

# City of Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department Study

October, 1994

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# THE CITY OF JOHNSON CITY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT STUDY

## Introduction

In October of 1993, Anne Marshall with the *State of Tennessee Parks and Recreation Technical Advisory Service* and Patrick Hardy with *The University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service* began a study of the *City of Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department*. The study was requested by Mr. Lonnie Lowe, *Director of the Department*.

The purpose of the study was twofold:

1. First, to examine the current structure of the Department and to make recommendations for changes in order to streamline management and operations in an effort to improve service delivery and position the Department to move into the next century;
2. To examine current operations and departmental processes, including job titles and job descriptions, training and professional development, and policies and procedures, in order to make recommendations for improvements.

The scope of the study did not include an analysis of personnel classification or compensation, or of the programs and specific services offered by the Department. Neither did the study examine specific facilities. Each of these issues are only addressed in an indirect manner as they bear on the purposes of the study as identified above.

## Overview

The *City of Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department* was created in 1944. At that time it had no facilities and a budget of \$12,000.

The *Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department* now employs approximately 41 full-time and approximately 250 part-time personnel. These personnel do an excellent job of providing both passive and active recreational services to the community. There currently exists a "can do" attitude among most employees, and there is no reluctance to initiate new programs or to take necessary risks. In addition, among many employees there is a high level of loyalty to the Department and to the programs and services it provides.

The Department has grown enormously over the 17 years Mr. Lonnie Lowe has served as *Director*. Mr. Lowe has worked to meet

the leisure and recreation needs of a broad range of citizens and has overseen the development of an excellent array of parks and recreation facilities.

Through his leadership, the Department has grown along with the City of Johnson City. New facilities and programs have been initiated to meet the growing demand for parks and recreation services, both passive and active. In this way, the Department has "evolved" to its present stage, wherein high levels of participation exist and quality relationships have been developed with a number of community groups and agencies (both public and private) who have a common interest in meeting the recreational needs of the community.

Today the Department operates 7 recreation centers, 18 parks, 26 ballfields, an indoor and an outdoor pool, 20 tennis courts, and the Memorial Park and Cardinal Park facilities. In addition, the Department is responsible for the maintenance of approximately 200 public spaces located throughout Johnson City.

1992-1993 figures indicate the Department:

- served more than 250 children in the summer playground program
- had more than 6,000 people participate in youth and adult sports programs
- had 700 children participate in the youth basketball program
- had 1,300 children participate in the youth soccer program
- held 23 tournaments with 567 teams participating at the Winged Deer Park facility
- held 40 different cultural arts and playground programs
- held more than 200 nature activities such as hikes and field trips
- hosted 1,200 children at the "Say yes to Fishing, No to Drugs" event
- helped to co-sponsor a number of other events such as Earth Day, Springfest, Teen Car Shows, Halloween Festivals, National Trails Day, and the Hall of Fame Program
- provided facilities where more than 20,000 people used picnic pavilion and meeting spaces.

These as well as the routine facilities and programs offered by the Department were provided on a budget of approximately \$2 million dollars.

The environment in which these services are delivered has experienced rapid change over the last fifteen years. Today this environment can be best described as "complex". That is, an array of constraints are imposed on the organization due to dynamic changes in the City itself and in the rules and regulations imposed on the organization by external forces. Some of these are for example, a number of federal and state regulations and

guidelines such as *The Fair Labor Standards Act*, *The Americans With Disabilities Act*, the increased litigation and liability associated with the delivery of recreational services, changes in the composition of the workforce, sweeping changes in the make-up and needs of client groups, and finally complex changes in the profession itself - service delivery methodology, the 1980's explosion of active recreation patterns, and the more recent trend toward passive recreation and the demand for additional "open space".

These changes, and the accompanying complexity which they bring demand that the Parks and Recreation Department also change. Specifically, there is a need to examine the organization in terms of the ability to deliver services into the next century. In short, we need to search for organizational changes which can now be made that will ensure the Department's future success. That has been the fundamental aim of this study.

Below is a summary of key recommendations contained in this report. Supporting discussion and additional detail concerning these recommendations are contained in the body of this report. In addition, a number of other recommendations for departmental needs are also provided.

#### **Overview of Needs/Summary of Recommendations**

A general observation which best describes the current needs of the Department and which highlights the direction needed to move the Department into the next century relates to the overall approach to the Department's management. In general, the Department must be managed in a more "business-like" manner. Mechanisms of control (such as established lines of authority and "check and balance" systems), process (such as the budget and decision-making systems), and operational and future planning processes, must be in place and utilized in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the programs and services offered by the Department.

A brief summary of key recommendations contained in this report is as follows:

1. Strengthen the budget and finance functions.
2. Expand planning functions to include strategic and extended comprehensive plans. Establish citizen input methods.
3. Consider alterations in the Department's structure.
4. Improve personnel functions such as staff meetings and hiring processes.
5. Develop standard operating procedures.

6. Conduct systematic evaluations/assessments of services.
7. Use the formal lines of authority established by the Department's structure.
8. Use current job descriptions as a guide to maintain the Department's existing structure.
9. Improve the management of concessions.

## ADMINISTRATION

### General Observations/Discussion

The Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department does an excellent job of providing services to the citizens of Johnson City. The Department employs a number of capable individuals, many of whom "go the extra mile" when providing services.

In general though, the administrative functions of the Department need to be streamlined and improved coordination of operations is a must.

Structural alterations as discussed below, will alleviate many of the coordination problems the Department currently experiences. However, in terms of operations administration, a number of recommendations can be made.

### "Must Do" Administrative Recommendations

1. Planning - Someone once said "it's difficult to get there if you don't know where you are going." For this reason, the department must have a number of planning mechanisms in place which help to guide both present and future actions and position the department to deliver more and better services in a proactive manner. These plans should incorporate existing documents such as the city's comprehensive land use plan and the *Vision 2015* program.

There are three planning mechanisms which the Department should have in place. These are:

- A. A formalized "Maintenance Plan" - This plan should provide for the routine, scheduled maintenance (and in some cases replacement) of existing facilities and equipment. It should include all routine maintenance and the replacement of all facilities and equipment which are not otherwise contained in the *Capital Improvements Program* or capital budget. The plan should also contain procedures for reporting and responding to requests for repair.

A maintenance plan is a procedure or process used to determine priorities, staffing, equipment, etc. so the required work can be accomplished in a timely manner. For this reason, it is important that the maintenance plan be considered in two phases: present and future. The present plan must consider factors such as current levels of funding, staffing, current level of service and other resources available, and then establish priorities based on current need. The future plan looks at the ways different areas can be improved, uses

priorities to establish recommendations for repairs, timetables, amount of funding needed and uses this information to develop a plan of action for the future along with a capital budget. The following steps outline a basic procedure for developing a maintenance plan:

- Develop goals and objectives.
  - Conduct a complete assessment of the current maintenance needs of the park system.
  - Set priorities as prescribed.
  - Establish a timetable for accomplishing your goals. One table showing monthly progress for the current year, and one table based on projections for the future.
  - Establish a level of service.
  - Ensure equipment, staffing, and budget is adequate to accomplish your goals.
  - Establish procedures and standards for each area along with task assignments for staff.
  - Develop an adequate records system for tracking all phases of the maintenance process.
  - Evaluate your efforts after each season and make necessary improvements.
  - Repeat the process annually.
- B. Short and Long-Range Strategic Plans - These plans are proactive in nature and are designed to guide the Department toward achievement of specific goals and objectives.

These plans should:

- identify the vision and core mission of the department;
- include an evaluation of current target populations, projections of future target populations, and an identification of the recreation services needed by these populations in the future;
- be strategic in nature: that is, they should



include a timetable with specific goals, objectives and the action steps needed to achieve these - as well as effective monitoring and evaluation procedures;

- be developed in a grass-roots fashion, utilizing the shared expertise of key staff and employees, advisory board members, volunteers, and citizens.

- C. Comprehensive Recreation Plan - This plan is similar to the city-wide comprehensive land-use plan. It details the "what if" of development and determines the essential recreation needs of the public. That is, if resources become available, and if the short and long-range strategic plans come to fruition, what parks and recreation programs and facilities will be developed, and where and at what level will development occur. There is no specific timetable assigned to this plan. This plan should also contain standards for the development of programs and facilities.

The comprehensive recreation plan also assures the maximum benefit for each dollar spent for administration, personnel, program services, and construction. It avoids duplication and overlapping of services, areas, and facilities, and facilitates the preparation of construction plans and assures their adequacy. Most importantly, the plan serves as a guide for zoning appropriate sites for parks, parkways, and recreation areas and promotes an effective program for better health, well-being and overall community life. Finally, the comprehensive recreation plan should be developed primarily by the Assistant Director for Budget, Planning and Development and the Director, but in consultation with supervisors, the Advisory Board, and the Assistant City Manager for Community Services.

This plan is similar to the existing *Master Site Plan*, but more detailed. In essence, the *Master Site Plan* should be expanded to encompass a "comprehensive" framework for future development.

2. Staff meetings - Quality staff meetings are essential to the operations of a department as complex as the Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department. Communications and coordination between operating divisions in the Department must be improved. In addition, consistency of operations and services must be maintained. For these and other reasons it is imperative that staff meetings be held and that meetings are operated in a business-like manner.

- Meetings should be held at least every two weeks.

- They should be routine. That is, they should be held at the same time and for the same period of time, unless an emergency exists.
  - An agenda should be prepared and distributed prior to the meeting.
  - All Supervisors should attend, and the Assistant City Manager for Community Services should be notified and invited to attend.
  - The meetings should not become "chat sessions". Instead, they should only be used for business. That is, for the coordination of efforts to deliver the best and most efficient parks and recreation services to the citizens of Johnson City.
  - Time should be allotted for a free exchange of ideas, problems, opportunities for coordination of efforts, etc.
3. Personnel hiring - Many times personnel are hired, especially for part-time or seasonal positions, without the knowledge or approval of a particular supervisor. This practice must be curtailed - the supervisor should become a key link in the determination of manpower allocations and the hiring process.

Personnel should only be hired within limits established in the annual operating budget, where each position should be created and the number of hours of work established. Specific procedures should then be followed to recruit candidates, and decisions to hire should be based on qualifications and merit, not on "who you know". Throughout this process, each supervisor should play an important role: in updating the job description and related minimum qualifications, in recruiting and interviewing candidates, and in selecting and orienting new employees.

#### **"Should Do" Administrative Recommendations**

1. Standard Operating Procedures - A number of well written and enforced SOP's will help the department coordinate efforts and operate in a more efficient manner. These should be contained in a Departmental "Standard Operating Procedures Manual" which should be distributed to all supervisors. For example, SOP's should be written which deal with:
  - Concessions operations, reporting of revenues and expenses, etc.
  - Accident response policies.

- Preventative maintenance schedules.
  - Maintenance and repair reporting procedures.
  - Citizen complaint procedures.
  - Purchasing guidelines/limits/authorization.
  - Special personnel procedures.
2. Systematic evaluations - A number of Department operations should receive on-going systematic evaluations. These evaluations should be "numbers" related.

For example, budget evaluations should drive all concessions operations in an effort to improve and standardize the concessions margin. Or, since it has been estimated that up to 40% of parks and recreation users are county residents, the percentage of "self-generated" revenue within the Department should be continuously monitored in an effort to fairly distribute the cost of providing services between city and county residents.

#### **"Nice To Do" Administrative Recommendations**

1. Routine assessment of services - The routine assessment of services is a key part of the planning function described above. However, it is difficult to determine the types and level of services to be offered without quality information (including client feedback) on current services. Routine assessment can also therefore help adjust current services to better meet the needs of citizens.

Tools of assessment which may be used for this purpose are: client feedback forms, citizen or client surveys, formal citizen focus groups, or occasional meetings with a variety of citizen groups for the purpose of determining their specific recreation needs. In addition, demographic changes in the community should be tracked in order to provide quality information regarding potential client groups who may need additional or expanded services.

Thus an on-going (at least annual) method of brainstorming the implementation of new or expanded services should be integrated into the Department's operations and long-range planning function as described above. This systematic process should rely on the information discussed earlier, but should then focus on the expertise of key staff, individuals in the city administration, and members of the Advisory Board.

In addition, periodic assessment of current service-delivery

techniques may yield alternative methods of more efficiently meeting the recreation needs of the broadest range of citizens. For example, there are 4 parks within 1/2 mile of each other. Is this needed? Is this arrangement the most efficient allocation of resources?

In short, more services may be needed. Key questions then become, who needs additional services, what are the programs that can best meet these needs, and how will these services be paid for? A systematic procedure should be provided which yields these answers and allows for the most efficient allocation of the limited resources which are available.

## PERSONNEL

### General Observations/Discussion

The Parks and Recreation Department employs a number of capable individuals, most of whom enjoy their work and are committed to providing a high level of service to citizens.

There is a sense of loyalty in the Department which is very noticeable. However, for a few who don't feel as though they are in the "family", frustrations exist. Though this loyalty is helpful and provides an advantage when operating a complex department where lines of communication and coordination must stay open, in some cases it stifles important feedback and opinions which are needed in order to enhance debate and decision-making.

The best of both worlds can be achieved where loyalty exists and where decision-making is pushed downward. Supervisors must be empowered to make as many decisions as possible.

This report did not examine the classification or compensation (including salary comparisons) program under which employees now work. This is because a full program of this type is currently being developed by the City of Johnson City.

However, a number of other areas related to personnel were examined. Before specific recommendations are discussed, here are a few noteworthy areas which were examined and which seem to be in order:

- The Department has good job descriptions for all positions (note: these do not specifically list "essential functions", which are the basic duties for which the job was created - they are the functions each employee must perform with or without accommodation as required under the *Americans With Disabilities Act*).
- Most employees are satisfied with the training opportunities which they are provided. In general, employees are free to choose a course of training which best fits their needs (however, better coordination of training could be obtained in order to develop recreational specialties among employees). Many of the directors attend the annual *Tennessee Parks and Recreation Association* conference.

Specific staffing and position recommendations will be discussed below, in the section regarding *Organizational Structure*.

### **"Must Do" Personnel Recommendations**

1. Hours worked - Working odd hours and vastly different arrangements is normal in a parks and recreation department. This is necessary in order to meet the recreational needs of the broadest range of citizens. However, management must be sure that all hours worked are done so in accordance with the City's personnel policies and procedures, and strict policies regarding the allocation (authorization) and use of overtime must be in place and enforced. Accurate records must then be kept which document all hours worked, compensatory time granted, and compensatory time taken.
2. Empower supervisors - Each of the supervisors should be empowered to make as many decisions as possible at their respective levels of command. It is inefficient in a department of this size to concentrate decision-making at or near the top, especially in "routine" matters. The effect is to immobilize certain supervisors and hence diminish productivity. In short, decision-making should be pushed downward when possible.

### **"Should Do" Personnel Recommendations**

None

### **"Nice to Do" Personnel Recommendations**

1. Conduct a training assessment - In order to expand the number of "specialists" in the Department, in order to better allocate the limited training resources which exist, and in order to assure a common base of knowledge for all supervisors, a "training needs" assessment should be completed. Based on this assessment then, each Supervisor should be encouraged to locate and participate in training programs which meet their needs or the needs of employees in their division. This can be done by developing an annual training calendar for each employee.

## BUDGET AND FINANCE

### General Observations/Discussion

The Department has in place an *Assistant Director for Budget, Planning and Development*. In concert with the *Director*, this office is responsible to develop and monitor the budget and finances of the Department.

In general, the budget is developed in this office with only ancillary input from Supervisors. This is problematic, since it is difficult for Supervisors to manage within constraints imposed by the budget unless they have both the information and authority to do so.

In certain fiscal years, the Department has not performed within the budgetary limits authorized by the City Commission. This is not surprising, given the lack of an effective budgetary process.

As discussed above under Administration - Systematic Evaluations, the Department must become more "numbers" oriented. It is difficult to translate recreational policies into actual programs without adequate fiscal information. The same is true for adjustment of existing programs and consideration of alterations in service delivery. In short, adequate fiscal analysis is an essential ingredient of effective and efficient parks and recreation management.

### "Must Do" Budget and Finance Recommendations

1. Budget at realistic levels and operate within approved allocations - The *Director* and *Assistant Director for Budget, Planning and Development* must be accountable for the revenues and expenditures of the Department. Revenues and expenditures must be in line with levels approved by the City Commission unless extraordinary circumstances arise. Consistently operating over approved levels undermines the budgetary authority of the city's management and the City Commission, and therefore seriously erodes the democracy and policy-making functions on which the city's form of government rests.
2. Budget development process - Supervisors must be used as a primary source of financial information when developing the budget. A routine process should be developed which provides accurate information, for each Supervisor and program, on prior years actual revenues and expenditures, current year-to-date actual revenues and expenditures, and which then requests projections for current and coming year revenues and expenditures. These should then be reviewed, discussed, and challenged by the *Director* and *Assistant Director for*

*Budget, Planning and Development*. This process should also be undertaken for the capital budget as well as for new initiatives.

In order to accomplish this, the Department should move toward a cost-center (sub-function) approach to budgeting.

3. Generate adequate monthly reports - Monthly budget reports should be provided to all Departmental personnel whose actions may impact projected revenues and expenditures. It is impossible to hold Supervisors responsible for revenues and expenditures (and they should be responsible) if adequate information is not generated in a usable format and provided to them. The same is true for information needed by the Director to control and guide revenues and expenditures on a Department-wide level.
4. Train supervisors in the use of the budget as a management tool - Each Supervisor must learn to read and interpret the monthly budget report in order to translate this information into actions taken when delivering programs and providing services. Only then can Supervisors play a key role in controlling the Department's budget. In addition, Supervisors should be able to design and implement programs and processes which result in more efficient delivery of programs and services. But this cannot be done from year to year without adequate information and training.
5. Conduct systematic evaluations - An analysis should be conducted at least twice each year to determine:
  - The percent of revenues generated from fees and charges.
    - should distinguish between residents and non-residents
  - The extent to which revenues have kept pace with inflation.
  - Per capita expenditures for parks and recreation and for specific target areas as defined in the short and long-range strategic plans.
    - should distinguish between residents and non-residents
  - The margin generated on concessions.
6. Limit the responsibilities of the Assistant Director for Budget, Planning and Development - This position should only be responsible, and should only engage in work directly



related to the budget and other specific duties such as the planning and development function and the development of relationships with community groups and organizations (a recently assigned duty). Additional duties of this position are discussed in the section regarding "Organizational Structure".

**"Should Do" Budget and Finance Recommendations**

None

**"Nice To Do" Budget and Finance Recommendations**

1. Develop a Fees and Charges Policy - This policy should provide guidelines which help determine when and at what level fees and charges should be initiated. In developing these policies, information from the short and long-range strategic plans should be utilized as should information generated from the systematic fiscal evaluations discussed above. In addition, these policies should reference actual fee and charges schedules in effect at any given time.

Program fees should be based on a "program cost analysis" of all programs and activities. To be justifiable, these fees should reflect actual costs and/or should be adjusted to cover the cost of providing "free" programs.

As a policy document, the fees and charges policy should be developed in concert with the Director, Assistant City Manager for Community Services and the City Manager, with approval by the Advisory Board and possibly the City Commission.

2. Establish Community Contribution Requirements - A policy should be developed which details requirements to maintain the name of a community group or agency on a park or recreation facility. What level of initial or ongoing support is required, if any, for a certain park or facility to be named after a community group?

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

### General Observations/Discussion

The Department does not currently have an organization chart which adequately represents the true operations, lines of communication, responsibility, and lines of authority in the Department. This is in part due to the complexity and overlapping nature of the duties assigned to a number of individuals. However, it also indicates a lack of coordination and decision making which exists in many parts of the organization.

This means that many times employees do not understand who is responsible for certain decisions and who to turn to for coordination of certain efforts. These decisions are made informally, and though this has seemingly worked well in the past, although not perfectly, the increasing complexity of the Department's operations demands that more formal lines of authority and responsibility be defined. In short, the Department's organization has "evolved" over time and as new persons enter the workforce, and as new demands are placed on the organization, a more definitive structure must follow.

A serious problem which now exists relates to the gap between organizational "design" and actual practice. Though this gap seems to exist at some level in nearly all organizations, it is very pronounced in the Parks and Recreation Department.

Specifically, the design of the organization assigns duties, as referenced in each job description, to certain positions. When employees either perform significant duties which are not in their job descriptions, or when they fail to adequately perform duties which are in their descriptions, they essentially alter the structure of the Department. This has happened to some degree in the Department.

Many of these observations can be addressed through alterations in the Department's structure. As earlier noted, with but a few corrections the existing structure is adequate. However, an alternative structure may better position the Department to move toward the next century and accomplish new goals. Such alternatives should address the overload of duties and responsibilities associated with the *Assistant Director for Personnel and Programs* and the need for specified responsibilities in the areas of grants, concessions, public relations, parks development, and intergovernmental relations.

When one examines the position of *Assistant Director for Personnel and Programs* it is noted that nearly all day-to-day operations and associated responsibilities are under this position. An alternative structure which adds a *Deputy Director* or a third *Assistant Director* may better allocate

responsibilities and streamline the management of functional divisions. It will also allow for the development of new initiatives as described below.

There are two new initiatives which should be addressed and provided for in the organization's structure. The first relates to the development of volunteers. Though the Department has relied on volunteers in the past, this trend must continue and should be expanded in the future. As a recent article regarding volunteers in local government has noted,

*Volunteer programs can help local governments maintain and expand existing programs or implement new initiatives during tight fiscal times. What is more, when citizens become involved as volunteers, they see firsthand how local government functions and the many service demands that counties and cities are trying to tackle.*<sup>1</sup>

In order for a volunteer program to be successful it must include active recruitment, training, and rewards components. In short then, someone in the organization must pay attention on a regular basis, to the development of the volunteer program. The alternative structures described below assign this duty.

The second new duty assigned in these alternatives in the development of the city-and-schools park and recreation partnership. Johnson City has made commendable strides in this area. However, much additional work should be done, and the assignment of this responsibility through the Department's structure will insure additional development of these partnerships.

#### **"Must Do" Organizational Structure Recommendations**

1. Use the formal lines of authority - The existing organizational structure is adequate, with the few adjustments noted below, but only if used as designed. This means that all levels in the Department must use the established chain of command. Key communications, personnel functions (hiring, discipline, etc), alterations in program or service delivery and design, and coordination of efforts across the Department's functional divisions must be undertaken through formal mechanisms.
2. Perform only duties as described in the job description - Though some flexibility of duties is necessary, each

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<sup>1</sup> Markwood, Sandra Reinsel. *Volunteers in Local Government: Partners In Service.* Public Management. Vol 76. No 4. April, 1994.

employee should perform only those duties as described in their job description.

It is confusing and disruptive for positions to engage in duties other than those to which they have been assigned. Not only does this confuse existing lines of authority, as discussed above, but it also essentially alters the structure of the Department.

#### **"Should Do" Organizational Structure Recommendations**

1. Establish firm responsibility for concessions management - A position is needed to coordinate, standardize, and improve all concessions operations. Though this position could be created anew in the form of a "Concessions Manager", it is suggested that either the *Assistant Director for Personnel and Programs* or the *Assistant Director for Budget, Planning and Development* assume this responsibility. In doing so, concessions operations should be standardized through established guidelines. In addition, the margin on concessions should be monitored and standardized as well.

#### **"Nice to Do" Organizational Structure Recommendations**

1. Alter the Department's structure - Though the existing Departmental structure has worked well in the past, an alternative structure may better position the Department to move into the next century. On the following pages are two alternative structures which may serve this purpose (note: organization charts which depict the alternatives described below begin on page 22):

Alternative 1: This alternative reduces the work load on the *Assistant Director for Personnel and Programs* by creating an additional *Assistant Director* position. Thus there will be three *Assistant Directors*.

There are two options associated with this alternative. They are presented as Alternative A and Alternative B. They vary only by the assignment of differing duties to the new *Assistant Director* position.

##### Alternative 1A.

Cost of Alternative 1 A.: The cost of this alternative is approximately \$35,000, which includes the salary of an *Assistant Director* and 25% ancillary costs. If the Program Manager position remains unfilled this alternative can be financed through current allocations. The net cost to the Department then is approximately \$12,500 (since the Department has not filled the Program Manager position, it is recommended that these dollars be used to help finance

this alternative - thus the cost of the Program Manager position reduces the net cost of this alternative by approximately \$22,500).

*Director*

Total number of employees under this level:39

Direct Responsibilities:

Cardinal Park

Intergovernmental Relations

*Assistant Director Budget, Planning & Development*

*Assistant Director for Personnel and Programs*

*Assistant Director for Centers*

*Assistant Director for Budget, Planning and Development*

Total number of employees under this level: 0

Direct Responsibilities:

Budget/finance

Planning

Grants

Parks Development

*Assistant Director for Personnel and Programs*

Total number of employees under this level: 29

Direct Responsibilities:

Maintenance

Landscaping

Parks Security (*Parks Ranger*)

Cultural Arts

Athletics

Concessions

*Assistant Director for Centers*

Total number of employees under this level: 7

Direct Responsibilities:

All Centers

*Aquatics Director* (all pools)

Community Organizations

City-and-Schools Partnerships

Volunteer Development

Alternative 1B.

Cost of Alternative 1 B.: Same as Alternative 1A.

*Director*

Total number of employees under this level:39

Direct Responsibilities:

Cardinal Park

Intergovernmental Relations

*Assistant Director Budget, Planning & Development*

*Assistant Director for Personnel and Programs*

*Assistant Director for Parks, Facilities and Landscaping*

*Assistant Director for Budget, Planning and Development*

Total number of employees under this level: 0

Direct Responsibilities:

Budget/finance  
Planning  
Grants  
Parks Development

*Assistant Director for Personnel and Programs*

Total number of employees under this level: 11

Direct Responsibilities:

Cultural Arts  
Athletics  
Concessions  
All Centers  
Aquatics Director (all pools)

*Assistant Director for Parks, Facilities and Landscaping*

Total number of employees under this level: 23

Direct Responsibilities:

Maintenance  
Landscaping  
Parks Security (Parks Ranger)  
Community Organizations  
City-and-Schools Partnerships  
Volunteer Development

Alternative 2: This alternative would create the position of *Deputy Director* of the Department.

Cost of Alternative 2: The cost of this alternative is approximately \$46,095, which is an Assistant Director salary based on the average salary of Assistant Director positions for cities between 25,000 and 99,000 in Tennessee, plus 25% ancillary costs. The net cost to the Department is approximately \$23,595 (since the Department has not filled the Program Manager position, it is recommended that these dollars be used to help finance this alternative - thus the cost of the Program Manager position reduces the net cost of this alternative by approximately \$22,500).

*Director*

Total number of employees under this level: 39

Direct Responsibilities:

Cardinal Park  
Parks development  
Intergovernmental relations  
*Deputy Director*

*Deputy Director*

Total number of employees under this level: 38

Direct Responsibilities:

*Assistant Director for Budget, Planning and Development*

*Assistant Director for Personnel and Programs*

*\*Maintenance Superintendent*

*\*Landscaping Superintendent*

OR

*\*Assistant Director for Parks, Facilities and Landscaping*

*Community Organizations*

*City-and-Schools Partnerships*

*Volunteer Development*

*Assistant Director for Budget, Planning and Development*

Total number of employees under this level: 0

Direct Responsibilities:

*Budget/finance*

*Planning*

*Grants*

*Assistant Director for Personnel and Programs*

Total number of employees under this level: 12

Direct Responsibilities:

*Cultural Arts*

*Athletics*

*Concessions*

*All Centers*

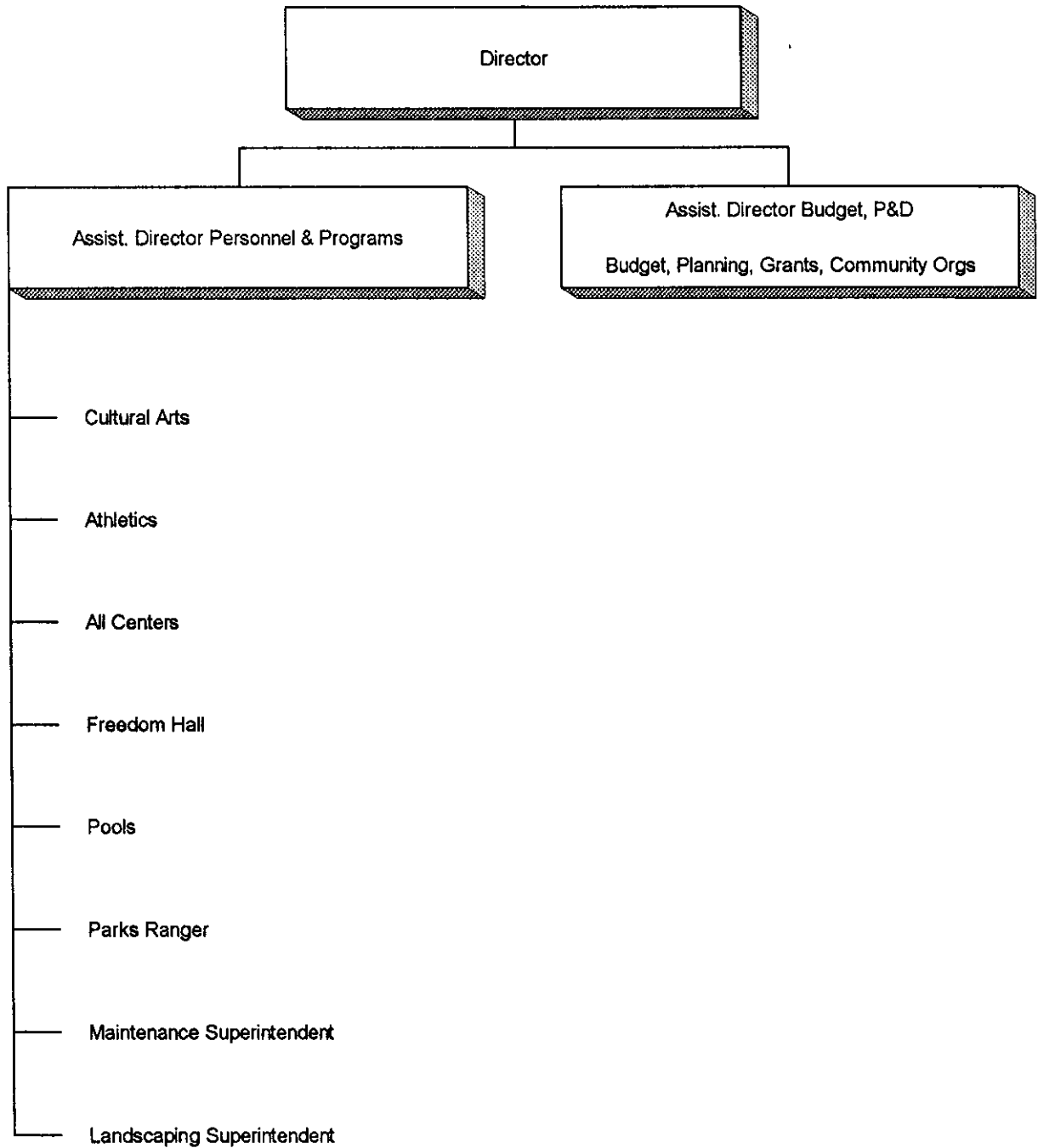
*Legion Pool*

*Freedom Hall*

*Carver Pool*

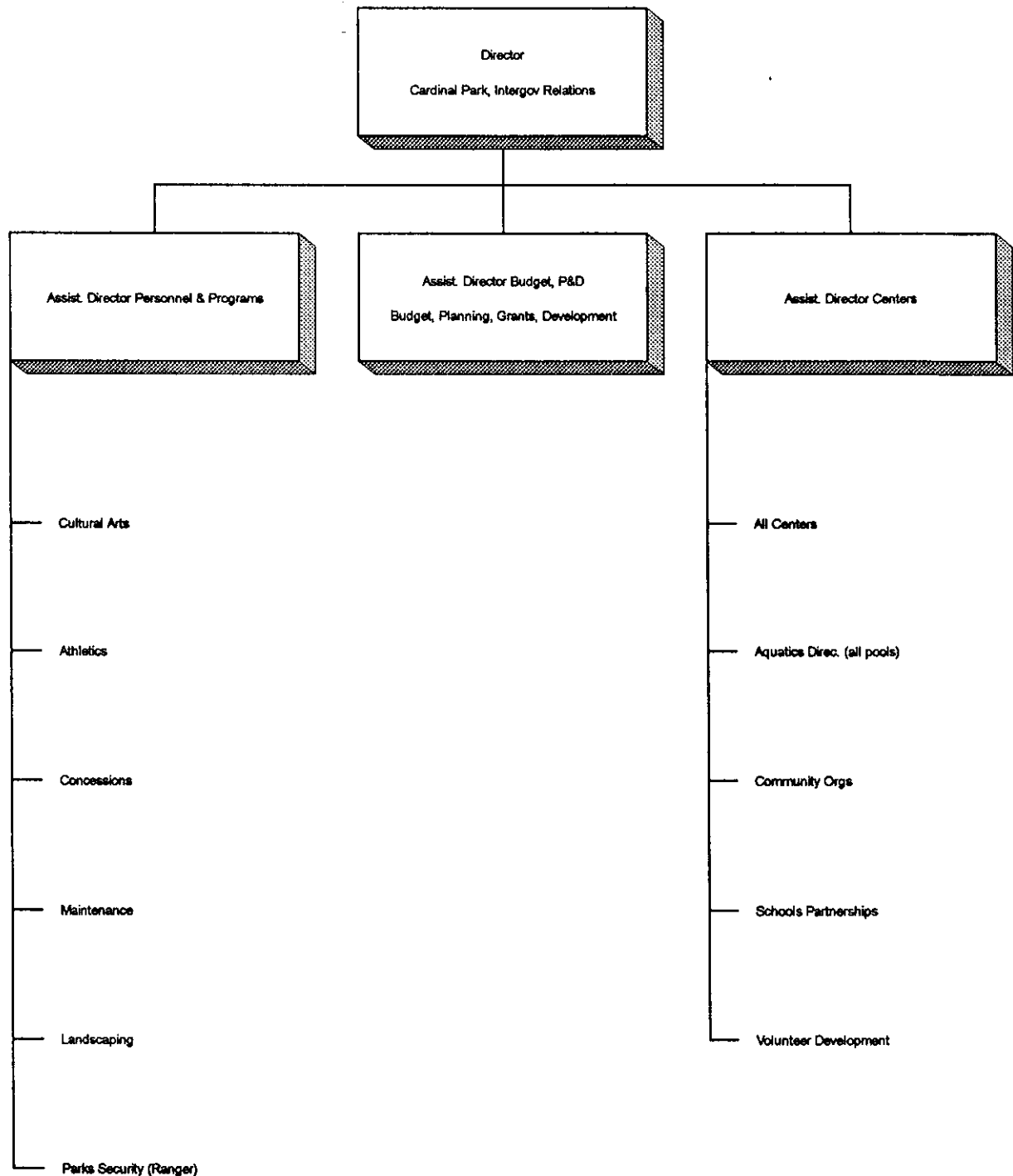
*Parks Ranger*

# Johnson City Parks & Recreation Department: Existing Structure

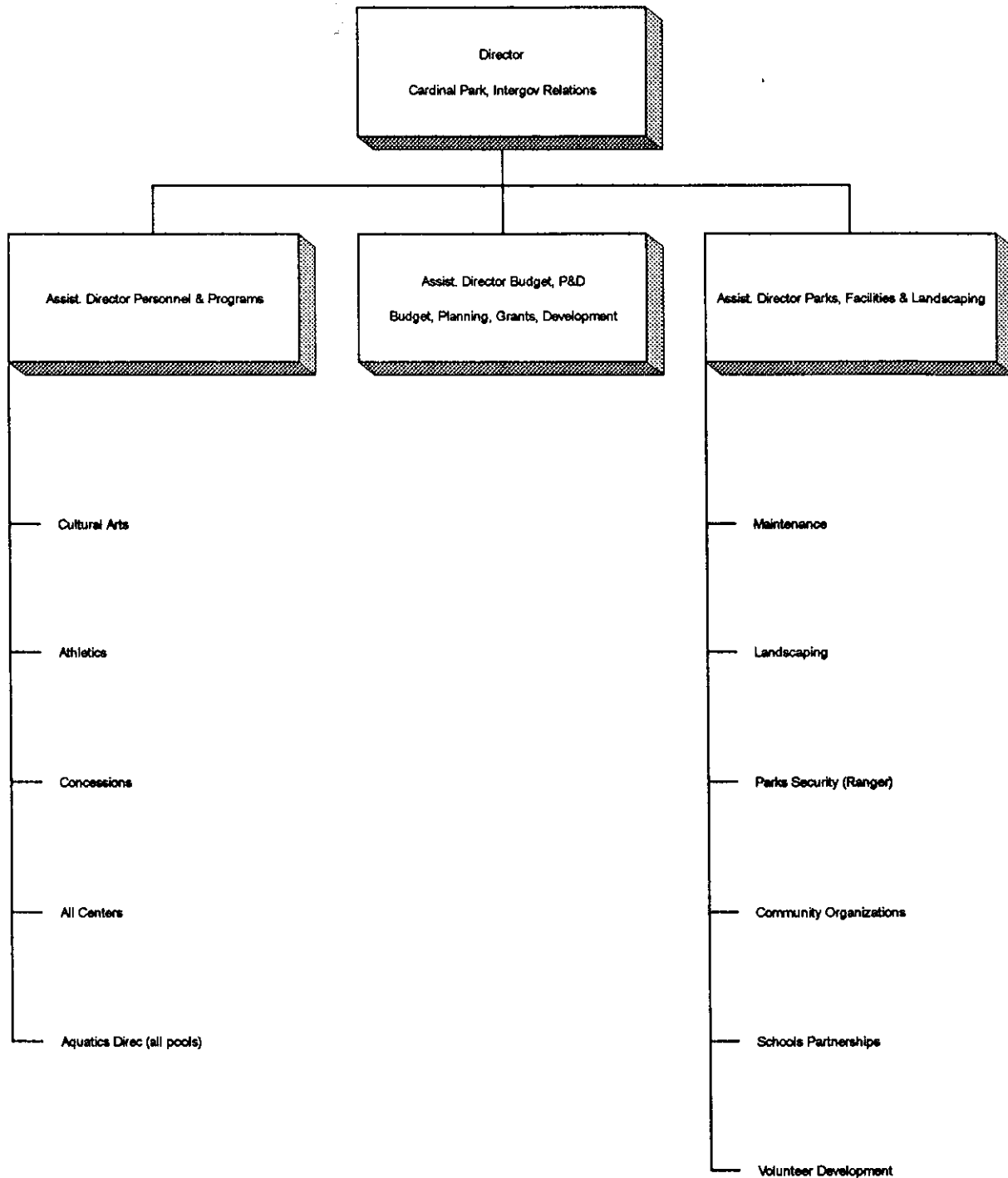




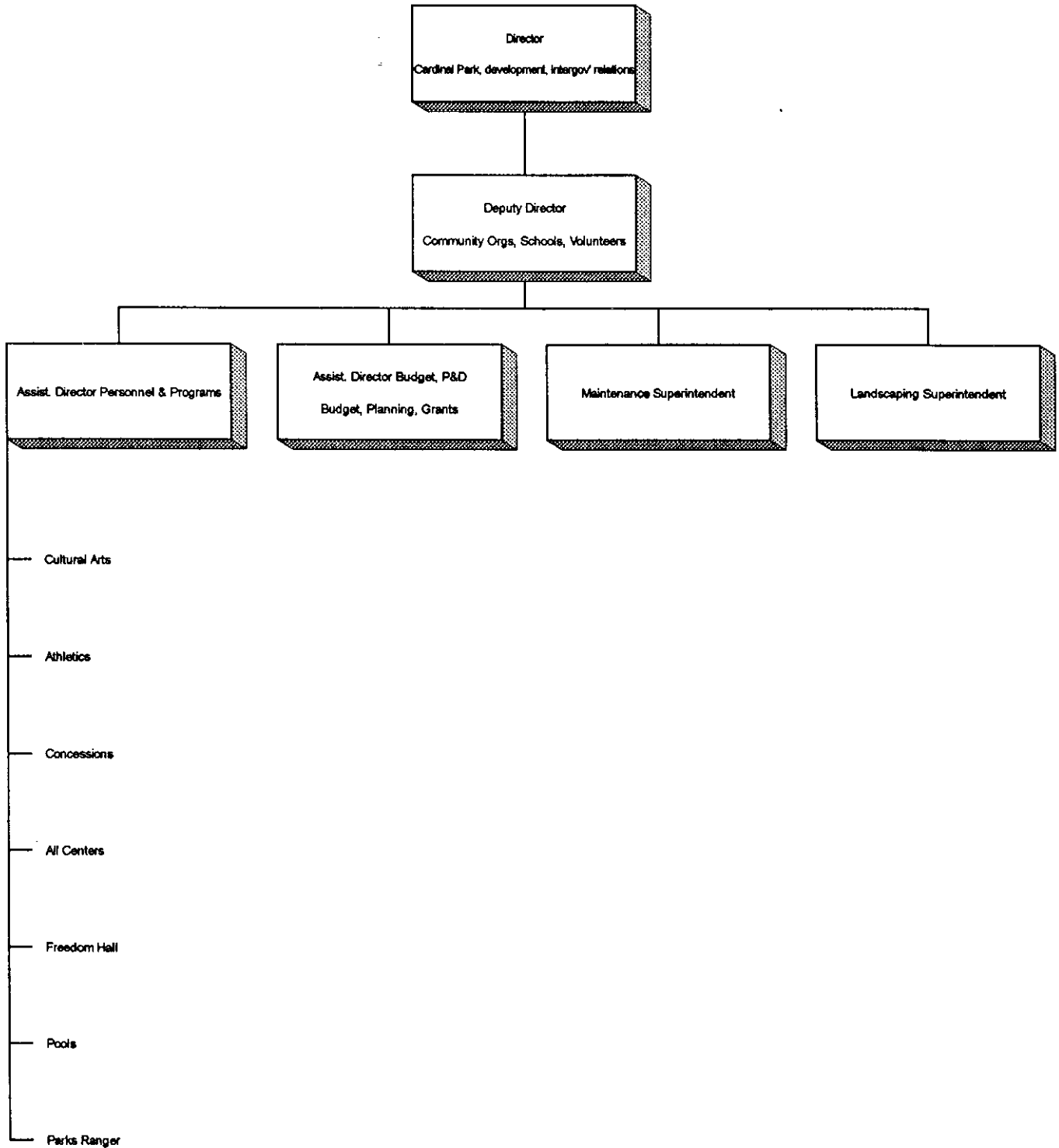
# Johnson City Parks & Recreation Department: Alternative 1A



# Johnson City Parks & Recreation Department: Alternative 1B



# Johnson City Parks & Recreation Department: Alternative 2



## ADVISORY BOARD

### General Observations/Discussion

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board serves in an advisory capacity and acts as a liaison between the city administration, City Commission, citizens, and the Parks and Recreation Department. In recent years, communication between the Board, city administration, and the City Commission has improved greatly and members of the Board seem to feel comfortable in their role.

The purpose of the Board is to:

*... make policy recommendations to the Board of Commissioners regarding the provision of recreation services and the use of facilities, including acquisition and disposal of property related to the City's park and recreation program.*

There are six members of the Board. They are appointed for overlapping two-year terms and the City Manager serves as an ex-officio member.

The general purpose of the Board is to serve in an advisory capacity, not a policy-making capacity, and to work with the Director in planning and developing a program that will best fill the recreation needs of the community. Since the Director and the advisory board must work together closely, the Director should assist the group in organizing and cooperate with the group in carrying out its functions.

Advisory boards become helpful only when they clearly understand what they are supposed to do, and when they accept their responsibilities willingly and enthusiastically. The Johnson City Parks and Recreation Advisory Board needs to be more than a "rubber stamp" group. They should function in an advisory capacity by providing advice, recommendations, and support.

Some of the basic functions of the Johnson City parks and Recreation Advisory Board should be:

- To define goals and objectives of public park and recreation services and to maintain the highest quality of leisure services.
- To communicate to the public the importance and need of park and recreation services.
- To inform public officials and the public of the status and progress of park and recreation services.

- To assist in the development of a sound fiscal plan to achieve specific goals, and to help develop alternate sources of funding for existing and future programs.
- To help in evaluating the services of the parks and recreation system in relation to its objectives.
- To communicate and work closely with other related community agencies to insure a complete community effort to provide the most effective and economical park and recreation services.
- To adopt by-laws to govern the organization and operation of the board and to carry out its legal responsibilities.

#### **"Must Do" Advisory Board Recommendations**

1. Orientation - Each new Board member should receive a structured orientation which covers both the operations and duties of the Board, and the operations of the Parks and Recreation Department.
  - A Board member "Handbook" may help clarify the role of the Board on issues such as policy formulation, responsibilities, legislation, advocacy, relationship to the City Commission and other City and Departmental staff, etc.
2. Diversify Membership - The Board's membership should be consciously broadened in order to reflect the make up of the community as it relates to recreation needs. For example, the Board should always be composed of members from differing locations in Johnson City, differing age groups, etc.
3. Reporting - The Board should provide a formal report to the City Commission at least annually (and should consider bi-annually). In addition, the City Commission and City Manager should receive copies of the minutes of Board meetings.

#### **"Should Do" Advisory Board Recommendations**

1. Involvement - The Board should become more involved in the Department's future direction and should serve those functions as described above.

#### **"Nice to Do" Advisory Board Recommendations**

1. Training - Consideration should be given to sending one or two Board members to all or a portion of the annual Tennessee Parks and Recreation Association conference.

In addition, specialized training for advisory board members is available from the *National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA)*. As well, publications pertaining to the training of board members are available from both *PARTAS* and the *NRPA*.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

### General Observations/Discussion

The Parks and Recreation Department does an excellent job of communicating with the general public and specific client groups. The *Director* works to ensure that lines of communication are kept open and that new initiatives are developed which respond to the broad recreational needs of the community.

This is not to say that additional programs and services are not needed. Surely they are. However, the *Director* continues to ensure that new programs and services are developed and are publicized in order to solicit adequate participation from client groups.

Most Supervisors in the Department are well aware of the role they play in terms of public relations and soliciting support and participation in the Department's programs and services. They in turn do an excellent job of "keeping in touch" with their customers, promoting existing programs and keeping abreast of suggestions for new initiatives. However, additional citizen input opportunities of a formal nature should be made available on a regular basis. Not only will this assist the department with positive public awareness of programs, services, and facilities, but it will give the department's staff necessary information for effective future planning. A combination of methods should be used such as: written surveys, public meetings/input sessions, telephone surveys, special committees, etc.

Printed brochures, schedules, and information pamphlets are available at the parks and recreation office and other distribution points. These materials are very professionally produced and are comprehensive in nature.

