

## **Poinciana Boy Scouts allowed use of Arrington gym**

This article may be viewed at

<https://www.theledger.com/news/20181019/poinciana-boy-scouts-allowed-use-of-arrington-gym>



**Mike Ferguson @mikewferguson**

**Oct 19, 2018 at 7:47 PM Oct 19, 2018 at 7:47 PM**

**POINCIANA – A local Boy Scout Troop will be allowed to use the Mary Jane Arrington Gymnasium free of charge, according to multiple sources.**

**Both the Association of Poinciana Villages and David Heare, assistant scoutmaster for Troop 844, confirmed that the two entities came to an agreement earlier this month. Heare previously told The Ledger that he was informed that the Scouts would have to pay nearly \$500 per month to use the facility.**

**“They didn’t give us any explanation other than the Board of Directors made the call,” Heare said. “I spoke to the Village One and Village Five representatives on the master board and they said that wasn’t the case.”**

**According to an email from APV spokespeople, the costs stemmed from new guidelines approved by the master board June 12. In regards to the Boy Scouts, APV said, it was simply a misunderstanding that was cleared up during a meeting between Heare and Mark Maldonado, the general manager of APV.**

**“The intent of this change is to provide transparency of the guidelines and criteria used for sponsorship funds,” according to an email on behalf of APV. “For groups who wish to use APV facilities at a reduced cost, or free of charge, they must submit a written application so that the Board can review their request and qualifications. That way, all groups are using the same application process and the Board is able to better evaluate them. Under the new procedure, groups sponsored by APV can receive funds or use an APV facility for free, but not both.”**

**The funds mentioned pertain to available grants previously mentioned by Heare in his correspondence with The Ledger. Heare said he was told that grant funding in the amount of \$1,500 was available. The rates to use the Mary Jane Arrington Gymnasium are \$125 per hour for the main hall and \$75 and \$120 per hour, respectively, for side rooms.**

**Heare said he learned that funding was previously available in addition to use of the building, but the changes limit grant funding to those not currently given free use of the facilities. After filling out the 11-page application, Heare said, the troop was given use of the building Oct. 3.**

**The documents do not specify how long the troop will be given use of the facility. There are other groups, he said, that have not been given use of APV facilities.**

**“We’re still working with other youth groups,” Heare said. “We all just want to help these kids and keep them out of trouble.”**

**One organization that will be switching locations is the New Dimensions High School boys’ varsity soccer team. The Osceola County charter school, according to APV, has use of Deerwood Park — in Osceola County — through January when the contract expires. APV said the varsity team was invited to apply for sponsorship to continue to use the facility after that date, but elected not to do.**

**“We would like to note, we have had multiple schools in Poinciana happily fill out the sponsorship request forms and they have already been approved for either sponsorship dollars or the use of APV facilities for free,” according to an email from APV spokespeople. “Additionally, there are also schools currently using the gym that are paying the rental fee.”**

**According to APV, the cost would be \$32.23 per hour to use the facility without sponsorship. Instead, the soccer program is in talks with Polk County to use Poinciana Community Park, according to Keith Laytham, a board member at New Dimensions.**

**“Polk County and the high school and the kids’ leagues are working on an agreement as we speak,” Laytham said. “The (Polk) county rate is \$25 per hour and that’s for an Osceola County school. It would be even cheaper for a Polk County school.”**

**APV said new rates for use of facilities are competitive with similar facilities in nearby communities. The homeowners’ association added that residents should contact APV**

**directly to avoid misinformation “being spread by certain groups and individuals.”**

**“For many years, APV has been proud to support and sponsor community groups and sports teams, including the New Dimensions varsity soccer team, the Boy Scouts and the Boys & Girls Club,” the email from APV said. “However, we needed to take into account the money we are spending for the upkeep of these facilities. That includes insurance, utility fees, maintenance, lighting, staffing and more that APV has always paid out of its own pocket. The Board of Directors is simply trying to make sure that all money going out is well spent and that we provide more transparency to our residents.”**

**Mike Ferguson can be reached at [Mike.Ferguson@theledger.com](mailto:Mike.Ferguson@theledger.com) or 863-802-7545. Follow Mike on Twitter [@MikeWFerguson](https://twitter.com/MikeWFerguson).**