

Carmichael, California
March 7, 2022

Ms. Joyce Carroll, Chairperson
CRPD's Advisory Board of Directors

Dear Ms. Carroll,

I am writing to you seeking your assistance in the resolution of an issue that has been very troublesome to the Carmichael Senior Citizens and its members.

The Carmichael Senior Citizens Club is a social, unincorporated association that has been in existence for more than 53 years. The Club membership varies but, at the present time, there are about 25 seniors who participate in its social activities twice a month.

Since its establishment, the Club has met at the Carmichael Parks and Recreation District clubhouse, 5750 Grant Avenue, Carmichael.

Whenever Carmichael Seniors meet, its social activities generally consist of

Invited speakers,

Potluck lunches,

Music entertainment,

Celebrations of Mothers day, Valentine's day, St. Patrick's day

Special trips,

Dine out,

Participate in community events - 4th of July Parade,

Donate monetary resources to local charities.

Playing bingo. Bingo playing is one of the members favorite entertainment pastimes.

Everytime the Club meets, each member in attendance is asked to contribute 50 cents to help pay for such expenses as coffee, tea, napkins, paper cups, plastic utensils, decorations, etc. Invited guests are not asked to contribute.

And whenever bingo is played, each member who wishes to play is asked to pay 50 cents per bingo card. The money collected from the use of the bingo cards is placed in the kitty and used fully to pay the bingo winners. No money whatsoever goes to the Carmichael Seniors Club. Everytime there is a bingo game, the total amount paid to the bingo players is less than \$30 dollars.

These types of activities have been conducted by the Carmichael Citizens Club for the last 53 years. In the last several decades the Club has had the privilege of having its meetings at the Carmichael Parks & Recreation District clubhouse.

Recently, a disgruntled member complained to the Park District that the Club was conducting bingo games in violation of the District's policies and County regulations.

In light of that concern, we contacted the County Sheriff's Office, the office that oversees the permitting of bingo operations. Their view is that the Carmichael Senior Citizens Club is purely social, very small and therefore does not require any license to conduct its bingo games.

As for the possible violation of Park District policies, we contacted Mr. Mike Blondino, District Administrator and his staff. The Club received a letter, dated February 10, 2022 and signed by Mr. Blondino, Administrator and by Ms. Alaina Lofthus, Recreation Services Manager, stating the Policies of the Park District regarding the uses within the Park District facilities and the recommended action;

- 1) **Bingo must stop until a proper bingo license is secured from the Sheriff's Office.**
- 2) **Carmichael Recreation & Park District does not allow pay at the door or monetary exchange activities at events.**

The Club's Response

As mentioned above, our contacts with the Sheriff's Office regarding the Carmichael Citizens Club and its bingo operations, the Sheriff's Office informs the Club that because of the nature of the Club and the size of the operation, a license is not required.

As for the possible violation / conflict with the Park District policies, we took a close look at those policies. Here is how the policy reads;

Facility Rental Policy

General Information

(paragraph 3)

3. **CRPD does not allow pay at the door or any monetary exchange activities at events. Individuals or Groups are not allowed to sell goods or services for commercial gain.**

The Club contends that no pay is charged to anyone at the door and certainly not to enter and attend the meeting. Yes, the Club members are asked to contribute 50 cents to help pay for the expenses, as it was explained above.

It is the view of the Club that no activity conducted by the Club members during its meeting, including paying for cards to play bingo, and use that total money (normally, no more than \$30 dollars) to pay the bingo winners with no money whatsoever going to the Club, is in any way a "monetary exchange" in violation of the Park District's policies.

Conversely, it is inconceivable that the Park District policy, shown above, was intended to prevent associations like the Carmichael Senior Citizens Club from playing bingo and prevent the participants from paying 50 cents per bingo card and prevent that all the money collected (\$30 dollars) be used to pay the bingo winners.

We don't believe that is the intent of the Park District policy.

REQUEST

The Carmichael Senior Citizens Club has always been a very responsible association and its operations always guided by principles of good citizenship.

On behalf of the Club, I respectfully ask the Carmichael Recreation and Park District's Advisory Board of Directors and the District Administrator to allow the members of Carmichael Senior Citizens Club to continue to play the same bingo game as it has done in the past decades at this District's clubhouse.

Sincerely yours,



Helen Freitas, President
Carmichael Senior Citizens Club

Cc: Honorable Supervisor Rich Desmond, District 3
Vanessa McCarthy-Olmstead, Chief of Staff

Mike Blondino, CRPD's District Administrator

Chris Ives, Member of CRPD's Advisory Board of Directors

Byron Borman, Member of CRPD's Advisory Board of Directors

Michael Rockenstein, Member of CRPD's Advisory Board of Directors

Brooke Judd, Member of CRPD's Advisory Board of Directors