

Town of Newburgh  
Parks Board  
Minutes May 25, 2017

**Members Present:**

Mary Ann Wilsbacher, Wanda Kavanaugh, Kevin Reine & Ron Keller

**Administrative Present:**

Attorney Raymond Dudlo, Legal; Christy Powell, Town Manager; Andrea Balboni, Administrative Assistant  
Stacie Krieger, Council Liaison, William Kavanaugh, District I

**Members & Administrative Absent:**

None

**Advisory Board Members Present:**

None

**Citizens Present:**

Steve Adams – 819 Treelane Drive, Newburgh  
Molly Adams – 819 Treelane Drive, Newburgh  
Laura Voegerl – 6421 Danville Court, Newburgh  
Jenna Pritchard - 4344 Partridge Place, Newburgh

**Petitions and Comments from Citizens Present:**

Steve Adams, 819 Treelane Drive, spoke to the Parks Board about his concerns on removing the swim team from the 2017 pool season. Mr. Adams stated that they were taken back by the swim team postponement and did not attend any Parks meetings because they received the spring newsletter where the pool flyer showed there being a swim team. The season did state “to be determined” but he assumed there would be a season. Mr. Adams stated that with such short notice of the postponement they did not have enough time to speak to the Parks Board or at this point have time to fundraise. Mr. Adams stated that they do have parents and maybe some sponsors to help back the swim team this year but because it has been postponed at this point he is unsure what he can even tell the potential sponsors.

Mary Ann Wilsbacher wanted to first commend Mr. and Mrs. Adams on their enthusiasm & support of the swim team and the children. Mrs. Wilsbacher stated that she understands how important it is for young children to have activities and for there to be activities for children to do in Newburgh, her children grew up in Newburgh.

Mrs. Wilsbacher then gave background on how the decision to postpone swim team for the 2017 pool season came about. Mrs. Wilsbacher wanted everyone to know that no one on the Parks Board wanted to see the swim team disappear and it was a difficult decision to make for this pool season. Mrs. Wilsbacher mentioned that continuity in Pool Managers has been an issue over the last four (4) seasons and this season we have a new Pool Manager, Alyssa Hammel, who appears to want to continue returning each season. The Parks Board wanted to give Ms. Hammel the opportunity to bring order to the pool environment.

Mrs. Wilsbacher spoke about the decline in swim team participants over the years, giving the example of sixty nine (69) swim team participants in 2012 to only thirty two (32) in 2016. When participation goes down the cost to operate swim team goes up. With participation low, the Parks Board thought that by postponing swim team for the 2017 season it would give the new Pool Manager a chance to get settled in a way that would enhance the pool for the 2017 season and for years to come.

Mrs. Wilsbacher asked Andrea Balboni to hand out the pool financials. Christy Powell stated that postponing swim team for the 2017 season was not solely based on the financials, there were other factors involved, but that it is important to see that the pool continues to lose more and more money each year.

Mrs. Powell then asked to put on record that each person on the Parks Board is a volunteer. They each give their time and are here tonight to listen and she has so much respect for each one of them. She then thanked them for their time and their service, stating that it is important for people to volunteer in their community.

Mrs. Wilsbacher talked about the pool financials and how they had to look at the pool as a whole and try to figure out what could be done to fix the financial issues. One (1) of the fixes was putting the swim team on hold for the 2017 season. Mrs. Wilsbacher stated that since postponing the swim team they have heard the concerns of the parents and in order to have the same schedule as they have had in previous years, they would need a team of at least forty (40) participants and would need to charge one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per participant. Parents would be allowed to fundraise and seek sponsors.

Steve Adams stated that they had few issues/questions with the financial report.

- Mr. Adams stated that there were not six (6) coaches and a manager on at all times during the swim team. Andrea Balboni stated that she contacted coaches and the managers from last year and they all stated that for every age group, which we have three (3), there are two (2) coaches and then there should always be a manager present.
- Mr. Adams stated that setup time and cleanup time should not be factored in for practices since they would have to do that anyway.
- Mr. Adams stated that they would not need stopwatches this year because there is a large box of them. Mrs. Balboni stated that on the sheet there is a range for stopwatches, entry fees, ribbons; because it is unknown from year to year what we will spend on each of those. Mrs. Balboni stated there is a box of stopwatches but she is unsure of their condition and/or if they would need new batteries this year.
- Mr. Adams wanted to know why for meets there is time added on. Christy Powell stated that meets require additional setup, cleanup and for away meets coaches and managers get paid for travel time.

Mrs. Powell asked if there was an official count of how many participants would be coming back this year. Mr. Adams stated that he does not have access to the list from last year so has been unable to reach out to all the parents. Mrs. Powell stated that she understands that the information was in the spring newsletter and apologized for that, but stated that since that spring newsletter no one else has called asking about swim team or wanting to sign up for swim team. Mrs. Powell stated that on May 20<sup>th</sup> the front desk was opened to the public to purchase punch passes, family passes and to sign kids up for swim lessons. During the whole day at the pool only one woman asked about swim team and Mrs. Balboni and Ms. Hammel informed her that swim team would not be taking place this year but they could sign up for a more advance swim lesson, which she did. Mrs. Powell stated that her point is that they marketed it the same way they always have, and they only had a few people contact the Town about swim team.

Mr. Adams spoke about the leadership at the pool and Mrs. Powell stated that they understand and that is why they are streamlining, pulling back, making huge changes and plan on coming out with a bang.

There was conversation between other members of the audience that was inaudible. Raymond Dudlo advised the members of the audience that they must come up to the podium to speak since all meetings are recorded.

Mr. Dudlo stated that the Parks Board is trying to explain the costs associated with the swim team and they would like to hear their thoughts on how to deal with the financial issues.

Molly Adams, 819 Treelane Drive, stated that they have done their research and the fifty dollars (\$50.00) was an affordable rate for everyone in the community. Mrs. Adams stated that there are twenty eight hundred

(2,800) families in Newburgh that qualify for free and reduce lunch. Mrs. Adams stated that some of those kids were on swim team and now they have nothing to do but to play in the creek behind the park or ride up and down the waterway.

Mrs. Adams gave the Parks Board examples of the cost of other swim teams in the area.

- YMCA is \$65.00 per month plus the event fee.
- Rolling Hills is \$1,500.00 for the year and there is a waiting list.
- TriState is not an option for everyone either, but they do not have the figures.

Mrs. Adams stated that if there is not swim team at the Newburgh Community Pool and the parents choose to put their kids into other teams at other pools, then those kids will not be coming to the Newburgh Community Pool to swim, they will go to the other pools with their new friends, and it would defeat our purpose of trying to get more people to the pool.

Mrs. Adams also stated that the reason there was a decline in swim team numbers was due the pool management. Mrs. Adams stated that the managers were rude, unprofessional and a lot of the parents pulled their kids from the swim team because of the way it was run, but that is in no way the kids fault and they should not be penalized for that.

Mrs. Adams stated that she understands that we want to give the new manager time to make it work but there is no reason why they can't come together to make it work. Mrs. Adams stated that the Town will have to take a loss on the swim team but that you cannot put a price on the kids of the community.

A discussion was had on the overall loss of the Newburgh Community Pool and the overall cost of the swim team. A continued discussion was had on the participation numbers for 2016 and possible participation for 2017.

Mary Ann Wilsbacher stated that the bottom line for this season is not so much financial as it is the organization and running of the swim team along with making sure the rest of the pool runs smoothly. So there is the financial component but also the actual running of the swim team, the running of the pool, swim lessons and pool parties that have to be considered.

Mrs. Wilsbacher asked Mr. Adams that if swim team was to be reinstated, would the parents listen and do what the Pool Manager wishes. Mr. Adams stated that the Pool Manager is in charge, it is not the parents swim team. Essentially they would be boosters, offering to help the Pool Manager to make things easier for her.

Mrs. Wilsbacher asked Mr. Adams if practice times change, meets change or the Pool Manager decides to make other changes, will they argue with her. Mr. Adams stated that they will have their opinions. Mrs. Wilsbacher asked again if they would argue with her. Mr. Adams stated that the Pool Manager is in charge, she is the boss. Mr. Adams stated they will give their opinions but that she is in charge. Mrs. Wilsbacher stated that she hopes that is the case because the attitude she is getting tonight is not one that is willing to help but instead is very angry and combative. Mrs. Wilsbacher does not want to put a new Pool Manger in a position where everything that she says is questioned and attacked. Mr. Adams stated that they will allow the Pool Manager to do her job if you give her a swim team to run.

Andrea Balboni stated that her first day with the Town of Newburgh was after the pool in 2016 had already opened. She was told on her first day that the pool would eventually be one of her responsibilities but for 2016 she would be hands off so she could focus on learning other aspects of the job. Mrs. Balboni stated she was at the pool almost every day. She understands the frustration that the parents have over the way swim team was run the previous years, but that is one of the reasons it was postponed for the 2017 season. Mrs. Balboni stated that postponing swim team was not the only part of the pool that was affected. Swim lessons use to have four

(4) sessions with three (3) times available in each session, but they have cut them back to three (3) sessions with just two (2) times available in each session. The adult, child and senior rate has been removed to just have one rate of three dollars (\$3.00). The two (2) separate rates for residents versus non-residents have been removed, family passes now have a five (5) person limit, punch passes have been introduced, hours extended, family nights planned and more strict rules have been put into place. Mrs. Balboni stated that every part of the pool has been touched, changed or modified. Mrs. Balboni addressed the newsletter issue and stated that when the newsletter went out they were still going back and forth on numbers and talking things over. It was not the intention of the Parks Board to postpone the swim team, but after putting the numbers together and finalizing other changes to the pool, the idea of postponing swim team for the 2017 season was brought to the Parks Board. Mrs. Balboni wanted to make everyone aware that the Park Board members did not come to this decision lightly, it was one of the hardest decisions they made for the 2017 season, but it was one they did in hopes of reviving the pool for years to come.

Mrs. Balboni stated after she received the call from Mr. Adams, she went back through her numbers and even tried to put together some possible schedules for a possible season. The issue with scheduling swim team this season is that swim team and swim lessons cannot meet on the same days. Due to scheduling conflicts in years past, multiple swim lessons and a few swim parties have been refunded due to swim meets being scheduled. Mrs. Balboni stated that one idea she had after talking to multiple other pool locations and Alyssa Hammel, is a shorter season, not seven (7) weeks like before but maybe four (4) weeks.

Mr. Adams stated that he does apologize for seeming combative but he feels like he is trying to save something that is already gone. He feels like once a service at the pool is removed all the efforts to revive the pool will be for nothing.

A discussion was had about how the parents could raise money for the swim team. Mr. Dudlo asked Mr. Adams what he thinks the parents are willing to pay. Mr. Adams stated that last year the fee was fifty dollars (\$50.00) but he knows there might need to be adjustments but if those adjustments go to one hundred and twenty five (\$125.00) a participant, we would price people off the team. Mr. Dudlo observed Mrs. Adams shaking her head "no" when talking about possible adjustments, and Mr. Adams stated that ideally they would like to keep it at \$50.00 per participant and raise funds to help cover the other costs.

Christy Powell stated that she is concerned if a swim team could be formed with fewer than twenty (20) kids. Mr. Adams stated that swim team is not the same as a football team; it does not have to have a certain number of participants.

Kevin Reine stated his biggest concern is the number of guards, noting that we hired less due to swim team not being on the schedule.

Ron Keller asked Mr. Adams if only three (3) meets could be scheduled, would that still be okay. Mr. Adams agreed that it would be fine.

Laura Voegerl, 6421 Danville Court, wanted to say thank you to the Parks Board for listening to everything they have to say and thank you to Andrea Balboni, she enjoyed everything that she had to say. Mrs. Voegerl stated that she really just wanted the swim team for her daughter and that she would be very upset if there was no swim team this year.

Jenna Pritchard, 4344 Partridge Place, stated that she does not have a child on the swim team but everyone at the meeting is a good friend of hers and her grandmother was Lou Dennis. Mrs. Pritchard stated that her grandmother would be so disappointed to hear the swim team would not be around and knows she would want it to continue to operate if there were forty (40) kids or five (5) kids. Mrs. Pritchard stated that she does love that she is possibly hearing that there could be a swim team if everyone comes together to work this out. Mrs. Pritchard stated that it is important to remember that these kids want to come to our pool, they want to be on our

swim team and if we send them somewhere else, they will not come back to our pool, they will go where their friends are. Mrs. Pritchard stated that she is so happy that the community is coming out and we are all working together to try to work this out.

Raymond Dudlo stated that at this time comments from the citizens will be closed.

Mr. Dudlo wanted to address a couple of issues before Parks Board discusses their options.

Notice of the agenda – Mr. Dudlo stated that the Parks Board meetings occur regularly and are pursuant to the Indiana law on when they have to be posted. Mr. Dudlo stated that almost every meeting deals with the pool, especially starting at the beginning of the year to the opening day. The reason why these are posted is so that concern citizens can come to meeting to voice their concerns, see what is going on within the parks system. Mr. Dudlo stated that Parks Board is very busy this year with the Master Plan coming up and the new Park Pals that has been set up to get citizens more involved in the parks system. Mr. Dudlo stated they need citizens more involved in parks meetings and within the parks system because most of the time it is just the Park Board members that volunteer trying to make it all work and without them none of it would happen. Mr. Dudlo stated that he knows everyone feels they were not given enough notice but that the agendas are posted before every meeting.

The newsletter was a way to get more word out on the upcoming events within the Town and the pool, but in no way blocks the Parks Board from doing what they have to do. Mr. Dudlo stated that if things to do go the way that the parents want it to go, there is no reason why a group of concern citizens cannot come to Park Board meetings this fall and up through spring of next year to talk about what to do in the season of 2018.

### **New Business:**

#### *Swim Team*

A discussion was had between Park Board members on if a swim team was even possible this season. Andrea Balboni stated that she and Alyssa Hammel have possibly worked out a shorter season but it would require weekends, bigger breaks in between practices and meets and possibly hiring additional lifeguards. Mrs. Balboni stated that there is a possible schedule but what she would need from Parks Board to move forward is the dollar amount that they want to see. Mrs. Balboni knows the possible hours that she has scheduled, knows how many guards they would need, can give a rough figure of additional expenses but needs to know once she has that dollar amount, are we looking to cover the costs completely or just to make up a little more than in years past.

Mrs. Balboni also stated that Alyssa Hammel asked her to address the subject of advance swim lessons in place of swim team. Ms. Hammel has informed Mrs. Balboni that swim lessons come in six (6) levels with the sixth level being an advance level, getting the participant ready for a swim team and or eventually becoming a lifeguard themselves. Ms. Hammel wanted to let the parents know that if Parks Board decides to stick with their original motion to postpone swim team for the 2017 season that those advance level swim lessons will be available.

A continued discussion was had between Park Board members on the swim team options. Raymond Dudlo suggested to the Parks Board that if the option was postponed to the next regular scheduled meeting (June 1<sup>st</sup>) that would allow Andrea Balboni and Alyssa Hammel a week to contact other pools to see if scheduling meets was even possible for this season. It would give Mrs. Balboni a chance to get all the numbers together and it would allow the Parks Board to have a clearer picture of what the season and the expenses would be.

Mary Ann Wilsbacher agreed with Mr. Dudlo that there were too many variables to make a decision tonight. Mrs. Wilsbacher wanted to state for the record that none of the Parks Board members want to see the swim team go away for forever. That the Newburgh swim team has been a part of the Newburgh Community Pool from the beginning. Mrs. Wilsbacher understand that once a child starts going to another pool with their friends, they are going to continue to go to that pool with their friends and not come back to the Newburgh Community Pool.

Mrs. Wilsbacher stated that the biggest obstacle in all of this is time. The timing of the swim team, swim lessons and pool parties. Do we have enough time to hire more guards, do we have enough time to schedule meets. Mrs. Wilsbacher stated they need one more week to figure this entire schedule out.

A question was asked if the parents present could have a list of participants from last year to contact them. Raymond Dudlo stated that the information last year was given as participation in swim team and they did not give their information out to be contacted by other parents. Christy Powell stated that she would contact the parents from last year and see how many would like to sign up. Andrea Balboni stated she would have a sign-up sheet at the pool. Mr. Dudlo stated that at the meeting next week, it would be helpful to have a participation number.

William Kavanaugh stated that this group of volunteers on this Parks Board is one of the finest Parks Board that the Town of Newburgh has had. He reminded the Parks Board that they are autonomous of Town Council, they manage the pool, they own the pool and they are doing a great job. Mr. Kavanaugh stated that the role of Town Council is seed money. That in 1972 the Town Council gave the Parks Board seed money to start the pool and every year there is a balance that Town Council expects to be paid back, but they have never been paid back, not in 45 years, and that is okay. Town Council understands that the pool and the parks are for the kids.

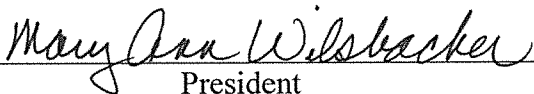
Mr. Kavanaugh stated that he is very defensive and very passionate when it comes to the boards, the committees and the volunteers that help run the Town. He addressed Mr. Adams and stated that he can see he is very passionate about this topic and apologized for his actions at Town Council the previous night. Mr. Kavanaugh donated one hundred dollars (\$100.00) to the swim team fund.

Mary Ann Wilsbacher promised that at the next Parks Board meeting, June 1<sup>st</sup>, they will have the research for everything they have talked about tonight and a decision will be made on the status of the Newburgh swim team.

Kevin Reine wanted to point out to everyone that this upcoming season is going to be a great season. They have received money from grants and from organizations to help revitalize the pool and everyone will see a lot of positive changes at the pool.

Mary Ann Wilsbacher closed the meeting.

Next Meeting will be **June 1, 2017** at 6:00 pm.

  
President

  
Recorder