

Are you smarter than a third grader?

Yesterday I was talking to several people about the impact fee discussion with the Feather River Recreation and Park District and the City of Oroville. It's really very simple. I've had many people ask me questions about impact fees, such as "What are impact fees?" A couple of the people I talked to encouraged me to write my article about impact fees, to explain what they are and why the District needs them. They also said I should make it very simple to understand, similar to the new TV show "Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader?" Another person disagreed and said I should write it at a third-grade level. I said I would try. So here goes.

"Good morning, class."

"Good morning, Mrs. Hill."

"Class, I hope you had a good weekend. I got back your reports on what parks you like to go to in the City of Oroville, and what you like to do. It was really fun to read them because you do so many fun things in the parks on a regular basis. Caleb, it was great to read your story of how you like to go with your mom to Riverbend Park and how you both really enjoyed Pumpkins in the Park. And, Emily, it seems that you really love to play soccer at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and Little League at Nolan Sports Park. And, Ethan, I think it's neat how you and your grandfather play tennis at the Bedrock Tennis Courts and then he takes you over to the Bedrock Skate and Bike Park. Anna, I know you like to swim, and it's great that you go to Nelson Pool during the summer. And, Olivia, I love rocking on the green dinosaur at Playtown Park, too!

Class, I want to explain that you're able to play in these parks because a special District cares about having a clean and safe park for everyone. But it takes money to do that. The District is asking the City to allow it to collect money that it doesn't receive right now to improve the older parks and build new ones for all the boys and girls who move to Oroville.

Yes, Tyler? You say your daddy doesn't want to pay anymore taxes, and that taxes are bad, and he has no money left after the government takes it all?

Well, the money that the District is trying to collect is not a tax. This money would be collected when Bob the Builder gets permission from the City to build a new home. In that new home would be a new family – a mother, father, and maybe a brother and sister. This means there will be more boys and girls playing in the parks, and there will be a greater need to build additional parks and fix old parks. Bob the Builder only pays that money to the District one time for his new home.

Yes, Natalie? Your uncle says the City owns all the parks in Oroville? Well, that isn't necessarily true. The City of Oroville owns less than 25 acres of parks. The Feather River Recreation and Park District owns more than 200 acres of parkland within City limits.

You're wondering if the City of Oroville collects this kind of money from Bob the Builder? Yes, they do. But the District does not.

Why doesn't the City allow FRRPD to collect their fee? Well, that's a good question. Here's your homework. I want you all to write a letter to the City Council members that did not vote in favor of FRRPD receiving impact fees to ask them why they won't help the Park District collect their park impact fees.

Class, it's a lot like Aaron's story that I read about how he and his dad built a bridge across the creek by their house. Aaron's dad said it is good to build bridges so that all of us can play together, and he's right.

Well, there's the recess bell. We will talk about this more later. Now I hope that the City of Oroville can play nicely with FRRPD, just like you all play nicely together in the parks."

For those of you that are older than a third grader, you can find a one-page information sheet that explains FRRPD's impact fees as well as information about how they are used. You can pick up a copy at the District office, or check it out on our web site at www.frrpd.com!

Clue #1

Argh! Me treasure's been stolen! Scoundrels they be – to the sharks they go! Argh, but there be bounty of treasures in the land of gold. A long time ago there be a ship drudging and dredging up the Feather River in search of treasures beyond me imagination. One of the most feared pirates of them all – his name was Matthew. I hear tell the last words to come from his lips be "Argh, the gates! Pass the gates! Argh, down the road from the gates!"

Argh – this be only tha first part of tha clue! The mud on my boots tastes better than the coffee in this town. But, argh, the second half of tha clue be in these shops.

Quote

"The more I know, the more I realize I don't know, you know?" Bob Sharkey, General Manager, FRRPD

Fun Facts

There are 206 bones in the adult human body and there are 300 in children. As children grow, some of their bones fuse together.

Armadillos, opossums, and sloth's spend about 80% of their lives sleeping.

Everyone's tongue print is different.

FRRPD Upcoming Events

Calling all teens! Come dance the night away at the Teen Dance tonight from 7-10 PM at the Municipal Auditorium.

Be sure to sign up for John Shult's Cartooning class, which begins Tues, Jan. 22. The class is held from 4-5 PM at the Municipal Auditorium.

ART for Kids begins on Wed., Jan. 23. The class is held from 4-5 PM at the Municipal Auditorium.

Mighty Mites basketball (grades K-5) begins Feb. 2. Games are held at the Municipal Auditorium.

Be on the lookout for our 2008 Recreation Guide, which is full of exciting programs, fun classes and special events!

See you in the parks!