

Deerfield Park District
Pool Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes of September 29, 2022

(1) Call to Order

The meeting of the Pool Advisory Committee was called to order at 6:00 p.m. and the following were:

Present: Executive Director Jeff Nehila, Director of Recreation Laura McCarty, Deputy Director of Recreation Tony Korzyniewski, Aquatics Manager Jeff Napolski, Park Board Commissioner Rick Patinkin, and Committee Members Sari Winick, Lauren Patinkin and Andy Kettlewell

Absent: None

(2) Matters from the Public

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

(3) Review of Committee Meeting Minutes of July 28, 2022

A review of the July 28, 2022, minutes revealed no changes.

(4) Recap of 2022 Pool Season

Recreation Director McCarty reported that since the Committee last met, operations continued to remain well. The Deerspring Pool closed on August 14th followed by Mitchell Pool on Labor Day. This season staff was able to offer normal admission types such as the season pass, daily fee and coupon book. The pools generated roughly \$240,000 which was slightly under budget but much better than the District has done in previous years due to the pandemic. Additionally, staff was able to bring back birthday parties, rentals and swim lessons. These services were popular prior to the pandemic and continue to be popular. Swim lessons generated approximately \$90,000 in revenue and \$18,525 in rental revenue. The Day Camp program was able to use the pool during public swim and staff offered a junior life guarding class for the first time which was extremely successful. Concessions made a net profit of \$7,900 between both pools which was better than budgeted. The Deerspring Sprayground was able to open on August 25th for eight days and will be fully operational next season. The season began with 100 lifeguards and by the time the season was over, there were only 12 remaining. It is challenging to retain part time staff towards the end of the season as they go back to college and the schedule reflects this. Overall, 2022 was a safe and fun season and Recreation Director McCarty commended Aquatics Manager Napolski on a job well done.

A Committee member asked the outcome of the final safety audit. Manager Napolski advised staff received four stars out of five.

(5) Review of Pool Reports

Looking ahead to the next season, Recreation Director McCarty reviewed the pool fee history and proposed 2023 fees. Staff is recommending that all daily fee rates remain the same as the fees are comparable to surrounding area pools. Staff is proposing a 5% increase in regular season passes primarily due to minimum wage increases and expenses associated with operating the pools. To emphasize the value in purchasing a season pass, Director McCarty provided a pool pass per visit cost.

A Committee member asked what percentage of the revenue is generated by season passes. Recreation Director McCarty advised season passes generate slightly over 70% of the pool revenue.

Additionally, staff is recommending swim lesson rates be increased \$6-\$8 based on the fact that the District was initially underpriced as compared to competitors. A Committee member asked if the competitors included private swim lesson facilities as well or if it only pertained to Park Districts. Manager Napolski advised it does include private competitors and that the District has not increased the cost of swim lessons in 15 years.

Lastly, staff is recommending that private rentals and birthday party rates be increased for the same reasons stated earlier. Staff has eliminated the 1½ rental option in 2023 as the consensus was that it complicated the offerings.

A Committee member asked if staff has ever received complaints about rentals due to pool scheduling conflicts. Manager Napolski clarified that rentals do not take place during normal operating hours.

Recreation Director McCarty provided Committee members data as it relates to season pass sales. The District generated roughly \$163,000 in season pass revenue for a total of 8,037 passes. This equates to 2,433 people with a season pass. The early bird 20% discount is incredibly popular as the District sells approximately 83% of season passes during this time. From a revenue standpoint, this is the second highest revenue generating season since 2018. The District also sold a total of 16 new Sachs Recreation Center add on passes. These passes provide SRC members the opportunity to purchase a pool pass for \$75 as an add on to their fitness pass. Staff intends to continue these offerings in 2023.

Recreation Director McCarty provided Committee members data as it relates to daily fee sales. Deerspring generated \$13,648 and Mitchell generated \$62,496 for a total of \$76,000 in daily fee revenue this season. This is slightly lower than last year. A Committee member asked why Deerspring visits were much lower than previous years. Manager Napolski advised that this is due to the spray ground not being fully operational, which has always been a major draw for patrons.

Recreation Director McCarty provided Committee members data as it relates to public swim daily attendance history and spray ground visits. This year there were a total of 28,907 visitors between both pools which is an increase from last year. In the eight days the spray ground was open, there were 578 visitors which generated \$1,344 in revenue.

Recreation Director McCarty provided Committee members the proposed 2023 pool operating hours and gave them an opportunity to provide input and recommendations. A Committee member noted a change in the Mitchell kiddie pool schedule and asked for clarification. Manager Napolski advised this change was made to accommodate swim lessons.

(6) Discussion/Committee Recommendation for 2023 Fees

Recreation Director McCarty provided Committee members data as it relates to current pool staff and proposed 2023 hourly wages. Minimum wage will be increasing to \$13 per hour effective January 1. This past season, staff were paid \$14 an hour. Since the state has implemented an annual dollar increase in minimum wage, the District has paid \$2 more than the minimum wage to remain competitive, attract, recruit and retain employees. As a result, staff is proposing \$15 an hour. Furthermore, staff is proposing that staff working through Labor Day receive an additional \$2 dollars per hour to encourage them to stay through the season. Manager Napolski also provided a brief overview of the employee tier system. There was Committee consensus among staff's recommendations.

(7) Other Items for Discussion

There were no other items for discussion.

(8). The next meeting of the Pool Advisory Committee is scheduled for May 25, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

(9). There being no further discussion, the Pool Advisory Committee meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.