



COUNTY OF LOUISA

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Chris Coon, Deputy County Administrator

DATE: March 24, 2026

RE: Parks and Recreation Fee Schedule and Turf Field Rules

Background

The Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism has developed a proposed update to the fee schedule to reflect current facility offerings and to incorporate the addition of the County's new synthetic turf fields. This item is being presented for the Board's consideration to:

- Approve the Synthetic Turf Field Rules,
- Approve the Parks and Recreation Fee Schedule, including establishing rental rates for the new turf fields and Louisa Fairgrounds, and
- Approve the Facilities & Field Rental Contract for Parks and Recreation.

The proposed fee schedule outlines rental rates for existing facilities, including school athletic fields, gyms, and recreational spaces, as well as the newly constructed turf fields located at the Middle School complex. The turf fields are anticipated to be completed in April and will significantly expand the County's athletic capacity.

As reflected in the attached fee schedule included in your agenda packet, the Department is recommending a turf field rental rate of \$30 per hour with a two-hour minimum, along with lighting fees of \$10 per hour per field. These proposed rates are intended to balance accessibility with the operational and long-term maintenance needs of these high-value facilities, should the Board choose to adopt them.

Responding to Public Feedback on Fees

Staff is aware of concerns expressed by members of the public, including youth sports representatives, regarding the proposed rental rates for the turf fields. Specifically, concerns have been raised about affordability and the potential impact on participation.

In developing this recommendation, staff considered several factors for the Board's consideration:

- **Preservation of Investment:** The turf fields are a significant capital investment. It is not operationally or financially realistic to provide unrestricted or no-cost use of facilities of this scale without risking accelerated wear, misuse, and costly replacement.
- **Operational Requirements:** The need for scheduled use, supervision, and rule enforcement is critical. Unlike open grass fields, turf facilities require controlled access to prevent damage from improper use, unauthorized entry, or prohibited activities.
- **Balanced System-Wide Benefit:** The addition of turf fields will reduce the usage burden on existing grass fields. This will allow Parks and Recreation to better maintain those fields, which are currently available at very low cost (\$5 per day weekday / \$10 per day weekend). As a result, the overall quality of all athletic facilities in the County will improve.

Field Rules and Operational Requirements

To protect the County's investment, the synthetic turf fields will operate under a strict set of rules and usage standards, which are included in the agenda packet. These rules are necessary to preserve the integrity and lifespan of the fields.

Key provisions include:

- **Controlled Access:** Fields are closed when gates are locked and may not be used without supervision. Unauthorized use presents both liability and maintenance risks.
- **Equipment Restrictions:** Only approved equipment is permitted. Metal cleats, unapproved gear, and movement of field equipment (goals, scoreboards) are prohibited.
- **Prohibited Items:** Food, sports drinks, tobacco products, glass containers, and sharp objects are not allowed on the turf.
- **Prohibited Activities:** Activities such as golf, throwing events, digging, or any action that disturbs the turf fibers or infill are strictly prohibited.
- **General Protection Measures:** No chairs, coolers, or similar items may be placed on the turf surface, and only water is permitted on the field.

These rules demonstrate the level of care required for synthetic turf facilities and reinforce the need for structured oversight and user accountability.

Staffing and Oversight Needs

To support the proposed operational framework, staff is recommending the addition of a part-time Parks and Recreation employee dedicated to turf field operations.

This position would:

- Coordinate scheduling and field reservations

- Ensure compliance with field rules and rental agreements
- Monitor for unauthorized use and address liability concerns
- Support transitions between user groups and manage lighting operations
- Assist in maintaining field conditions and reporting issues

Given the proposed requirements outlined above, along with early instances of attempted unauthorized access, this position would play a key role in ensuring the facilities are properly managed and maintained, if approved by the Board.

Public Expectations and Communication

Staff will work to ensure that all user groups clearly understand:

- Appropriate uses and restrictions for turf fields
- Reservation procedures and scheduling requirements
- Responsibilities tied to field usage

Clear communication and consistent enforcement will be essential to maintaining these facilities to a high standard.

Recommendation

Staff is presenting the proposed Synthetic Turf Field Rules, Parks and Recreation Facilities and Field Rental Contract, and Fee Schedule, including turf field and lighting rates and a rental fee for the Louisa County Fairgrounds, for the Board's consideration.

Staff will implement the direction provided by the Board and can adjust the approach based on policy preferences, priorities related to affordability, and the desired level of operational oversight.