4), exception for use of government property and do not need voter approval; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Government Code section 50402, the County has the authority to charge for use of park and recreational facilities as may be provided by resolution of the governing body; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles, State of California as follows:

Effective August 1, 2024 at all County Los Angeles owned golf courses, the establishment of a \$10.00 non-refundable reservation deposit to be collected at the time of reservation for each round and player, seven days a week; and

The establishment of new tee time reservation cancellation fee. If a golfer cancels their reservation within 48 hours prior to tee time, or is a no-show or short-show, in addition to the forfeit of a \$10.00 non-refundable deposit, an additional fee of \$10.00 per player would be charged as a cancellation fee.

Edward Yen, Executive Officer
Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles

By _____
Deputy

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Dawyn R. Harrison
County Counsel

By *Sonia L Chan*
Senior Deputy County Counsel