



Board of Park Commissioners

Special Untelevised

335 South Broadway
De Pere, WI 54115
<http://www.de-pere.org>

Final Minutes

Thursday, December 14, 2017

7:15 PM

De Pere Community Center

Notice is also given that 3 Alderpersons in addition to those on the Park Board will be present at this meeting to gather information concerning subjects over which they have decision making responsibility. This meeting is therefore also rebuttably presumed to be a meeting of the De Pere Common Council under Wis. Stats. §19.82(2). No formal action will be taken by the Common Council at this meeting.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM by Board Member George Brown

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Ryan Jennings	Alderperson	Present	
Larry Lueck	Alderperson	Present	
Dean Raasch	Alderperson	Present	
George Brown	Board Member	Present	
Sue Schinkten	Board Member	Present	
Randy Soquet	Board Member	Present	
Bill Volpano	Board Member	Present	
Ella Bublotz	Teen Advisor	Excused	
Lydia McMorrow	Teen Advisor	Excused	

II. Action Items

1. Discussion and possible action on request to maintain Legion Pool.

George Brown provided a brief history of the actions related to closing Legion Pool. He explained that this special meeting was called because of the concerns raised to the park board and common council regarding the decision that was made to build one aquatic center to replace the two aging pools.

Marty Kosobucki provided a timeline of the major events and different communications that occurred throughout the entire process regarding the aquatic center .

Dean Raasch made a motion to open to meeting to public comment at 7:25 pm, seconded by Sue Schinkten. Upon vote the motion passed.

George Brown provided instruction that comments would be limited to one person per family; address the board only once; and a time limit of 5 minutes per person.

Angie Bougie spoke in opposition of closing legion pool. She feels the closing the pool would be heartbreaking and that legion pool is center of community. She also has safety concerns about crossing the roundabout. She feels that if Legion pool could stay open that would be fantastic.

Kelley Quakkelaar spoke in opposition of closing Legion pool. She has gone through comments on petition and there are a lot of really strong feelings regarding the pool and safety. She cannot understand that there were 14,000 residents when both pools started but now a city of 25,000 cannot support both pools. She is not opposed to building an aquatic center but thinks Legion pool should stay open.

Trich Pauze spoke in opposition of closing Legion pool. She stated that Legion pool is an area where many children come without parents and that small town De Pere does not need an aquatic center but needs Legion pool.

Janelle Beckett spoke in opposition to closing Legion pool and was great to hear the passion behind the pool.

Brenda Smits is not a resident of De Pere, but uses Legion pool daily. She stated that a lot of kids that attend Legion pool and do not have parents with them. She also has safety concerns with children crossing the river.

Karen Vincent read letters from her children wanting Legion pool to stay open. She feels that there needs to be recognition of the working poor and of micro communities and how micro communities make a larger community; she feels there should be a study done regarding the safety of roundabouts and make it public to residents to view; and for the board to hear the voice of the children.

Betsy Hornseth stated Legion pool means a lot to her and found out a lot of people feel the same way once the petition was started. She realizes that this is really late in the game and is not sure of the process that has to be taken at this time, but would like the city to get creative and to keep Legion pool open.

Alexias Fuller would not feel comfortable having her kids cross the roundabout or the bridge by themselves. She feels that having just one aquatic center and combining communities would make the kids feel unsafe with it being so large.

Dan Van Straten spoke regarding his concerns regarding the number of children that visit the pool without parents, which would not be possible if there was only one pool. He stated that during the summer there is a day camp at Dickinson school and a summer reading program that uses Legion park and pool, as well as a lunch program at Optimist park. These children would not be able to go to west De Pere. He feels the common concern is safety and if this comes down to a financial decision, this is a large enough item that it should be a referendum item and the community should decide on it.

Jonathon Hansen Alderman of District 2 stated he was elected after the decision was made to close Legion pool and has been getting a lot of feedback from residents. He thinks the shuttle system would be a complicated process for children and kids. He feels that it would be a great loss for the city if the pool is removed. Repairing the pool would be very costly, but would ask the park board to pause with the plans to remove pool until options can be fully exhausted to renovate and preserve the pool. He feels the \$300,000 in funds allocated for the splash pad could be used for repairs, and then fundraising could be done to try to meet remaining amount.

Alice Wood spoke in opposition of closing Legion pool. Currently her kids can get to the pool safely. It might be great to have aquatic center but that is not what makes De Pere unique. East De Pere is unique and special because they have a local nearby pool that kids can use on a regular basis.

Bailey Caldwell wants legion pool to stay because there are no other pools close.

Newshe can ride her bike to the pool to be with friends.

Annie Ranft spoke regarding the ability of children to go to Legion pool without parents and how important it is for them to have this independence. She feels that Legion park and pool are the heart of the city and has safety concerns with children crossing the roundabout.

Elizabeth Kee is new to De Pere and bought her house because of the area. She was devastated to find out that Legion pool was going to be closed. She stated De Pere will lose a huge sense of community if there is only one pool and feels fundraising should be reconsidered.

Brandon Beard spoke in opposition of closing Legion pool. He feels as elected officials the board has a responsibility from the people who voted for them. He feels that the board has not been completely honest and that there was a bait and switch. He stated that the decision lacks common sense and the data does not show having one aquatic center.

He commented that the two aldermen that represent him were not at the meeting and that upsets him. He would like to see if the safety concerns have been addressed and if there was any research on the shuttle service. He feels there should be a place for residents to communicate with the city and board. He is on the board of Celebrate De Pere and has a lot of respect for what the board does and stated Celebrate De Pere would love to have a discussion of the possibility of bringing funds to the table to help with repairs.

Larry Lueck addressed the comments made by Mr. Beard. He stated that he is one of the aldermen that represents the area where Mr. Beard lives and has been on the park board for 3 years. He has dealt with this issue extensively and resents the comments he made regarding it.

Lori Keen stated this is a very heated topic with lots of emotion behind it. She doesn't want to lose heritage of Legion pool. She would like the ability for residents to come together to help get carry the burden of fundraising and sponsorships to help keep Legion pool.

Sara Halverson looked hard to find a place in De Pere to live in and wanted the ability to walk to school and walk to park. She likes the small town feel of the Legion community and has safety concerns with the roundabout.

Diane Goffard lives on the west side and would feel the same way if the west side pool was closing.

Vicky Kelley Seeman chose to live in De Pere because of the community and how it supports the children. She understands the cost of taking care of the pool, but there is a greater cost to kids without the pool. Kids will get into a lot more trouble without the pool and a large part of the community will be lost if the pool is closed.

Julie Vidani stated she grew up at Legion pool and spent all day there. She is not concerned about nostalgic aspect, but the safety aspect is the most important. She stated there is a lot more poverty in De Pere than is realized and it should be kept simple by keeping the two pools.

Bill Halverson spoke about the safety concerns with high speed traffic and drivers not paying attention to pedestrians. Suggested to build the aquatic center but leave Legion pool as is and hold fundraisers to help cut costs. He also feels that residents from surrounding communities should pay resident rates for recreation programs.

David Cook stated he never served on a board, but could see why the board is frustrated with everyone coming forward at such a late notice and clearly a discussion should have been done multiple years ago. Seeing there is so much invested into the project, feels it is important for the board to review the information received tonight before a decision is made.

Mallen Beard stated her and her younger sisters love to go to Legion pool. They go to Legion pool with the babysitter in summer. If Legion pool is closed, many people would not be able to do swim lessons.

Josie Pauze feels that if residents wanted a waterpark they wouldn't be here tonight. All the people are here because they care about Legion pool. Legion pool is like a family and bigger is not always better. She would like the board to reconsider the decision to close Legion pool and most people would not want to cross the bridge to go to the water park.

Mark Becker stated he moved to De Pere because of the area and the small town feel, which Legion is part of. Asked for the board to not be short sighted with financial matters, but look at community as whole and the long term investment

Mary Danen stated she is grateful for the safety of Legion pool and her main concern is safety with crossing river.

Chris Ziegler had questions regarding the financial numbers for the repairs and updates to the pool, as well as the costs for the new aquatic center, which Marty Kosobucki

answered. He feels Legion has much more to offer than a splash pad. George Brown stated that the splash pad has not been determined. The repurposing of area has yet been decided and community input would be requested on what should be put there.

Tina Quigley stated that over 1,500 people signed the petition to save Legion pool and several hundred of them were not aware of the decision until after the decision was made. From the results of the survey done, the majority were in favor of keeping both pools and all three recommendations from the survey included keeping both pools. She questioned how the decision was made and if it is truly what residents want.

Will Hornseth stated he has been to many aquatic centers and has been bored. He is not bored at Legion pool which has endless things to do.

Jonathon Hansen clarified some financial numbers regarding the stadium funds and the funds returned to the city from Brown County was \$1.2 million and \$300,000 of this total was approved for a splash pad at Legion park.

Grace Huebner stated Legion pool is a great place to hang out with friends and have a good time.

Dean Raasch made a motion to return to regular order at 8:57 pm, seconded by Bill Volpano.

George Brown stated that no decision will be made tonight, allowing the input from tonight to be considered by the board. This topic will be on the agenda of the next regular Board of Park Commissioners meeting which is next Thursday.

Larry Lueck encouraged everyone to attend the board meetings. It is disappointing that he only heard from three residents when this topic was being discussed. Feedback is always welcome and needed. With Legion pool being so important, he was very surprised at the lack of feedback received.

Sue Schinkten commented that residents are always welcome to come to park board meetings. She was very surprised when the meetings were held and only one person was in attendance. It is great to see all here tonight and that public meetings are posted on the City website.

Dean Raasch's motion to return to regular order was approved by all at 9:04 p.m.

Lengthy discussion by the board followed.

Marty Kosobucki explained that if the park board decides to deviate from the original plan, then the park board needs to send the item back to Common Council, because the direction was given by Common Council to proceed this way. The park board needs to decide to either continue on course as directed by City Council, or if the topic warrants going back to Common Council to potentially go a different way.

George Brown feels that closing Legion pool does warrant discussion at the next regular board meeting and it should be placed on the agenda.

III. Public Portion

IV. Adjournment.

Randy Soquet made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:18 pm, seconded by Bill Volpano. Upon vote, the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Grace Lahtela