

**FY 2019-2020 Virginia Beach Budget
Response to Council Questions**

Question Number: FY 20 51

Question: What is the business case for increasing the part-time pay? What turnover rate is expected with the increase?

Date Requested: 4/2/2019

Requested By: Councilmember Moss

Department: Parks and Recreation

Response:

Activity Center Leaders and Activity Center Assistant Leader

This proposal will help us ensure that participants of Child Care programs are safe and well supervised, that all programs maintain a consistent standard of quality, and that we are maximizing our capacity to serve the needs of Virginia Beach families.

Overwhelmingly, childcare providers across the nation rely on full-time staff members and augment their coverage with part-time teachers. (In many cases, the ratio is approximately 80% full-time staff to 20% part-time staff.) The Out of School Time (OST) model is flipped – 32.5% of our salaries are supervisory staff members and 67.5% are comprised of part-time site staff members. This approach allows us to provide an affordable program and coverage to operate 94 programs each day during the school year and serve over 3,200 children ranging in age from 3 – 12 years old. (This equates to roughly 10% of the entire VBCPS elementary school student population.) While the OST model has proven to be sustainable over our 55 year period of providing child care services, it relies on the consistent availability of quality part-time child care workers. Additionally, our part-time site staff members are required to take on many responsibilities typically borne by full-time workers at other childcare agencies. We are currently experiencing staffing challenges and are not able to recruit enough staff members to maintain required staff-to-participant ratios and meet required safety standards.

A pay rate adjustment that went into effect in July 2017, had a positive impact on our staff recruitment. We were able to fill only 77% of our part-time positions in FY 17 and improved to 86% in FY 18 – coinciding with the pay rate adjustment. Our turnover rates have also improved, largely owing to the pay rate adjustment, they are down from 37% in FY 18 to 25% presently for the Activity Center Leader (ACL) position and from 52% to 35% for the Activity Center Assistant Leader (ACAL) position.

Our OST staff are currently paid less than similar providers in the Armed Forces Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Department (\$20.13), and the Cities of Norfolk (\$27), Hampton (\$15.50), and Newport News (16.91). We pay assistant leaders less than MWR (\$16.03) and the Cities of Norfolk (\$25), Chesapeake (\$14.25), and Newport News (\$14.62). This proposal will enable us to increase the leader rate from \$13.55 to \$14.25 and the assistant leader rate from \$11.50 to \$12.25. Our goal is to continue to make incremental progress toward higher rates of pay, which is supported by incremental fee increases for the program. We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of each incremental increase yearly. We are confident this pay increase will continue the upward trend of greater staff stability, lower turnover, and improve recruitment, while minimizing the impact associated with a large single year fee increase which would be necessary for a larger pay increase. Additionally, if staff recruitment and retention continues to improve, we will be able to serve more children by clearing waitlists and increasing revenues.

Facility Customer Assistant

The Guest Desk Facility Customer Assistant (FCA) staff are the first point of contact for guests entering the recreation centers. These staff must be able to perform a multitude of responsibilities including becoming proficient in the ActiveNet database, processing memberships, day passes, class, program and OST registrations, provide tours, financial transactions, reconciliation, answering the phones and providing quality customer service. They are the front line staff who must constantly multi-task transactions, registrations, phone and in person inquiries, facility tours, and scanning membership cards while providing quality customer service to every patron and staff entering and exiting the center. We have experienced an ongoing inability to attract, hire and maintain FCA staff resulting in high turnover rates of over 30% in FY18 and FY17. The last pay rate adjustment for this title went into effect in July, 2017. The turnover rate is down to 20% thus far in FY19.

It is difficult to hire and keep these staff by offering 27 hours or less a week at \$10 an hour while many other cities and private businesses are paying \$11 - \$12 for similar positions. This proposal will enable us to increase the Facility Customer Assistant rate from \$10.00 to \$11.00 an hour. Facility Customer Assistants serve as the most entry-level position at our guest desks in the Centers, and have a career path to a Park & Rec Aide IV, a part-time benefits eligible position paying \$11.50 per hour, as well as additional full-time positions, with increasing levels of responsibility and scope of work. We plan to continue to monitor the effectiveness of the pay adjustment and how this position aligns with the other positions at our Guest Desks.