



To: Members of Dublin City Council
From: Dana L. McDaniel, City Manager
Date: May 24, 2021
Initiated By: Alison LeRoy, Director, Community Events
Re: Rental Fee Waiver for the 2021 Columbus Feis

Background

Staff has received a request from the Columbus Feis committee for the City to offer them the rental of the Dublin Community Recreation Center (DCRC) at a reduced cost. The letter of request is attached.

The Columbus Feis is an Irish dancing competition and has been held at the Coffman High School since 1988 when the Dublin Irish Festival started as a post-Feis party. In late 2019, the school informed the Feis committee that the school will not be available. Since then, staff has been assisting the committee in finding a suitable new location.

Summary

The Columbus Feis toured the DCRC and has decided that it could work this year. Typically, this would be used for Dublin Irish Festival operations but it will not be needed for the Dublin Irish Days celebration this year. This is a one year request because the City will need to use the DCRC for future Festival operations. The Feis will still be searching for a location for 2022 and beyond.

While room needs and other logistics have not been finalized, it is possible that staff could keep the fitness floor and gym open during the Feis. This is normally not an option during a typical Irish Festival weekend. Staff has estimated that the rental fees associated with the use of the rooms would be between \$3,000 - \$5,000.

In the past, the Feis has paid Dublin City Schools approximately \$5,000 for the rental of the facility and the City pays \$4000 for additional air conditioning needed from the Events operating budget.

Many Feis participants and their families stay in Dublin hotels and pay hotel/motel tax. Unfortunately, we don't have an accurate count on how many that is since many also report coming for the Festival.

Recommendation

The additional hotel stays from Feis participants increase the amount of hotel/motel tax generated and provides revenue for Dublin's hotels which will see a significant decrease this year due to a smaller Dublin Irish Festival. In addition, there will be an associated \$4,000 decrease in expenses due to not having to provide additional air conditioning at Coffman High School.

Staff recommends approval for the waiver of all DCRC rental costs for the Columbus Feis.

Good Afternoon Members of Dublin City Council,

The Columbus Feis has been a cornerstone of the Dublin Irish Festival since 1988.

As you may know, after the 2019 Feis, Dublin Coffman notified the Feis Committee and the City of Dublin Community Events Department that Dublin Coffman High School would no longer be available to host the Feis.

The Dublin Community Events staff and the Feis Committee have worked since then to find a new location for the Feis in Dublin. The Dublin Community Events staff suggested we look at the Dublin Rec center as a possible location for the Feis. Members of the Feis Committee toured the Dublin Rec Center and it looks like it would be a great fit for the Columbus Feis.

We would like to rent out several spaces of the Rec Center for the Feis including the Abbey Theatre and the Conference Rooms. In order to advance the Irish Culture and Dance we try to keep the cost of entry to the Feis as low as possible.

We would ask the Dublin City Council to give the space in the Rec Center at a cost which will allow the Feis Committee to keep the entry fees to the Feis at a reasonable price. This would allow us to keep the Feis in Dublin.

We hope we can count on your support. The heart of our Feis beats in Dublin and we believe it should remain in Dublin.

Thank you for your consideration.

The Columbus Feis Chair, Joe Regan