

Study Session
Selah Parks & Rec
Aquatic Center
July 28, 2009

Mayor Jones recognized Parks & Recreation Director Jeff Hagler

Mr. Hagler said we've been talking about the pool at Wixson Park a long time especially at the May 22 Council Retreat. He said we are looking at the Carey plan, noting our engineers have studied the feasibility. He said the Council has discussed how we might pay for the pool. He noted one question at the retreat was in regard to determining grass root feelings toward floating a bond to pay for the pool as well as how we get input from the public and information to the public. He said he will put together a concise package if that's the way the Council wants to go. He said he is in the process of doing an executive summary of Comprehensive Parks Plan. He reported that he has been involving the Parks Board in the consideration of the pool.

Mayor Jones asked audience members to introduce themselves. They were as follow:

Ken Yager with Selah Dolphins and High School swim team,
Leslie Brown High School girls swim team and also Selah Dolphins coach,
Amy Hinze Pool Manager Wixson Park,
Tammy Allen whose are kids on swim team and one is a life guard,
Debbie Baughman Selah Dolphins Swim team and Selah Parks Board,
Holly Gonseth Recording Secretary for the Dolphins Swim Team whose son is a lifeguard at the pool plus both of her kids are Dolphins and members of the High School swim team,
Allison Eglan who is interning for the City of Selah and a lifeguard at the pool, and
Marge VanCleve Chair of Selah Parks Foundation.

Mayor Jones welcomed these audience members. He said it has been a personal goal of his to improve the pool. He asked the Parks & Rec Director if the pool needs to be deeper than it currently is. He said those who use the pool really need to get out in support of this project.

Jeff Hagler responded that it would be better to have the pool deeper. He referred to bullet #5 of the Council retreat handout, stating the Public Facilities District leftover money is not a practical source for Selah's pool. He said that while there is some money left over from the Yakima Aquatic Center survey, it is not available for Selah's use. He noted that sales tax is possible, but the problem is it is not stable. He said the most stable source is revenue bonds. He noted that there has been conversation about the spray pool. He handed out an overview of information to be gathered prior to presenting the project to the Selah Parks and recreation Service area Board. He asked if the City had made a definite answer to the Yakima Aquatic Center people.

The City Supervisor responded that Selah's response would be contingent upon what is decided about Selah's pool.

The Parks and Rec Director said the next step is to go before the SPRSA Board.

Councilman Larson asked when the last time that Board met.

Jeff Hagler responded that they met three months ago and before that about a year ago.

The City Supervisor said the SPRSA Board's role is to review the proposal that has been put together, that outlines support, proposed strategies, concrete numbers and dates.

The Parks & Rec Director said putting that all together would be his next step. He said the City is pursuing Option #2 as outlined by Don Carey projected at a cost of \$3,354,043.00. He referred to the rate capacity handout, an email to Frank Sweet from Jacob Tate from Yakima County.

Councilman Paul Overby asked if we would take this proposal to the SPRSA before the public.

Frank Sweet said his response would be no, because one of the first questions that board would have in is regard to public support. Therefore, you would want to take it to the public first.

Councilman Larson said when it goes before the SPRSA Board it should pretty much be ready to rock and roll, because that Board is not going to be interested in projects that have little or no support.

Mr. Hagler said one of the reasons why he urged the Selah Dolphin and high school swim team people here today is because they are very supportive of what we're doing. He said they are willing to go out and contact neighbors and friends to urge support.

Mayor Jones asked if those in the audience are sold on this concept or is there another.

Margie Van Cleve said they think something needs to be done with the pool, but they are concerned about the cost and concerned about the net loss of green space to the community.

Jeff Hagler said the only green space it would take over is the area where the one picnic shelter is now.

Margie van cleve said with the parking and everything, it would amount to a significant loss of green space. She said this is a lot for eleven weeks a year, and suggested that for this amount, perhaps we should be looking at an indoor pool. She said that also raises the question about the appropriateness of the site.

Councilman Smeback asked how many of the Mid-Valley League cities are looking at renovation of pools to a 25-yard concept.

Ken Yager said Grandview and Prosser are renewing theirs, and Prosser is going to a 25-foot.

Amy Hinze said pools are usually made to a 50 meter or 25 yards regulation length, and few if any in the valley meet those specifications. She said she would love to see a year-round facility. She said lots of people are excited about the prospect of updating our pool. She praised the indoor pool in Astoria, Oregon. She said a man in Vancouver donated money to build a natatorium there for use by all school and community teams.

Leslie Brown & Ken Yager said the high school teams practice from 7:30 to 9:30 at night at Yakima high school pools six winter months.

Amy Hinze said there could be some year round activities for swim teams in Selah if we had the facilities.

Holly Gonseth said Naches hosts meets and that has been a huge financial boost to them.

Amy Hinze said a swim meet can net as much as \$18,000 per meet, in addition to benefits for local businesses.

Councilman Larson asked about bond limitation.

Frank Sweet explained that in rural Selah there is only \$.82+ remaining in taxable funds. He noted this project would assess \$.30 per thousand. He noted part of that \$.82 could also be tapped for a soccer complex.

Jeff Hagler advised speakers to keep in mind that running an indoor pool is a lot more expensive than running an outdoor pool. He said we have a basic plan, and his question is whether we want to take that to the public.

Frank Sweet said this is a starting position, but if there are concerns about cost, perhaps location. He noted marketing this is going to be a huge job. We need some more input. This is great to have everybody here today; however, we need to talk more.

Mayor Jones said this is a quality of life issue. He said there is a slanted area at the west end of the park where we could put as much green space in without taking anything away from the park. He said for 40 years, he's wanted to see a new pool.

Councilman Keith Larson said we need to be really clear on funding. He said he's concerned about having enough money to draw from when bonds are in competition with fire districts, etc. He recommended that as quickly as possible we should get a specific project proposal together.

Frank Sweet noted the possibility of a cover for an outdoor pool.

Jeff Hagler reminded those present that the Parks & Recreation Board will meet Monday, August 3.

Mayor Jones thanked Mr. Hagler and members of the audience for their input. He urged them to get together to see if they can work out a proposal. He said it's important to move this project forward while people are thinking about swimming.

The Mayor adjourned the study session at 3:39pm.