

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY

DEPT: Environmental Resources-Parks & Recreation

BOARD AGENDA # *B-5

Urgent

Routine

AGENDA DATE December 9, 2008

CEO Concurs with Recommendation YES NO

4/5 Vote Required YES NO

(Information Attached)

SUBJECT:

Approval to Authorize the Department of Environmental Resources and Department of Parks and Recreation to Implement the E-Pay Process

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Authorize the Use of the E-Payment Process for Environmental Resources Annual Program Fees.
2. Authorize the Use of the E-Payment Process for the Implementation of the Online Stanislaus County Parks Reservation System.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Costs associated with implementing an e-payment solution are being absorbed within departmental existing budgeted appropriations. The Departments currently accept credit cards over the counter/phone and absorb approximately \$11,400 in merchant fees annually for both departments. The Department of Environmental Resources will work with SBT to develop the e-payment website.

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2008-827

On motion of Supervisor Monteith, Seconded by Supervisor Grover
and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Grover, Monteith, and Vice Chairman DeMartini

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: Mayfield

Abstaining: Supervisor: None


1) X Approved as recommended

2) _____ Denied

3) _____ Approved as amended

4) _____ Other:

MOTION:



ATTEST: CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk

File No.

Approval to Authorize the Department of Environmental Resources and Department of Parks and Recreation to Implement the E-Pay Process

DISCUSSION:

One of the goals of the Board priority of Efficient delivery of public services is to increase e-government (electronic) services and transactions. As part of this goal, on November 21, 2006, the Board of Supervisors approved a Customer E-Payment Policy. On September 23, 2008, the Board of Supervisors approved the E-Payment Master Agreement with Link-2-Gov and authorized Animal Services to absorb the additional fee incurred when payment is made through the web application.

The Department of Environmental Resources is requesting approval to implement an e-payment process to allow businesses to pay program fees online. The Department will absorb the additional fees, resulting from online payments, in the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 budget appropriations. The attached E-Payment Business Case estimates that 25% of annual invoices could be processed online the first year. This could result in a savings of staff time of 250 hours, as well as increase customer service and increase audit controls.

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting approval to implement an e-payment process in conjunction with the Online Parks Reservation System that the Board approved June 3, 2008. The Online Parks Reservation System is scheduled to go live on May 1, 2009 and the Department will absorb the additional fees, resulting from online payments, in the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 budget appropriations. The attached E-Payment Business Case estimates that 25% of the current revenue at Woodward Reservoir, Modesto Reservoir and Frank Raines Off-Highway Vehicle Park could be processed online in the first year through the reservations made online and will result in more efficient customer service for the public we serve.

The Department of Environmental Resources and Parks and Recreation staff are working with Strategic Business Technology (SBT) and the Treasurer-Tax Collector in order to ensure the e-payment solution is implemented effectively.

POLICY ISSUES:

The Board of Supervisors should determine if approval of the recommendations will support the Board's priority of efficient delivery of public services and is consistent with the Customer E-Payment Policy.

STAFFING IMPACT:

There is no staffing impact associated with this agenda item.

Stanislaus County Environmental Resources
E-Payment Business Case
October 27, 2008

The long-term goal for the Department of Environmental Resources (DER) is to provide the most cost effective, accessible, user-friendly means of paying annual fees for the public that we serve.

The Department processes approximately 4,000 program fee billings annually. Revenue in excess of \$2,000,000 is received annually in the form of cash, checks, and credit card payments. Customers either mail their payments or the Department accepts walk-in payments at the DER reception counter. The payments are then processed through the Accounting Unit and funds are held in a safe until a deposit can be made with the County's Treasury Department. With the implementation of E-payments, a portion of this revenue will be processed automatically reducing the need for customers to mail in or bring in their payments, and reducing the need for accounting staff to manually process the payments and deposit the funds to the Treasury.

With the implementation of the e-payment solution, it is estimated that customers will process 25% of payments on-line in the first year, 30% in the second year, and 40% in the third year.

Implementing E-payments will reduce the number of payments processed through the DER Accounting Unit resulting in an estimated savings of approximately 250 hours the first year depending on the ease of reconciling the E-payments. Over the years, DER has received an audit concern regarding holding more than \$30,000 in the safe at any one time. The implementation of E-payments is anticipated to reduce the time required by accounting staff to ensure that funds are deposited in the Treasury in a timely manner and enhance audit controls. While it is hopeful that implementing E-payments will provide a time savings to the staff in the Accounting Unit, implementing E-payments is anticipated to result in more efficient customer service for the public we serve. Customers will no longer be required to make payments in person or by mail, saving on postage and travel costs.

The Department will absorb the cost of the E-payment fees through the current budget appropriations.

Stanislaus County Parks and Recreation
E-Payment Business Case
October 27, 2008

The long-term goal for the Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide the most cost effective, accessible, user-friendly means of delivering online parks reservations to the public.

On June 3, 2008, the Board of Supervisors approved spending \$213,695.80 for the Online Parks Reservation System. The benefit to the public is to provide an online system through which camping reservations can be made at Woodward Reservoir, Modesto Reservoir and Frank Raines Off-Highway Vehicle Park. In order for the online reservations to be successful the ability to accept E-payments is a necessity.

During the Fiscal Year 2007-2008, approximately \$1,600,000 in revenue was generated at these three locations. The revenue is collected at the entrance station of each location as customers arrive in the park. During the busy summer season at Modesto Reservoir and Woodward Reservoir, the payment of customers at the entrance station can result in long lines of vehicles waiting for entrance to the parks. With the implementation of the Online Parks Reservation System and E-payment, a portion of this revenue will be processed automatically reducing the need for customers to wait in long lines and collection of money at the entrance stations.

With the implementation of the e-payment solution, it is estimated that customers will process 25% of payments on-line in the first year, 30% in the second year, and 40% in the third year.

While implementing the online reservation system and E-payment is not expected to result in less staffing at the entrance stations, it is anticipated that the online reservations and E-payments will result in more efficient customer service for the public we serve. It is anticipated that this service will reduce the amount of cash that is collected and held in the entrance stations and enhance the audit controls over the revenue.

The Department will absorb the cost of the E-payment fees through the current budget appropriations.