



City of Delta TABOR Refund Mechanism: Rec Center Punch Pass

History

The city has used rec center punch passes as a TABOR refund mechanism twice now – once in 2020, once this year (2022). In 2020, they gave out 1,000 20-punch passes, of which 150 were left over. This year, they only did 800 and had a few left over.

Advertising

They advertised several days that citizens could come in to receive their punch passes, using:

- Social media
- Direct emails from the rec center
- Notices on the city website
- Rec center newsletter
- Newspaper ad

In retrospect, they would have more explicitly advertised *why* this was happening, explaining that it was a city-level TABOR refund to avoid tension when some didn't qualify (see next section).

Administration & Verification

To receive their punch passes, citizens brought a utility bill and ID to demonstrate eligibility. The verification system itself was manual: they verified whether the individual lived within city limits by typing the address on the utility bill into an online mapping system from the county. This caused some tension when residents had a Delta address but technically didn't live within city limits and therefore didn't qualify (as this is a city-level TABOR refund). Similarly, because the rec center is heavily used by the county, some Delta County residents were upset they didn't qualify.

There were no administrative costs, as they just had regular staff taking shifts on the days they advertised for pass redemption. There were four dates, including a few weekend dates so those who worked during the week could come in, and the passes could be redeemed all day on those dates.

Part of the reason there were no administrative costs is because they simply used a spreadsheet. Whenever someone redeemed their pass, they would input that person's name and address into the spreadsheet. By using one spreadsheet, they could check for duplicate addresses (though not all duplicates were caught). This was, of course, possible because of the relatively small scale.

Reaction

The reception from city residents was great. The first year, they had a lot of families in the center that they'd never seen before – the program got people in the door who usually couldn't afford to come in. They didn't track whether people came back after the punch passes, but it was good exposure and good for the sense of community.