



# CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

## Parks & Recreation

Kathryn Ott Lovell, Commissioner

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May 7, 2019

The Honorable Darrell Clarke  
City Council President  
City Hall, Room 490  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Council President Clarke,

This letter is in response to questions raised at the April 25, 2019 hearing before the Committee of the Whole on the Fiscal Year 2020 Proposed Budget for Philadelphia Parks and Recreation (PPR). At this hearing, the following questions were asked:

**Council President Clarke:** *Provide a list of the new and proposed changes to the Civil Service qualifications for facilities to accommodate new categories of employment.*

- Assistant Recreation Leader: The specification (Spec) was revised to add an equivalency in the requirements to allow individuals to substitute prior experience as a PPR seasonal employee or other related experience for the college credit requirement. This spec change has allowed more seasonal workers to qualify for permanent part-time employment.
- Recreation Leader Trainee: The Spec was revised to include more degree categories to attract qualified candidates with varied educational backgrounds. Varied language was updated to reflect the current work of Trainees. An experience option was added to the requirements section to allow for individuals who worked six seasons or more for PPR to qualify with any bachelor's degree.
- Grounds Facility Maintenance Worker (Grounds and Facilities Specialty only): Spec was revised to allow candidates without specific experience to qualify with 40 hours of training provide by the department. The spec was changed with the removal of the required 5 months of specific experience.
- Tree Maintenance Helper: The Spec was revised to specifically target graduates of PPR's Community Apprentice Program. This position will not be available to the public. Cabling, treating and other terminology was removed, and the new language reflects actual responsibilities for which the tree maintenance helper is responsible.
- Tree Maintenance Worker (Trimming Specialty only): The Spec was revised to allow seasonal staff participating in PPR's TreeKeeper program to qualify for the position. An equivalency was added to the spec: Two years of full-time equivalent experience in the care and maintenance of trees in the Philadelphia Parks and Recreation TreeKeeper program.

- Community Outreach Worker: The Spec was revised to target graduates of PPR's Community Apprentice Program, a workforce development initiative. The title was changed from Recreation Outreach Worker to Community Outreach Worker to better reflect the work this position does within the community in both the Park and Recreation environments. Wording that was no longer relevant was removed and Park Environmental Services specialty was changed to Stewardship Specialty to reflect work in the park with the friends' groups and assisting with education and program campaigns.

**Councilwoman Bass:** *Provide the Parks and Recreation report regarding criminal activity at recreation centers.*

The 2018 Crime Data (Hazard Score) Report is attached.

**Councilwoman Bass:** *Provide an estimate of the resources needed to have recreation centers opened until midnight.*

All minors must adhere to the City's curfew, which is one factor we must take into consideration before exploring the feasibility of extending recreation center hours until midnight. The current curfew is 10pm for 16 years and older; and is 11pm during the summer months.

The estimated cost to fund existing needs and keep roughly 55 sites open until 10pm seven days a week would cost \$2.7 million.

**Councilman Henon:** *Provide a URL for Civil Service job postings that Council members can share with the community.*

The URL for the City of Philadelphia job postings is: <https://www.phila.gov/personnel/JobOpps.html>

**Councilman Henon:** *Provide a list of all leases that Parks and Recreation has with the School District, including the maintenance and programming expectations.*

Leases from the City of Philadelphia through PPR to the School District of Philadelphia include the following:

**School of the Future**

4021 Parkside Avenue

Date of Lease: 2004

- Required to provide a school curriculum for ecological and environmental studies
- 75% of students must come from West Philadelphia
- Facility is available for public use
- School District is required to improve and maintain the public park playing fields in proximity to the school
- School District is required to maintain and repair the premises and the playing fields at its own expense

**Verree Road House at Pennypack Environmental Center**

8600 Verree Road at Pennypack Environmental Center

Date of Lease: 1988

- School District provides environmental education programs
- School District maintains the interior of the historic farmhouse

**Fox Chase Farm**

8500 Pine Road

Date of Lease: 1999 (The lease is from the City to PIDC to the Fairmount Park Conservancy to the School District.)

- School District operates a working demonstration farm to educate citizens and school children about agriculture and horticulture
- School District provides all maintenance, repairs and renovations
- Farm is open to the public for events

**Manatawna Farm**

Vicinity of Hagy's Mill Road and Spring Lane in Roxborough

Date of Lease: 1988

- Facility used by Saul High School to provide educational programming concerning gardening and agriculture
- Facility houses livestock and provides feed grain and hay for Saul livestock at Henry Avenue campus
- School District provides all maintenance and repairs

**Saul Farm School Pasture and Farm Buildings**

Henry Avenue between Wigard Avenue and Livezey Lane

Date of Lease: 1950

- School District provides Saul High School horticultural and agricultural courses
- Barn facilities house livestock
- Pasture and turn out facilities for livestock
- School District required to provide all maintenance and repairs

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact my office.

Thank you,



Kathryn Ott Lovell

Commissioner

Philadelphia Parks and Recreation