



Madison Parks Division

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December 9, 2022

To: Board of Park Commissioners

From: Eric Knepp, Parks Superintendent

Background

At the September 2022 and November 2022 Board of Park Commissioners meetings, members of the public raised the concern that the summer concert event, Sessions at McPike Park, was approved to have amplified music at McPike Park until 10pm on Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) school nights, Thursday, August 31, 2022 and Friday, September 1, 2022. Residents expressed their dissatisfaction with the event approval as it created significant disruption to the sleep schedules of children in the neighborhood who had school the next day. These comments prompted a request from a Commissioner to review the Public Amplification Policy.

Madison Park's Public Amplification Policy

- Permit Definitions:
 - PA1 – sound limit: 75 dB, 150 feet from the source
 - PA2 – sound limit: 95 dB, at the sound board or 100 feet from source, whichever is closer; Ranger staff monitors and takes sound readings
- PA1 amplification permits, with shelter reservations, are allowed until 9:00 pm with no restrictions on days of the week.
- PA1 and PA2 amplification permits, with permitted park events, are allowed until 10:00 pm with no restrictions on days of the week.
- Requesting an extraordinary extension of PA1 amplification and event hours until 11:00 pm requires approval from Facilities, Programs and Fees subcommittee and Board of Park Commission.

2022 Sessions at McPike Park approval process

This particular event followed Madison Park's Public Amplification policy.

The 2022 Sessions at McPike Park went to Facilities, Programs and Fees Subcommittee on April 18, 2022 and BPC on May 11, 2022. The approval was for an extension of PA1 amplification and park hours on Friday, August 12 and Saturday, August 13, 2022. The committees did not review other dates or amplification requests for this event series as part of this process.

Sessions at McPike Park requested PA1 amplification until 10pm on Wednesday, August 31 and Thursday September 1, 2022. Staff administratively approved this request prior to the 2022/2023

MMSD calendar being made public. Historically, Sessions at McPike Park has been on Wednesdays and Thursdays in August but has not impacted the start of the MMSD school year.

After the complaints were raised at the Board of Park Commissioners, Parks staff worked with the event organizer and confirmed that the upcoming dates of the 2023 Sessions at McPike Park would not be on school nights.

Conclusion

The current amplification policy does not take into account days of the week or school days. Staff communicates with event applicants regarding location, event schedule and event activities as it pertains to known impacts on residents.

Staff recommends this item is referred to the Facilities, Programs and Fees subcommittee to review the current policy and discuss if any process improvements are needed to better assess Park Event permit requests and their impact on neighboring residents.