

- Recommendation and Vote on FY2022 City of Key West Youth League Funding (Resolution for a Vote attached)

Youth leagues are very important to the City of Key West and the unincorporated areas of Monroe Country encompassing the Lower Keys. City of Key West financial support of these leagues provides enriching and constructive extra-curricular activities for our youth after school and on weekends, promotes healthy lifestyles, provides opportunities for adult volunteers to mentor youth, and enhances the development of important skills like sportsmanship, teamwork, respect for others, integrity, discipline, and the pursuit of excellence at the individual and team level.

The goal of review and recommendation of Youth League funding by the Parks and Recreation (PAR) Advisory Board, as requested by City of Key West Finance Director, Mark Finegan, is to provide a fair and transparent process for the City Commission to consider in determining the level of City taxpayer funded support for these Youth League activities. Support by the City for Youth Leagues includes the annual subsidies proposed below and the provision of well-maintained fields and facilities. In consideration of the new funding process implemented by the City of Key West for fiscal year 2022, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board recognizes that proposing any reduction in funding at this time would be unfair to the youth leagues of our community.

Funding for the six Youth Leagues has generally been routinely approved by the City in the aggregate amount of approximately \$72,000 without publicly advertised disclosure of funding availability or a formal discussion or vetting process (except in the department budget process). Because of Covid 19, these youth leagues have not been funded since FY2019 (two years of funding were missed). Funding for FY2019 was as follows: KW Little Conch Baseball \$19,500, Key West Youth Football League \$18,000, Southernmost Hockey Club \$7,000, KW Youth LaCrosse League \$7,000, AYSO Region 660 \$10,000, Key West Girls Softball League \$10,000.

The PAR Advisory Board spent its entire May Meeting hearing directly from each representative of each of the six Youth Leagues and has reviewed their lengthy funding requests including financial information. Factors the PAR Advisory Board has considered in recommending the modest increase in Youth League funding below has included the number of participants in each league, the potential for growth in participant numbers, the gender and diversity of the participants in each league, the financial information and resources available to each league, the emphasis on inclusion of kids of families that are resource limited through extending fee waivers and scholarships, as well as specific needs and circumstances like the recent change in safety equipment requirements applicable to KW Youth LaCrosse League, for example.

For many of the reasons described above, we recommend that the City approve Youth League funding of \$125,000 for the fiscal year 2022 budget in the following amounts:

KW Little Conch Baseball	\$25,000
Key West Youth Football League	\$25,000
Southernmost Hockey Club	\$15,000
KW Youth LaCrosse League	\$20,000
AYSO Region 660	\$20,000

Key West Girls Softball League \$20,000

Total Proposed Youth League Funding \$125,000

This would result in an increase in funding from \$72,000 in FY 2019 to \$125,000 for FY2022, a modest \$53,000 increase.