

**MINUTES OF LAYTON CITY
COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLANNING
WORK MEETING**

AUGUST 1, 2023; 7:17 A.M.

**MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS
PRESENT:**

**MAYOR JOY PETRO, CLINT MORRIS, TYSON
ROBERTS, BETTINA SMITH EDMONDSON, AND
DAVE THOMAS**

EXCUSED:

ZACH BLOXHAM

STAFF PRESENT:

**ALEX JENSEN, DAVID PRICE, JOELLEN
GRANDY, LAYNE JENKINS, AND TORI
CAMPBELL**

The meeting was held in the Council Conference Room of the Layton City Center.

Mayor Petro opened the meeting and turned the time over to Staff.

DISCUSSION – PROJECT UPDATES

Pool Discussion

Mayor Petro mentioned since the Council had regularly been approached regarding the pool, she recognized the need to hold a meeting to discuss options. David Price, Parks and Recreation Director, thanked Mayor Petro and the Councilmembers for the opportunity to discuss options for the City's pool.

Mr. Price reminded the Council of previous discussions regarding the City's aquatic facilities and indicated he, JoEllen Grandy, Parks Planner, and Layne Jenkins, Aquatics Manager, were always available to answer any questions. He shared the visual illustration from a previous meeting which identified the five different options for consideration by the Council and reviewed each. At that time, it was Staff's understanding, the Council directed Staff to proceed with Option 2: retain the wave pool and demo the small pool, for the immediate future. He reported Staff had since closed the small pool and was working to keep the wave pool operational.

Mr. Price mentioned the proposed costs of \$2,840,000 to extend the pool life, which included necessary repairs to keep the facility healthy and operational for approximately 8-10 years.

Mr. Jenkins reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan associated with the Aquatics Division and explained the immediate and short-term repairs over the next several years to retain the pool at a satisfactory level. Ms. Grandy mentioned this information was based on recommendations from the consultants which completed the Pool Conditions and Assessment. Mr. Jenkins specifically spoke to the wave pool roof hatch and Mr. Price mentioned the dome fasteners in the cement which anchored the bubble also needed to be replaced. Mr. Jenkins added this would require replacement of the entire pool deck and wasn't sure of the duration for this project, which would require closure of the facility. Ms. Grandy indicated this project would depend on the availability of materials and a contractor. Mr. Price stated the goal would be to have these improvements completed by early spring and removing the bubble before the regularly schedule time frame. He mentioned this was an example of how the \$2 million could be used for improvements and mentioned the additional \$500,000 would be on top of the traditional funding gap between operational costs and revenue.

Alex Jensen, City Manager, spoke to the complexity of the issue; it's a policy, philosophical, and economic decision. He explained how the City had historically been the provider of swim services for private swim clubs and the school district. The City now had to make a decision whether it wanted to continue this relationship or allow the school district to provide a facility for its students. He continued to

explain not only was there initial costs for constructing the facility, it required regular costs for maintenance and operations unlike that of a pickleball court. He pointed out the challenge of partnering with the school district and the possibility of it designating swim time for the various swim teams prohibiting use from the citizens for open swimming.

Mr. Jensen believed a tax increase would be required to construct a new facility. He mentioned the costs that were just disclosed for the needed repairs would consume the RAMP (Recreation, Arts, Museum, and Parks) grant funding for this year. He pointed out the multiple interests groups: lap swimmers, aerobics, swim teams, swim lessons, recreational/activity swim, etc. each believing their personal interest was more important than another. He remarked attempting to provide a facility that satisfied some needs yet not satisfying others, could result with an expensive, yet poorly attended facility. He suggested the Council identify the population it desired to serve in order to determine the best facility for that purpose.

He reported the school district originally indicated it would provide $\frac{3}{4}$ of the costs of a new pool with the City taking over the operational costs, which would be ongoing for the duration, including staff and maintenance. He believed Staff needed some direction to move forward with discussions with the school district and explained what he would like that to resemble. A discussion took place.

Mayor Petro expressed agreement the City should present its plan for a pool facility and determine whether it's a win-win for both parties.

Mr. Price commented the City had been able to accommodate the swim teams because when they needed the pool in the afternoons before parents were home from work so it was generally a slow time at the pool. He reviewed estimated calculations associated with bonding provided by the City's Finance Director, Tracy Probert. He requested the Council provide guidance and explain its intention regarding the aquatic facility and a discussion followed.

Councilmember Thomas expressed his opinion the City should provide its citizens with an aquatic facility and pointed out swim lessons was his first priority with public recreation the second priority. He didn't believe it was the City's obligation to provide a pool for school swim teams; however, they should be allowed access. He believed the City should continue to work with the school district for assistance or partnership and expressed interest in participating in discussions. He requested further clarification and a discussion followed.

Mr. Price directed the Council to Option 4 and reviewed proposed costs and project amenities which included a play structure, lazy river, slides, etc. He also directed the Council to Option 5, a joint-service facility, included an Olympic sized pool. Mayor Petro clarified Option 4 called for a 25-meter pool and Option 5 would be a 50-meter pool and Mr. Price responded in the affirmative and further clarified the costs. He recommended the Council consider whether it wanted to partner with the school district in this venture and emphasized approximately 50% of the current facility's users were from the swim team and surfers with the other 50% being recreational play, lap swimmers, swimming lessons, aerobics, etc. He pointed out moving forward with a flat water pool had the potential to alienate recreational users.

Councilmember Smith Edmondson stated she was pleased the City was currently maintaining the current facility to benefit the public by providing a facility enjoyed by the residents. She expressed agreement in pursuing future plans and indicated the City needed a firm commitment from the school district with how it was willing to partner for the project, as well as Kaysville City since its residents used Layton's facility and believed it was theirs. She believed Layton should take the helm with the other two entities participating financially. She expressed agreement with Mr. Jensen's sentiments neither want to own/operate the pool. She mentioned the existing splash pad at Ellison Park and inquired whether it would be included as an amenity to a new facility at that location.

Councilmember Smith Edmondson requested a cost breakdown for each amenity associated with Option 5 to determine what was included for that cost. She emphasized the importance of the Council being provided detailed information pointing out the following:

- Costs for a splash pad
- Costs for a wave pool
- What else could be provided aside from use of the pool at the facility
- Community space available for citizens to rent
- What other options/amenities could generate revenue
- Are we assessing usage fees for groups that use the facility on a consistent basis

She welcomed discussions specific to fiscal partnerships to lessen the financial burden to Layton residents for an aquatic facility. She also mentioned the disappointment regarding a recently constructed pool which was an inch too short for regulation swim meets and suggested it would be beneficial if the City could fill that void.

Mr. Price responded, Staff could design a pool or provide a conceptual plan for consideration. He requested the Council determine what it needed and/or wanted specific to amenities and parameters which could provide Staff direction of what needed to be included in discussions with potential partners. The Council continued to discuss the issue.

Councilmember Thomas suggested Davis County should also be approached as a potential partner in the project.

Councilmember Morris suggested the City needed to look at the big picture and expressed his opinion that because certain special interest groups, like the swim teams, wasn't happy with the Surf'n Swim didn't necessarily mean Layton City was responsible to provide what was needed or fill a void. He believed the City was being asked to provide a solution for the school district and pointed out cities didn't provide football fields or baseball diamonds for high schools. He didn't believe the citizens of Layton should be forced to fund or provide a pool for those participants. He pointed out the school district received the majority of funds each homeowner paid for its property tax compared to what the City received. He believed the everyday swim moms or recreational users weren't being represented because they weren't vocal. He emphasized he wouldn't be in favor of raising taxes and placing the burden on Layton citizens or future Councils for building a new pool facility; he indicated he would be in favor of Option 2. He wasn't sure bonding for this purpose would be fiscally responsible.

Mayor Petro asked Staff how much longer Surf'n Swim could continue operating and Mr. Price responded 10 more years if the proposed repairs could be completed and the discussion continued.

Councilmember Roberts spoke of the special interest group pushing for a new pool. He believed the City's responsibility was to provide a recreational pool which would best benefit City residents. He stated he didn't like Option 5 because it catered to special interest groups as opposed to Layton City taxpayers. If he had to pick one of the options he would choose Option 2; however, he wanted a plan for year 11 when the current facility had ran its course. He also liked Option 4 because it affected a greater percentage of users and included partnerships. He expressed agreement with Councilmember Morris' comment the City didn't build football fields for schools. He brought up the point why the county isn't in the loop of participating with this endeavor and mentioned some of its facilities such as the newly converted fairgrounds and the conference center which both bring in people and revenue.

Mr. Jensen believed an aquatic facility was considered during discussions regarding the demolition of the fairgrounds and construction of the new sports facility. He believed decisions made by the Commission was driven by tourism as opposed to benefits to residents.

Councilmember Roberts cautioned the Council about potential long-term partnerships with other entities and pointed out the importance of the City maintaining control of its destiny and stated he would be more in favor of maintaining the current facility but agreed a plan was needed at the conclusion of the 10 years.

Councilmember Smith Edmondson suggested a town hall meeting or survey inviting residents to weigh in with their desires for a facility. Mr. Jensen pointed out the responses might not net the desired results; rather, there was potential for a broad range of suggestions and the majority of residents don't realize the costs associated with that type of facility. Councilmember Smith Edmondson responded the City and/or Staff should be direct with the public in informing of the costs in relation to an additional pool and how that would affect residents in the long run. She would like a pool to remain here but would like to learn what the citizens desired. A discussion took place to the survey completed in 2018 and Mr. Price reported aquatics wasn't high on the list which concluded residents weren't interested in constructing a new pool. He indicated trails had been ranked number one.

Mayor Petro concluded it was the consensus of the Council to continue maintaining the current pool, while at the same time keeping the options open while soliciting partnerships. She believed a pool was an amenity to a community especially the lifesaving component with swimming lessons. She pointed out many of the City's recreation programs were subsidized; subsidizing the pool should be no different. She expressed her opinion the City should continue maintaining what was currently in place but moving forward present a plan to partner with other entities which included a larger facility and amenities presented in Options 4 or 5 and let them determine whether they were in or out. The discussion continued.

Councilmember Smith Edmondson inquired about operations of the South Davis Recreation Center and how that facility was funded and Mr. Jenkins responded five cities and Davis County had partnered for that facility.

Mr. Jensen concluded Staff would include amenities into a plan and identify those interested partnerships to move forward. He suggested this issue would continue until something final was decided.

Mayor Petro expressed appreciation to Staff for their work pertaining to this issue.

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 a.m.

Tori Campbell, Deputy City Recorder