



To: Board of Parks and Recreation  
From: Mark Heintz – Director of Parks and Recreation  
Date: April 19, 2022  
Re: Social Center deposit appeal

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On Saturday, March 19, 2022, there was a rental of the Community Park Social Center by the user who is appealing to receive his full deposit back.

Background:

To use our facilities to their fullest, it is frequent that we have multiple activities on the same day at the Social Center. On Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, the Munster Parks and Recreation department had a 'Home Alone' class in the Social Center from 9-11:30am. There was a rental scheduled that same day from Noon-3pm.

At around 10am, several people came into the facility to prepare for the rental that began at Noon. The contracted instructor did not want to slow down her class or cause any commotion and since she was only using a portion of the facility, she let them continue. She was able to instruct the class while the people who entered, set up for the rental later that day. After participants were picked up and the instructor put her items away, she called the Supt. of Recreation to inform her that people for the rental entered the facility at 10am and that the site supervisor was not yet on site. The site supervisor showed up, planning for a Noon opening, as per the facility use permit.

The rental took place until 3pm, as originally permitted, and the users cleaned up and vacated the facility by the scheduled ending time. The following Monday, the Supt. of Recreation, who reviews facility rentals from the weekend, submitted for a reduced refund to account for the additional two hours that the rental had guests in the facility, which otherwise was in approved condition. In applying the terms and conditions from the Social Center user agreement it was felt that the user should pay for an additional two hours of use of the facility which totaled \$149.80. So instead of receiving the full \$250 refund, a refund of \$100.20 was submitted and sent to the user.

This was communicated to the user via email on Monday following the rental with the explanation as to why the decision was made. We further explained that we could not take any further action on the item without approval from the Park Board. Attached is a letter to the Board, appealing the decision made by staff.

Recommendation:

We want to provide a facility that is welcoming and enhances the well-being of our community but at the same time is managed by the rules and policies set forth by the Park Board. While I believe the user agreement was correctly applied as was done by staff, we feel that it would be acceptable to approve the appeal from the user and issue the balance from the initial deposit. The class was able to be completed during its scheduled time without any interference from those that entered early.

While we don't want this to become a regular occurrence, we feel that it is important to leave the user with a positive experience from the facility and the Munster Parks and Recreation department. This situation did bring about an occurrence that we did not anticipate, and we will use as an instructional tool for our staff and instructors in the future. We are recommending that the Board approve the refund of the balance from the initial deposit which is \$149.80.