

City of Mesquite, Texas

Legislation Text

File #: 23-6491, **Version:** 1

A. Conduct a public hearing regarding the Parks and Recreation Department Youth Programs Standards of Care.

B. Consider an ordinance adopting Standards of Care associated with the City's recreation programs titled "2023 Youth Programs Standards of Care" and repealing Ordinance No 4943.

The Parks and Recreation Department operates youth recreation programs at the recreation centers after regular school hours and when school is not in session. These programs provide a constructive recreational experience and reduce the number of school-aged children left without adult supervision.

State law exempts municipal youth programs from many of the standards regulating day cares provided that the municipality completes certain required procedures. The municipality must develop a set of operating policies and regulations called the "Standards of Care" policy. A public hearing and formal adoption of the standards is required annually. In addition, staff must provide a copy of these Standards of Care to the parents of each participant in any City youth recreation program. The City may not advertise the program as a "child-care" facility or program and parents must be informed that the State of Texas does not license the City of Mesquite to provide "child-care" programs that qualify for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Child Care Tax Credit.

The Youth Programs Standards of Care were last adopted on March 21, 2022, by Ordinance No. 4943, following a public hearing. This year, the standards include the following updates:

1. Updated the staff/participant ratio
2. Information on new Recreation Aide position
3. Clarification the program is not licensed as a daycare
4. Language to clarify parents will be asked to pick up kids for behavior issues
5. Language that staff will receive additional training to recognize and report abuse

All policies governing the program are made available to participants in the program.

The public hearing meets the guideline requirements of Senate Bill 212 (Section 42.041 [b] [14] of the Texas Human Resources Code) that exempt municipal youth recreation programs from State child-care licensing requirements. Following the public hearing, the Standards of Care will be submitted to the City Council for review and action. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Daily Commercial Record newspaper on March 9, 2023, and March 16, 2023.

Recommended/Desired Action

Staff recommends approval of the ordinance.

Attachment(s)

Ordinance

Redlined Standards of Care

Drafter

Elizabeth Harrell

Head of Department

Elizabeth Harrell