

Recreational Sports and Services Advisory Board

Report for 6/18/08

Meetings: Attended 1/15/08, 2/5/08, 4/1/08, 4/29/08. On April 1st the board took a bus tour of all the facilities on campus.

Overall: RSS Advisory Board continued to meet on approximately monthly basis for the Spring Semester but will not meet during the summer. Student participation was often underrepresented.

Recreation Park: Funding for this ambitious project was not approved.

Saluki Way: Forced the relocation of some fields and elimination of others. As it stands now, the Tennis courts will stay where they are now and be north of the new football stadium, and therefore be part of the sports corridor on that part of campus. The Softball fields will be relocated to the west of the baseball field. These will be designed to be multiuse fields to accommodate Cricket and Rugby as well. Parking and bathroom facilities will be part of this area.

Student Fees: Modest increase in fees, not including the Recreation Park proposal, passed.

Extended Hours: Regular operational hours were extended to 11:30 on week nights and seem to have been successful. It is felt that it increases usage, gives students one more safe place to be in the evening and perhaps lessens congestion at peak times.

Holiday Hours: As an unannounced trial, the main Rec Center was open for shortened hours without the pool for three days Dec. 27, 28, 29. Usage was high enough to consider something similar during Holiday break 2008, but with announcement and increased staffing. Also unannounced were "no fees" for guests during that time. This will not likely be repeated but because of small number of staff, it was waived during this trial.

Facility: New lighting around the entrance and perimeter make the Rec Center surroundings much brighter at night and hopefully safer. Increased Police patrol has also made an impact during night time operations. Parking lot lights in the North lot were upgraded with much brighter bulbs as well. The older trees lining the north entrance were diseased and considered a safety issue and were removed and replaced with new landscaping.

An increased number of security cameras have been purchased and are being placed as time permits.

There are plans for increased number of lockers including 'free' lockers around the large gyms. This will improve security in this area and reduce theft occurrences.

The biggest change in the main facility is a single entrance into the exercise facility and will hopefully be completed this summer. There will be one entry point at the north end of the building. This will be 'manned' by an attendant who will swipe the cards and have a small theater like turnstile instead of the prison like arrangement currently in place. Entrances from the Student Health Center and the South, second floor will be eliminated

but may still be exit points. Entrance from the South on the second floor will still exist but patrons will have to walk downstairs to enter the exercise facilities. The tennis courts near the law school are in disrepair and will require resurfacing and perhaps relighting as the current light pole locations present a danger. The director is looking into costs and funding proposal for this effort. Program Registration was moved from the front desk on the second floor to the Administrative Offices.

Events: April 25: Past and Present Celebration

A golf outing during the day was followed by awards banquet to recognize students, staff, and supporters of the recreation programs. Two scholarships were awarded.

April 26: Doc Spackman Triathlon was followed by the Cardboard Boat Regatta

Proposals: Staff is looking into ways to increase freshman utilization of the Rec Center which is currently at only 15%. It is felt that if they can be encouraged to utilize the facility in the first 6 weeks on campus there is a better chance that healthy lifestyles will be established for the students and that may pay off in improved student retention for the University.

Studies have indicated about a 10% per year increase in utilization each of the last 3 years and approximately 100% increase in summertime use in the last year. With that in mind staff is developing a facilities use plan that may include modest expansion, and rather dramatic changes in locations of some facilities including consolidation of all the weight lifting into one supervised area and a larger room for stationery exercise equipment. There are plans for improved ambience by allowing more natural light into the facility as well. Some novel ideas in this regard are being entertained.

There is ongoing discussion on building an air conditioning 'chiller' dedicated to the facility. In the long run it would reduce energy costs, but it would also give the center more control of the atmosphere and improve the durability of humidity sensitive equipment, which currently enjoy a limited lifespan because of the environmental conditions currently present. Apparently the physical plant is exploring improved capabilities but it may be years before that comes to fruition, long after dozens of expensive machines have been destroyed prematurely.

I welcome feedback or suggestions.

Respectfully submitted,

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RSS Advisory Board Member for the A/P Staff Council