

**HARWICH COMMUNITY CENTER**  
**For-Profit Fee Increase Meeting**  
**March 30, 2016**  
**11:00 AM**

**Individuals Present: Carolyn Carey, Community Center Director, Charles Abate, Caroline Elliott, Mildred Mazanec, Barbara Hill, Dave Frank, Janice Miller, Donna Frank, Marguerite Heffernan, Jeremy Gingras, Deb Paige, Sheila House, Amy Natiello, Brian Power**

- I. Ms. Carey, Community Center Director, opened the meeting by discussing the purpose of the meeting and by distributing an informational sheet with a draft proposal for the fee increase for FY 17.**
  - A. The Board of Selectmen has asked the Community Center to evaluate room use fees for the upcoming fiscal year which runs from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017. We are proposing an increase in fees that would fill the joint need of maintaining the financial sustainability of the Community Center with our commitment to ensuring that the building and its resources are accessible to all.**
  - B. We are looking to get feedback from the groups and individuals who use the Center as the people who are most impacted by any change in fees.**
  - C. We hosted a comparable meeting with non-profit clubs and organizations regarding room use fee increases in January 2016. The proposed fee changes discussed at that meeting were widely supported and have since been approved by the Community Center Facilities Committee.**
  
- II. Ms. Carey presented her proposal regarding the fee increase for for-profit groups renting rooms in the Community Center. The proposal is detailed in the table below.**
  - A. Fitness and athletic classes can be sponsored by the Recreation Department, Council on Aging, or the Community Center. Sponsorship is subject to Facilities Committee approval. This will allow the Department Directors operating within the Community Center to meet the ongoing needs of their patrons and to continue to offer these beneficial and highly requested services at rates lower than those offered by private businesses. This sponsorship allows fitness class instructors to reserve rooms at the non-profit room rate in addition to paying \$5/person/class session into the Town general fund.**
  - B. All other for-profit groups and organizations will continue to pay double the rate charged to non-profit groups unless otherwise specified by the Facilities Committee.**

<b>Room</b>	<b>Current Fee (Non-Profit)</b>	<b>Current Fee (For-Profit)</b>	<b>FY 17 Fee (Non-Profit)</b>	<b>FY 17 Fee <u>Proposal</u> (For-Profit)</b>	<b>Percent Increase</b>
<b>Activity Rooms</b>					
Single Use	\$35	<b>\$70</b>	\$40	<b>\$80</b>	14.3%
Yearly (104 max uses)	\$150	<b>\$300</b>	\$165	<b>\$330</b>	10.0%
<b>Multipurpose Room</b>					
Single Use	\$50	<b>\$100</b>	\$60	<b>\$120</b>	20.0%
Yearly (104 max uses)	\$250	<b>\$500</b>	\$275	<b>\$550</b>	10.0%
<b>Gymnasium</b>	\$100	<b>\$200</b>	\$125	<b>\$250</b>	25.0%
Single Use	\$400	<b>\$800</b>	\$450	<b>\$900</b>	12.5%
Yearly (104 max uses)					
			<b>Average Percent Increase:</b>		<b>15.3%</b>

- III. After presenting the above proposal and information, Ms. Carey opened the meeting up for discussion.**
- IV. Charlie Abate spoke regarding the services he offers through his Super Fit and Senior Fit exercise classes.**
- A. He estimated that between 100 and 120 people participate in each of his classes and indicated that he holds six 6-week sessions throughout the year.**
  - B. Based on these numbers, Mr. Abate estimates that \$4,000 is paid into the Town general fund from the \$5/person/session paid to the Town. This is in addition to fee he pays to reserve the Gymnasium for the year.**
  - C. Mr. Abate said he was happy to provide this service as he sees the benefit the money paid into the general fund provides to the Town as well as the benefit the class has for the participants.**
  - D. He stated that if the room use fees were to increase substantially, he would be required to raise the fees for class participation which would result in fewer people taking the class. This would also mean less money would go to the Town overall in the form of money paid into the general fund.**
- V. Sheila House then spoke and stated she was opposed to a large fee increase. She indicated that the Community Center is meant to be affordable and should be accessible to all.**
- VI. Dave Frank spoke next and said that the worst thing the Community Center could do would be to discourage people from coming in the front door. He felt that substantially increasing room fees would have that effect. He indicated**

that once people stop coming into the building, it is very difficult to get them back in.

- VII. Amy Natiello stated that she has met with people from other towns on many different occasions. She commonly hears that the Harwich Community Center is the envy of many in other towns and communities. She stated that this is something we should be very proud of. She is against a large increase as well.**
- VIII. Jeremy Gingras then spoke and asked to discuss the details of some of the for-profit groups that do use the Community Center.**
  - A. Ms. Carey explained that for-profit groups utilizing the Community Center must be aligned with the mission statement (included below). An example of a for-profit group using the Community Center is one that is currently offering an SAT Prep class. This applies to the mission statement in that it is providing educational programming to people in the Town and the larger community. Further, for each paying student, the organizers of the class provide a scholarship to cover the cost for a student who is unable to pay. Their class rate is also lower than rates charged for similar classes offered in the area.**
  - B. Mr. Gingras then asked for an example of a for-profit room use request that was denied. Ms. Carey discussed a request made by a private business to use the industrial kitchen in the Community Center. They intended to use the kitchen to prepare meals that they would then sell to members of the community at a high price. The Facilities Committee denied their request, as their proposal did not align with the mission statement.**
- IX. Deb Paige then spoke. She indicated that she was once a member of the Community Center Weight Room, but she found that this resource did not meet her needs. She then joined Mr. Abate's class and that has been very beneficial for her. She has enjoyed both the fitness and community aspects of the class which are important to her. She would not want any change in price that would alter the accessibility, structure, or community of the class.**
- X. Overall, people were happy with the proposal put forth by Ms. Carey. They were very supportive of the proposal to distinguish between fitness classes and other for-profit groups and organizations. They understood and agreed with the notion that allowing the Department heads within the Community Center to sponsor classes allowed them to do their jobs and meet the needs of their patrons. They also supported the proposal to continue charging all other for-profit groups a rate double that paid by non-profit groups.**
- XI. Lastly, Ms. Carey asked the group in attendance about whether they wanted to specify a time limit on room rentals, as this was a topic that was introduced in**

**the non-profit fee increase meeting in January. No one in attendance felt that a time limit was necessary.**

**Harwich Community Center Mission Statement:**

**The mission of the Harwich Community Center is to provide facilities for the residents (permanent residents and nonresident taxpayers) of Harwich to engage in recreational, social, educational, cultural, community service, civic, and governmental activities. The Center should provide opportunities for persons of all ages to participate in a wide range of programs that educate and stimulate the public, enhance self-confidence, and promote mental and physical health.**

**The primary responsibility for the program and activity development lies with the Council on Aging and the Recreation and Youth Department. However, the Community Center Facilities Committee and the Community Center Manager may develop and promote social, cultural, community service, or governmental activities in keeping with this mission statement and the policies outlined in the Use Policy.**