



Committee: Directly to Council
Committee Review: N/A
Staff: Vivian Yao, Legislative Analyst
Purpose To introduce agenda item – no vote expected
Keywords: girls, sports

AGENDA ITEM #5D
March 15, 2022
Introduction

SUBJECT

Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget, Department of Recreation, \$100,000
(Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves)

EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None

COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

- Introduction only. Public hearing is scheduled for March 22, 2022

DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

There are significant gender disparities which persist in local sports programs, with girls and women accessing fewer participation opportunities than boys and men. Gender disparities in sports participation begin when children are young and widen as they reach middle school, and more dramatically during high school. Because of these disparities, girls are not able to benefit from the improved health, social and life outcomes associated with sports participation. In addition, access to sports programming has also been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- This appropriation will expand affordable, accessible recreational sports programming tailored to the interests of girls at all levels, to increase their participation in sports, reduce the drop-off in participation as they age into middle school and high school.
- This appropriation will provide \$100,000 to the Department of Recreation to engage elementary and middle school girls in volleyball, softball, and lacrosse introductory activities, instructional skills classes and clinics, with the goal of establishing County-wide recreational leagues for these sports in FY23. Funding will also support expansion of the Soccer-4-Change girls' program.

This report contains:

Proposed Resolution
March 8 Memorandum from Councilmember Riemer and Council

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Resolution No.: _____
Introduced: _____
Adopted: _____

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Lead Sponsors: Councilmember Riemer and Council President Alborno
Co-sponsors: Councilmembers Friedson, Katz, Navarro

SUBJECT: Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget
Montgomery County Government
Department of Recreation
Expansion of Sports Leagues for Girls
\$100,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves)

Background

1. Section 308 of the County Charter provides that a special appropriation is an appropriation which states that it is necessary to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency, or to act without delay in the public interest. Each special appropriation shall be approved by not less than six Councilmembers. The Council may approve a special appropriation at any time after public notice by news release. Each special appropriation shall specify the source of funds to finance it.
2. According to the Office of Legislative Oversight Report “Gender Equity in Local Sports Programs,” significant gender disparities persist in sports nationally, “with girls and women accessing fewer participation opportunities than boys and men.” Data from the Aspen Institute’s Project Play, cited by the report, show that gender disparities in sports participation begin when children are young and widen as they reach middle school and more dramatically during high school, with girls leaving sports at rates that were two to three times higher than that for boys.
3. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in reduced access to youth sports programming. According a September 2021 survey conducted by the Aspen Institute in collaboration with Utah State University, families face reduced supply of youth sports programs, with 44% of respondents reporting that community-based programs they used have closed, merged with other programs or returned with limited capacity; half of respondents report that fear of their child getting sick is a barrier to resuming sports participation; and nearly 30% of parents reported that their child has lost interest in playing organized sports.

4. These national trends described in paragraphs two and three are consistent with sports participation in Montgomery County. For example, between FY17 and FY20, girls were only one third of all youth participants in Department of Recreation basketball leagues. Many private and nonprofit sports providers in Montgomery County also serve more males than females, as reported through a survey of 26 providers conducted by OLO that showed an average of 36% female participants.
5. The decrease in overall participation in youth participation in County recreation programs and widening of gender disparity rates reflected in post-pandemic registration data evidence the urgent need to provide sports opportunities that meet the needs of girls in the County. There was a decrease in total registrations for youth basketball from FY19 to FY20 of 545, or 7.4%. Moreover, the gap between 14-18 year-old girls and boys widened with registration for girls amounting to just 13.8% of total registrations, in contrast to 19.6% for the previous year.
6. The participation by girls in youth sports also varies significantly by geographic location in the County. District 3 (Poolesville), District 7 (Bethesda, Glen Echo and Somerset), and District 10 (Potomac) had higher overall registration rates than other districts – 89 to 135 registrations per 1,000 population. In contrast, District 9 (Gaithersburg, Montgomery Village, and South Germantown) and District 5 (Burtonsville and White Oak) had six to eight registrations per 1,000 population.
7. This appropriation will expand affordable, accessible recreational sports programming tailored to the interests of girls at all levels, to increase their participation in sports, reduce the drop-off in participation as they age into middle school and high school, and convey the improved physical, mental health, social and emotional development, and educational and workforce outcomes associated with sports participation.
8. This appropriation will provide funding to the Department of Recreation to engage elementary and middle school girls in volleyball, softball, and lacrosse with introductory activities and instructional skills classes, and clinics, with the goal of establishing County-wide recreational leagues for these sports in FY23. Funding will also provide for the expansion of the Soccer 4 Change girls program as well as support field and gym permitting fees, equipment, outreach, and contracted program delivery.
9. Notice of public hearing was given and a public hearing was held.
10. The County Council declares this request is in the public interest to be acted upon without delay as provided for under special appropriation requirements described in Article 3, Section 308 of the Montgomery County Charter.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

A special appropriation to the FY22 Operating Budget of the Montgomery County Government, Department of Recreation is approved as follows:

<u>Personnel Expense</u>	<u>Operating Expense</u>	<u>Capital Outlay</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$0	\$100,000	\$0	\$100,000	General Fund Reserves

This special appropriation must only be used to implement the program using the guidelines described in paragraph 7.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.
Clerk of the Council



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

MEMORANDUM

To: Councilmembers
From: Councilmember Hans Riemer
Council President Gabe Albornoz
Date: March 8, 2022
Re: Special Appropriation for New Sports Programs for Girls

Last month we received OLO's report, Gender Equity in Local Sports Programs, which described the significant participation gap in youth sports between boys and girls and the widening of the gap as kids age. The report found that most providers of youth sports - including the Department of Recreation, private and non-profit providers, and MCPS athletics programs - serve more males than females and few have targeted efforts to recruit more females. Thousands of kids, girls in particular, continue to miss out on opportunities to participate in sports.

As a starting point to fill this gap, we are seeking your support for a \$100,000 Special Appropriation for the Department of Recreation to provide engagement programs and activities in Spring and early Summer 2022. This appropriation will provide funding to engage elementary and middle school girls in four of the most popular sports for high school girls: volleyball (the most popular sport among girls in 21 states), softball, and lacrosse introductory activities and instructional skills classes, and clinics, with the goal of establishing County-wide recreational leagues for these sports in FY23. This appropriation would also allow for the expansion of Recreation's successful Soccer 4 Change girls program.

This appropriation will expand affordable, accessible recreational sports programming tailored to the interests of girls at all levels, to increase their participation in sports, reduce the drop-off in participation as they age into middle school and high school, and convey the improved physical, mental health, social and emotional development, and educational and workforce outcomes associated with sports participation.

During the upcoming FY23 Operating Budget discussion, we will also be requesting additional funding for Recreation to enable them to expand these engagement activities to build out leagues in three of the previously mentioned sports: volleyball, softball, and lacrosse.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting this appropriation. Please contact Jason Fasteau in Councilmember Riemer's office with any questions.