

**CITY OF ROCKPORT
MINUTES
SWIMMING POOL OPERATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
4:00 p.m., Monday, July 26, 2021
Parks Department Office
402 E. Laurel, Rockport, Texas**

On the 26th day of July 2021, the Swimming Pool Operations Advisory Committee convened at 4:00 p.m. at the Parks Office located at 402 E. Laurel, and notice of meeting, giving time, place, date, and subject, was posted in accordance with the Texas Government Code, Section 551.041.

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

J.D. Villa-Chairperson
Rick Martinez, City of Rockport Director of Parks & Leisure Services
Wendy Laubach

OTHERS PRESENT:

Joe Riekers, Community Aquatics & Skate Park Manager
Charlene Drake, Friends of the Pool Treasurer
Brittany Elkins
Jeff Hutt

1. Call Meeting to Order.

With a quorum of Committee Members present, the Meeting of the Swimming Pool Operations Advisory Committee was called to order at 3:30 pm by chair J.D. Villa on July 26, 2021, at the Parks Department Office, 402 E. Laurel, Rockport, Texas.

2. Citizens to be Heard.

At this time, comments will be taken from the audience on any subject matter that is not on the agenda. In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, the Committee may not discuss or take action on any items that have not been posted on the agenda.

3. Deliberate and act on approval of April 26, 2020, regular meeting minutes.

MOTION: Committee Member Laubach introduced a motion to approve the special meeting minutes of the April 26, 2021, minutes as written. Committee Member Martinez seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

4. Hear and deliberate on the grand funding from Friends of the Pool.

Mr. Martinez discussed the grant from the Friends of the Pool account that was granted to the Community Aquatic Park, for exclusive use for swim lessons, fees, lifeguard training and swim related items. Charlene Drake stated she received the grant request and wrote the check to the city the same day. She stated the Friends of the Pool were no longer active, but she will maintain the tax-exempt status of the organization in case there are future interest in starting back up.

Committee Member Laubach asked if this grant request would deplete all remaining funds from the Friends of the Pool. Charlene Drake replied that the Friends of Pool account will be closed but will continue to be updated with filing of taxes to keep nonprofit status active. Committee Member Laubach questioned the budget report looking for the Friends of the Pool check, which had not been deposited yet. Mr. Martinez replied that the check will not be going into the budget because it has been set aside in an account to use as needed for cost for programs and other expenses as mentioned earlier. Committee Member Laubach asked when the check will be shown on the budget report. Again, Mr. Martinez commented that the funds were being deposited in a separate account but would again verify it with finance.

5. Hear and deliberate on 2020-2021 Third Quarter Budget Report.

Committee Member Laubach pointed out the months were not correct on the budget report to which Ms. Elkins replies the numbers are correct the heading just needed to be corrected to April to June. Committee Member Laubach also pointed out the pool was still running a large deficit. She also asked what the negative budget balance means because she did not understand. Joe Riekers explained its deceiving because the pool has been operating under budget, but the balance is an estimation of predicted cost is income based on historical data. He also noted the budget report does not include the summer season increase as of report. Committee Member Laubach asked where she can find the real numbers, where the actual income and spending numbers. Mr. Riekers explained that this specific report shows the predicted budget and how he sees how the pool is doing is by looking at the percentage of the budget year to see where they are in terms of line items and budget. He also stated the revenue is not considered in the budget line-item report per category. Committee Member Laubach stated that the pool fourth quarter is the busiest month, and the pool will catch up. Mr. Riekers stated the pool will never catch up but will close the gap significantly with the revenue increase for the summer months. Mr. Riekers also stated to look at the revenues from the county and town and see the contributions were lower or incomplete. Committee Member Laubach asked the estimate for the fourth quarter. Mr. Martinez stated it would be hard to predict those numbers. Chairperson Villa stated the pool has always run in the negative and the closest the pool has come to catching up was right before Covid. Committee Member Laubach asked where the money comes from to cover the deficit of the pool. Chairperson Villa stated the city covers the cost and always has because of the pledge commitments not being met from the county, Town of Fulton and originally ACISD. Mr. Martinez stated there were four partners when the pool first started. The school was the first one to pull out because they could not support the expenses. Then the county reduced contributions over the years, so the city has always supported the loses of the pool. Committee Member Laubach stated the city pays the deficit to cover the loses but she mentions there are no rate increases to help cover the negative. She also stated we should work on that with the rate increases. Chairperson Villa asked if there was an MOU that was in place. Mr. Martinez stated there was one originally put in place but there have been variations and adjustments of decreases in contributions. Committee Member Laubach stated she the county contribution is a fixed number and does not go up to cover loss. Mr. Martinez asked what her best guess is to why the county does not go up and cover the original contribution cost. Committee Member Laubach stated she has not discussed or brought up the pool contributions and has never seen anything come before the court asking for a raise in the contributions. Mr. Martinez stated Mr. Riekers has attended several commissioners court hearings and has requested an increase based on the

original agreement and based on county citizen usage which is double the contributions cost. Committee Member Laubach stated she would not be surprised if it was brought up again, that the county would more than likely not approve the increase. Jeff Hutt stated ACISD originally signed on to the agreement and was the first to pull out. Chairperson Villa commented it should be on everyone who originally agreed and have lowered and pulled out of their commitments leaving the city to cover the loss every year. Mr. Hutt asked if the pool has reached out to the new superintendent in order to restart funding to the pool. Mr. Riekers stated they have reached out about using the pool as part of the curriculum. He also stated that the school has never offered to pay. Mr. Hutt asked how much money the school board gave at the beginning that they do not give now. Mr. Martinez stated the school district originally paid the pool managers salary. Mr. Hutt asked if it was possible to approach the new superintendent to see if they could cover this shortfall and continue their contributions. Mr. Martinez stated there was something preventing the school district expending funds in that way. Mr. Riekers stated the historically the Friends of the Pool paid for the 6th grade swim lesson program and wanted to know why the school district could not pay for their own program costing around \$9,000. Mr. Hutt stated the pool is for the kids, and they might be more receptive than they have before. Mr. Hutt also stated the yearly fee should be raised and the nonresident entry fee should be raised, and the swim lesson should be offered for free, and finally if the concession stand isn't making money is there a way to look into leasing out to a third-party vendor. Mr. Martinez stated there was a vendor in there before that ran concession but never came back because they were not making money. Chairperson Villa stated there was a change in offerings of the concession stand and the pool concession was doing good and then Hurricane Harvey and then Covid hit and caused a loss. Mr. Martinez stated swim lessons are not free, Friends of the Pool cover the cost. He also stated support from the school district would be nice, but he needs to go back and look into why they pulled out in the first place. Discussion was had about resident rates by city or county based and then other rates for age and or profession. Committee Member Laubach stated what could be recommended to get the deficit lower and Mr. Martinez recommended the county contribute the original cost. Committee member Laubach stated the county would not go back. Charlene Drake stated the problem is people not knowing the prices to the pool and the county not discussing the contributions to the pool. She also stated with the discussion of the rates being raised the people who get crapped on is the residents. Committee member Laubach stated the county is averse to raising the contributions to anything. Chairperson Villa stated they are beating a dead horse on this because the county will not budge and now the city will have to handle it like every year.

6. Hear and deliberate on Aquatics Manager Operations Report, including staffing, equipment and facility maintenance, special events and programs.

Mr. Riekers stated the guards went from 38 to 11 and the way to remedy the loss of guards was to move the staff to temporary full time to allow more work time, they also have supplemented junior guards. There was also a new law where the minimum number of guards have increased which caused the minimum staffing to double. Low staffing issues caused some days where the pools at least on pool was closed because of the shortage. The pool now has new office staff and looking into a dual role with office/lifeguard experience. We have also hired a part time temporary concession stand employee. He also stated the busiest day at the pool is Wednesday. Mr. Rikers also stated there were a few mechanical issues with pump costs going up and

shipping times increasing. The pool chemical testing has improved with the new electronic testing which is causing less time for the guards to be off stand.

7. Hear and deliberate on pool rental rate increases.

Mr. Martinez stated this was discussed last meeting and wanted to further deliberate what is wanted but is not an action item. Committee Member Laubach stated it was not an action item, and that she would not recommend this up to the county to increase funding when the meetings go by quarter after quarter with no action. Charlene Drake stated the Committee Member Laubach will not support the pool and will not recommend the county to step back up and increase the contribution to the original price. Committee Member Laubach agreed and stated the fees should be heavily on user fees and not general taxes. She also stated if there was not an effort to raise user fees, she would not recommend the fund increase from the county. Mr. Riekers stated the rental rate fee is \$200. He mentioned the law changing and the party might need more lifeguards to be in compliance. He mentioned half of the rental fee is costs. Chairperson Villa stated we have raised the rental fees already. Mr. Martinez stated the cost is \$100 but we charge \$200 so there is a profit from rental fees. Committee Member Laubach stated she wanted to raise the fees more to try to get out of the deficit total. She then asked if the fee discussed is just the pool rental rate and not the admission fee. Committee Member Laubach asked about getting grants because of Covid and if the city looked into getting them. Mr. Martinez stated there was reimbursements from Covid costs but not grants. Mr. Riekers stated there are only about 30 rentals in the summer. He also stated the place to raise the rate and make the most would be to raise the annual pass rate. Chairperson Villa stated to stay on the rental rate prices, and he agrees about a rental rate increase for pool parties. He would like to get a study on rates.

8. Hear and deliberate on items for inclusion on next agenda.

Rate increases, rebranding, funding programs, and ACISD support.

9. Adjournment.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 5:04pm.

**SWIMMING POOL OPERATIONS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**



J.D. Villa, Chairman

Parks and Leisure Services
Meeting Attendance Record
Pool Committee Members

Date: JULY / 26 / 2021

Pool Committee Members Attending this date:

- 1) Wendy Laubach
- 2) JD Villa
- 3) Pick Martner
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____

Parks and Leisure Services
Pool Committee Meeting Attendance Chart
Visitors Attending

Date: JULY / 20 / 2021

(PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME)

- 1) Charlene Drake - FOP - treasurer
- 2) Brian Ekins
- 3) Joe Ackers
- 4) Jeff Hult
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____
- 11) _____
- 12) _____
- 13) _____
- 14) _____