To: Basketball Coaches, City of Oak Ridge Recreation & Parks Basketball Leagues

From: John Harris: Recreation Program Supervisor for Athletics, City of Oak Ridge Dept. of Rec & Parks

Re: New Player/Free Agent Policy

Date: 10/3/2016

 Beginning in the 2016 season, we will be instituting a new “free agent” registration system in the leagues, which will allow teams to more easily add extra players if and when they are needed. This new system will help teams in the league by giving them a supply of extra players that they can add if needed, and will give those individuals that don’t have a team a better opportunity to get to play and become a part of a team.

 Beginning this spring, the Rec & Parks Department will be taking registrations from individuals for a new “free agent” list, in addition to the normal team registration. The idea here is for players that don’t have a team to be made available to you, the captains, so that you can pick them up when needed. To pick up a “free agent” you must alert me by 2 pm on game day that you have contacted and found a free agent to acquire, and that you are adding them to your team. **Roster signatures and other registration components are still due 24 hours prior to game time.** However**,** as these free agents will have already completed the needed paperwork, they will be able to immediately join your team without any additional paperwork. **Acquiring a free agent that has completed all of their registration components is the only way a team can add a player on game day.**

**It will be the responsibility of the team captain to contact and find a free agent to acquire, and then alert me that you have added them by 2 pm on game day.** I will not contact them for you, will not accept the requests after 2 pm, and they will not be allowed to play if I am not alerted about this by the deadline. Free agents are added strictly on a first-come, first-served basis, and the Rec & Parks Department cannot guarantee that a free agent will be available to acquire. **Free agents that are acquired become members of the team that uses them, are removed from the free agent list, and are thereafter unavailable to be acquired by another team.** Additionally, teams are allowed to pick up free agents at any point during the season, including after the roster deadline. You cannot sign any new players to your roster after the deadline, as usual, but will be allowed to acquire an eligible free agent through the end of the season. The deadline for free agent registration is the same as the normal roster deadline.

To register as a free agent for a league, a player cannot be a member of another team in that league *(Ex. A player who is registered on a co-ed team, cannot also be a co-ed free agent. They can, however, be a free agent for men’s or women’s leagues if they aren’t already signed up on a team.).*

 As part of their registration materials as a free agent, they will be required to self-rate their playing ability on a 1 to 10 scale. I will then generate lists of eligible free agents for each league and division based on the self-ratings. Free agents will be allowed to “play up” (a B free agent can be added by an A team), but cannot “play down” (an A free agent isn’t available to B or C teams). These lists are made at the discretion of the Rec & Parks Department, and will be based on self-reported ratings and participant numbers. Those ratings will also be made available to you on the free agent list. The list will be updated regularly as free agents are added and removed, and will be made available to team captains as updates are made.

I believe this new system will be a great thing for our programs in a variety of ways. It will help captains more easily add players, could potentially reduce the number of forfeits that occur for having too few players at game time, and will allow those that might not already be a part of a team a better opportunity to join our league.

My hope is that taking individual registrations under this policy can attract new participants to the program, and will offer you a better opportunity at connecting with new players to add to your team. If enough free agents register to form a team of their own, they will be allowed to self-organize and register their team as normal if they choose to do so.

Please contact me should you have any questions about this new policy.