



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Department of Parks & Community Services
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MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: Jennifer Schroder, CPRP, Director
Michael Cogle, Deputy Director

Date: November 25, 2013

Subject: EXPLORE OPTIONS FOR REPLACING THE JUANITA AQUATIC CENTER LOCATED AT JUANITA HIGH SCHOOL BY 2017

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council receives a presentation on the current use and operation of the Juanita High School Aquatic Center and discusses options to study replacing the pool by 2017.

BACKGROUND

Juanita Aquatic Center Pool Closure Pending

At their regular meeting of August 6, 2013, the City Council received input from citizens and members of the Lake Washington School District (LWSD) Board of Directors regarding the potential closure of the Juanita High School swimming pool, known as the Juanita Aquatic Center. The District has determined that the facility is nearing the end of its useful life and that replacement costs could be as much as \$15 million.

The LWSD has placed a bond measure on the February 2014 election ballot which would, in part, renovate/replace Juanita High School. However, the LWSD Board did not include a renovated or new pool in the bond measure. Should the bond measure be approved by voters, the District will need to close the pool potentially as early as 2017, leaving Kirkland residents without access to a public year-round swimming pool.

The testimony provided at the August 6th meeting requested that the City of Kirkland consider participating in the building of a new aquatic facility to replace the one at Juanita. Kirkland is a key potential partner because the pool is the only public year-round aquatic facility in the Kirkland community, and is utilized extensively not just by students, but by residents for competitive swimming, youth and adult swim lessons, fitness, and recreation. Other partners could include entities such as Bellevue, Redmond, Bothell, Evergreen Health, Wave Aquatics, and Northwest University.

PFEC Exploration of Aquatics Facility and the 2012 Parks Levy

The Parks Funding Exploratory Committee (PFEC), convened by the Council to recommend elements of the 2012 Kirkland Parks Levy, used the City's 2007 Indoor Recreation Facility Plan to evaluate whether to include an aquatics facility in the 2012 ballot measure. A copy of the Indoor Recreation Facility Plan is available on the City's website at: <http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Assets/Parks/Parks+PDFs/Indoor+Recreation+Facility+Final+Report.pdf>

Ultimately, the PFEC recommended not including a pool facility in the ballot measure for several reasons. In general, there were too many unknowns about the project, such as how much it would cost, where would it be located and what would it cost to operate. These questions couldn't be answered in time to get a package to the 2012 ballot. In addition, the LWSD had yet to decide whether the Juanita pool would be replaced in 2014 and the PFEC felt that funding it in the 2012 levy would be premature.

Finally, PFEC felt that the cost of including an indoor aquatic facility would either make the ballot measure too large, or require significant cuts to the rest of the capital projects in the levy. The initial purpose of the parks levy was to restore maintenance and operations resources for Kirkland parks, so the PFEC was not interested in such a large capital component, and the other capital projects were deemed to be more urgent. In the end, the PFEC recommended that the City pursue an indoor aquatics facility in 2021 when the existing Parks bonds were retired and when the capital projects included in the 2012 Parks Levy would be completed. The City Council concurred with those recommendations and did not include an indoor aquatics facility in the 2012 Parks Levy which was passed by the voters.

The recent decision by the LWSD not to include a pool in their 2014 ballot measure and the resulting closure of the Juanita Aquatic Center in 2017 is new information, and it is reasonable for the Kirkland City Council to reassess the need for an indoor pool at this time.

School Board Pledges Support and Funding for Pool Partnership

On September 9, 2013, the LWSD Board adopted Resolution 2166 (Attachment A) affirming its intent to enter into future pool partnerships with cities and/or other interested entities. The resolution also authorized directing an undetermined amount of unspent funds from the District's 2006 capital bond measure toward a portion of future pool facility project(s) enabling use by high school swim and dive teams. The District estimates that \$10 to \$12 million will remain once all the school projects are completed and much of that could be applied towards a pool facility in partnership with other entities. However, these funds would be necessary for other District capital purposes should the proposed 2014 bond measure fail.

December 10th Study Session

In response to the pending closure of the Juanita Aquatic Center, the City Council on September 17th amended its 2013-2014 Work Program (Attachment B) to include development of an aquatic facility as follows:

*Partner with the Lake Washington School District and other interested public and private organizations to explore options for replacing the Juanita Aquatic Center by 2017 to further the goals of **Parks and Recreation**.*

The City Council authorized the allocation of \$215,000 as part of the 2013-2014 Biennial Adjustment to provide funding for additional resources necessary to support this work program item, and directed staff

to schedule a study session to provide Council with the opportunity for further discussion on the options for replacing the pool.

At the study session, staff will provide an overview of the current use and operation of the Juanita Aquatic Facility at Juanita High School, deficiencies in aquatics today, options to study to replace the pool and seek policy direction on the scope of the feasibility study.

WAVE Aquatics

WAVE Aquatics currently manages both the Juanita Aquatic Center and the city of Redmond's Hartman Pool. WAVE facilitates use of the pools by Masters swimmers, Water Polo, Seattle Synchronized Swim Team, Scuba Dive, club swim teams (WAVE) and school swim teams from beyond the Lake Washington School District boundaries. WAVE and the organizations they work with will be important stakeholders in efforts to replace the Juanita Aquatic Center. WAVE is also pursuing its own efforts to replace the pool. Kirkland staff were invited to a presentation by WAVE to the LWSD about these efforts.

A copy of that presentation is included in this link below:

<http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Assets/Parks/Parks+PDFs/Aquatic+Center+Partnership+Project/Aquatic+Center+presentation+to+LWSD+11-5.pdf>

Please note that this presentation is included for informational purposes only. It was developed by WAVE and Kirkland has not had a chance to verify its accuracy or assumptions. Kirkland staff remain in regular contact with WAVE and will continue to coordinate with them.

Key Policy Questions to Consider

The LWSD ballot measure election occurs on February 11, 2014. There are only three City Council meetings between December 10 and the election. Those meetings are on January 7, January 21 and February 4, 2014. Staff will need direction from the Council as to what information needs to be presented or what actions need to be taken at these meetings to demonstrate to the community that the pool partnership is viable.

Staff will be raising some key policy issues at the December 10th Study Session for the Council to consider. These include:

- **What services should a new aquatics center provide?** At a minimum staff believe it must meet the needs of the school district swimming and diving teams and the general public interests in recreation and swim lessons. But should it include a therapeutic pool or accommodate the more "private" interests of Masters swimmers, water polo, synchronized swimming, scuba diving, club swim teams and "out of town" school teams? Should it also include non-aquatic recreational facilities and public spaces? And if so, how should those needs be funded?
- **Should the assumption be that the pool must be on publicly-owned property to keep costs down?**
- **What are the roles of the Park Board and LWSD moving forward?**

Potential Kirkland Aquatic Facility Sites

Assuming that a new pool would likely need to be placed on existing Kirkland-owned properties to save both money and time, Kirkland staff are suggesting that the following sites be considered as potential sites:

- The existing pool site in Peter Kirk Park
- The North Kirkland Community Center
- Mark Twain Park
- Juanita Beach Park (northern section)
- Snyder's Corner

Staff will be looking for Council input on whether to proceed with evaluating these sites as well as whether Council has additional sites they would like considered.

Key Timelines and Council Direction Needed

Staff has done a preliminary review of the steps necessary to site, construct and open a new facility in 2017. Assuming that any such facility would require voter approval to fund, a ballot measure in either November of 2014 or the spring of 2015 would be required to have any chance of meeting the 2017 timeline. Staff will provide more details on this during the study session.

Clearly replacing the Juanita Aquatics Center is a complicated and costly project. As previously mentioned, there are only two Council meetings in January and one in February prior to February 11th. Staff requires direction from the Council to understand what information or action (if any) is needed at any of those meetings.

LWSD Frequently Asked Questions

The following information has been provided by the Lake Washington School District in response to frequently asked questions (also available on LWSD website: <http://www.lwsd.org/News/2014-Levy-and-Bond/Pages/Swimming-Pool-FAQs.aspx>):

Juanita High School Pool

Q. I see the swimming pool is not included in the modernization of Juanita High School in the proposed bond. Does that mean that the swimming pool will be closed if the bond passes?

A. The district is actively looking to partner with community entities for a pool to serve Juanita and neighboring communities. The pool is an important community asset. In fact, a review of current pool use showed that the pool was used much more by the community than for school programs. Since this facility serves an important community purpose, the district is in discussions with the city of Kirkland and other interested groups around possible partnerships.

Currently, we expect between \$10 and \$12 million to be left in the 2006 bond measure fund, since those projects have come in under budget. The board has expressed its interest in committing funds from this source toward a new community pool, in partnership with one or more other organizations. If the bond does not pass, those funds will be needed for housing of students in portables due to our growing enrollment and will not be available for a pool project.

Q. How much do district schools use the pool?

A. The current Lake Washington School District use of the pool is for the Juanita High School and Lake Washington High School competitive swimming/diving teams, as well as for very limited swimming lessons for three elementary schools. (For example, one of the elementary schools provides one hour swim lessons for two weeks to fourth graders.) There is also some use for high school meets that involve district teams. All other use of the pool is by community members, by high school teams from other school districts and by groups such as WAVE Aquatics, Lake Washington Masters, Seattle Synchro, and others. There is no school district use of the pool during the summer. High school competition for girls takes place in the fall and for boys in the winter; there is no competitive high school use of the pool in the spring or summer.

Q. If the pool is an important community asset, why doesn't the district just ask the community for more money?

A. The school board has to prioritize its funding requests to the community. Given the high cost of a swimming facility and the fact that the school district uses it only for part of the day and part of the year, it makes sense that we find partners to share in both the use of a facility and the cost.

Exploring partnerships

Q. Who is the district talking with?

A. The district has had discussions with the cities of Kirkland, Redmond and Sammamish, as well as WAVE Aquatics, the group that is currently managing both the Juanita Aquatic Center and the city of Redmond's Hartman Pool.

Q. Why is the district talking to Redmond and Sammamish?

A. The district is interested in making sure that competitive swimming facilities are available for students at all four comprehensive high schools in the district: right now, no high school in our district is assured of those facilities for the long term. While Sammamish is building a new recreation facility with a swimming pool, that facility currently does not have in its plans the set-up needed for high school teams to compete there. And Redmond's Hartman Pool is aging just as the Juanita Aquatic Center is. We need to look at swimming opportunities district-wide.

Partnering with the cities and potentially other entities may be the best way to ensure that the school district helps fund the needs of high school swim teams but does not take on the entire burden of funding and running recreational swimming facilities, something that is not our area of expertise. At the same time, it would mean that cities, which are responsible for parks and recreation facilities, can get some help to make sure they have swimming facilities that can accommodate our high school swim teams as well as recreational needs.

Timing

Q. If the bond passes and Juanita High School is going to be modernized, when would any new partnership or funding have to be in place? Is there a danger that the pool could be demolished at some point?

A. High schools are very large construction projects that take time to plan, design and obtain permits. If the bond passes, it is likely that actual construction of a new Juanita High School would begin in 2017. That means there are several years to develop alternative plans.

Q. What kind of shape is the pool in? Why can't we just leave the building as it is if no funding is found, and just fix whatever needs it?

A. The facility is nearing the end of its useful life. You can keep a car that has 200,000 miles on it and

continue to pour money into fixing everything that breaks. But you can't rely on that vehicle to perform reliably and safely. While we may be able to eke a few more miles out of the Juanita pool, we are reaching the point where we can't expect it to perform reliably and safely. The district does not have the money to repair a catastrophic equipment failure, which will mean the closure of the pool.

Attachments

cc: Park Board
Dr. Traci Pierce, Superintendent, Lake Washington School District

INTENT TO ENTER INTO
FUTURE POOL PARTNERSHIPS

RESOLUTION NO. 2166

WHEREAS, the Board adopted Resolution No. 2164 placing a bond measure on the February 2014 ballot;

WHEREAS, the bond measure is proposed in order to provide space for increasing enrollment and replacement of aging schools;

WHEREAS, the February 2014 measure includes funding for the modernization of Juanita High School, but does not include funding for the replacement of the pool currently sited on the Juanita High School campus known as the Juanita Aquatic Center;

WHEREAS, approximately 300 Lake Washington School District students participated in high school swim and dive teams using the Juanita Aquatics Facility and the Redmond Aquatic Center during the 2012-13 school year;

WHEREAS, the district values the swimming program in its athletic program;

WHEREAS, the district is nearing completion of the construction called for in the bond measure approved by the voters in February 2008, which provided funding for the district's Phase 2 modernization program;

WHEREAS, the district anticipates the projects in the Phase 2 modernization program to be completed for less than the currently allocated resources;

WHEREAS, should the upcoming 2014 bond measure not pass, these unspent monies will be needed for portables and other temporary student housing measures;

WHEREAS, should the upcoming 2014 bond measure pass, these unspent monies would be available to enter into pool partnership(s) with cities and/or other entities to fund a portion of pool projects which will enable use by high school swim and dive teams for practice and competition; and,

WHEREAS, the ability to repurpose unspent funds will require a formal public hearing be conducted prior to authorization by the Board of Directors.

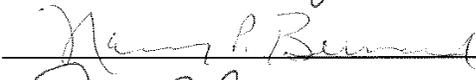
Intent to Enter into Future Pool Partnerships
Resolution No. 2166
September 9, 2013

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors intends, should the 2014 bond measure pass, to authorize a portion of the unspent Phase 2 modernization funds for potential pool partnership(s) in order to benefit Lake Washington School District student athletes.

APPROVED by the Board of Directors of Lake Washington School District No. 414 in a regular meeting held on the 9th day of September 2013.

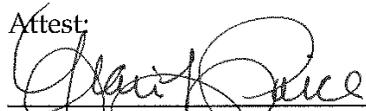
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
LAKE WASHINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 414









Attest:


Secretary, Board of Directors

City of Kirkland 2013-2014 City Work Program

Priority Goals: Economic Development ~ Financial Stability ~ Public Safety ~ Dependable Infrastructure Parks, Open Space & Recreational Services ~ Neighborhoods

Revitalize the Totem Lake Business District through continued implementation of the Totem Lake Action Plan to further the goals of Financial Stability and Economic Development. Partner with the private sector **to attract tenants to Kirkland's major business districts** to further the goal of Economic Development.

Reenergize neighborhoods through partnerships on capital project implementation and plan updates while clarifying neighborhood roles in future planning and transportation efforts to further the goal of Neighborhoods,

Complete the Comprehensive Plan update and incorporate new neighborhoods into all planning documents to further the goals of Balanced Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Diverse Housing, Economic Development, Dependable Infrastructure and Neighborhoods.

Implement the Development Services Organizational Review recommendations and simplify the Zoning Code to further the goals of Economic Development and Neighborhoods.

Develop a City-wide Multimodal Transportation Master Plan to further the goals of Economic Development Neighborhoods, Balanced Transportation, and Dependable Infrastructure.

Achieve Kirkland's adopted legislative agendas, with emphasis on securing transportation revenues and funding for the NE 132nd Street ramps to I-405 to further the goals of Balanced Transportation and Dependable Infrastructure.

Complete the Cross Kirkland Corridor Master Plan and construction of the Interim Trail to further the goals of Economic Development, Parks, Neighborhoods and Balanced Transportation.

Develop a cost effective 2015-2016 Budget that maintains Kirkland's AAA credit rating and implements an improved performance management system that delivers desired outcomes to further the goal of Financial Stability.

Continue partnership initiatives with employees to achieve sustainability of wages and benefits to further the goal of Financial Stability.

Complete construction and occupy the Public Safety Building to further the goal of Public Safety.

Continue implementation of the Fire Strategic Plan recommendations, including evaluation of a Regional Fire Authority and resolution of a consolidated Finn Hill Fire Station to further the goal of Public Safety.

(Adopted by the Kirkland City Council 2/5/13)

Partner with the Lake Washington School District and other interested public and private organizations to explore options for replacing the Juanita Aquatic Center by 2017 to further the goals of Parks and Recreation. (Added by the Kirkland City Council 9/17/13)