

**Wallingford Parks & Recreation Department  
Parks & Recreation Commission  
Community Pool Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, September 29, 2020  
5:30 pm at Park & Rec**

**Commissioners in Attendance:** Dave Gelo, Rec Commission Member; Mike Savenelli, Rec Commission Member and Pool Committee Chairperson

**Recreation Department Staff Present:** Kenny Michaels, Director; Michelle Bjorkman, Superintendent of Recreation

**Special Guests:** Cathy Granucci, resident; Michael Fortuna, TLB Architecture; Chris Shortell, Town Council member and liaison to Pool Committee; Lauren Takores, Record Journal; Christina Tatta, Town Council member; and Larry Ziprowski, resident

**Opening Remarks:** Chairperson Mike Savenelli called the meeting to order @ 5:30pm. This meeting is to recap the walkthrough of Community Lake and next steps for the Pool Committee.

**Review/Recap of tour with Town Council on August 14<sup>th</sup>**

The tour was a way to level set the members of the Town Council and have the Council understand the condition of the pool. Chris Shortell was asked if there was any additional conversation on the pool. He said there has been no formal discussion as the topic has not been on the agenda. The Mayor would need to put this topic back on the agenda for the Council to discuss.

**Status of Current Pool**

- Opening the pool next summer in its current condition would require additional funds. Every year the pool is opened and we hope there aren't any issues that need to be addressed. At this point, the pool is limping along and any major issue could close the pool for the season or permanently.
- At some point do you pivot this property to another avenue other than as a pool? The Mayor believes the Town should have a pool for the residents as the town always had one.
- Larry Ziprowski asked how many people get pool passes.
- Answer: In 2019, 2,721 people got pool passes. This number is the highest since 2015.

**Next Steps, review process**

- Councilperson Tatta would like to have an RFP done on renovating the pool. Christina said if there was an RFP to compare what the cost and longevity of renovating the pool versus building a new aquatic park, she would be more confident in making a decision. She is struggling with what is the best option. A rough estimate of doing a thorough RFP is between \$200,000 - \$300,000. The issue with an RFP is how detailed will it be. Will only certain sections be addressed or would it be a full renovation.

- Christina asked if everything had to be demolished or could renovations be done with the new pool option?  
Answer: The bathhouse would need to be demolished as it does not meet the current health standards and once any work is done on the bathhouse it then falls under all the new state rules and regulations.
- Larry stated: There is no zero-depth entry point as the current pool has, this is a nice feature.  
Response: The new pool design has a zero-depth entrance.
- Councilperson Tatta: Do we need to demolish everything and start new or could we modify existing areas. For example: the bathhouse stays where it is and be creative in adding the splash pad.  
Answer: The bathhouse needs to have a lot of work done on it. To work around it would increase the cost of the project rather than start anew with the entire project.
- Cathy G.: When the public learns the actual size of the new pool they might be surprised.  
Answer: Analysis of area towns' pools was performed and a key item in the analysis was the size of area town pools. Our projected pool size is larger than a lot of area town pools.
- Can you renovate?  
Yes of course, does it make sense and is it cost effective? That is really the question. The problem with renovating a pool this large is the sheer size of the pool. The current pool is a batuimus pool which is illegal now in CT to build. If any work needed to be done on the pool, sections would need to be cut out of the pool and cement used to patch the pieces. While you might spend 1-2 million dollars less your warranty would not be as long, maintenance costs would not be as economical, and the projected life of the pool would not be as long.
- In 1999, the cost to renovate the pool was \$2 million. What drives the price up is when you are not starting from scratch but you need to rework the existing pool into a new plan. There would be a lot of factors that would need to be reviewed along with state regulations and guidelines.
- Councilperson Shortell said the Sr Center receives \$1 million from the town each year for a unique segment of the population and Community Pool only receives \$180,000.
- Can we start the mechanical component to ensure everything is working before we open the pool?  
Answer: This summer a chemical walkthrough will need to be done. For the budget of 2021-2022 the cost to run the pool and also a backup plan if there are issues that arise from not using the pool this past summer.
- Mike F. said they are wrapping up a project in Bristol a renovation of bathhouse 50 meter by 25 a concrete pool poured new floor and built one side of the pool up. A fence was also added the price was \$3.5m. Once you start working on a pool this size it is going to be expensive and what is the limit that you spent too much money on a renovation.
- Larry Z. concerned that the ticket sales do not pay for the operating expenses.  
Kenny said with the splash pad added the season for the pool activities have opened from April to September rather than just June – mid-August for the pool.
- Cathy G. asked if swim lessons use the lap lanes during operating hours?  
Answer: No, swim lessons are given when the pool is closed.
- Kenny and Mike S will setup a meeting with the Mayor to review the benefits of doing the project now.

**Ideas on 2021**

- Mike S would like to have the pool project back on the table in 2021.
- Councilperson Shortell asked if the Sheehan pool could be used during the week nights in the winter for swimming. In the past the cost was around \$20,000, but a review of the expenses would need to be done for a more exact cost to have swimming there. When Park & Rec stopped using Sheehan due to low attendance the YMCA started using the pool for practice.
- The attendance at the time did not warrant the expense.

**Status of Current Bidder**

- It is unfortunate that the pool did not proceed forward as this is an ideal time to build. The contractor has offered to extend the bid.

Meeting adjourned 6:44pm

Respectfully Submitted,  
Shirley Barillaro