Teresa Cwik

From: Ron Cwik <ronaldccwik@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2024 4:04 PM
To: Teresa Cwik
Subject: Happyland Pool

You don't often get email from ronaldccwik@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

I am here today to ask you all if you could please vote in favor of keeping the Happyland Park Pool open. I won't repeat all the reasons why we should save the pool as I am sure other presenters here today have done an excellent job of explaining them.

I would like to point out as you are aware, we did get a petition with approximately 2300 signatures. The reason we were able to get these signatures was because many of these people actually use this pool.

Happyland pool is not only central to St Boniface but it is well situated to service other neighborhoods and it does accommodate many areas. People attend this pool from areas like Elmwood, the north end , Norwood and even old St. Vital, that has a brand new pool. Because Happyland offers free admission, lower income families are able to enjoy its many benefits.

Happyland Pool is located in beautiful Happyland Park.A place where families can enjoy the pool , its play structure , frisbee golf and fire pits. The City of Winnipeg has invested in this park to make it enjoyable for everyone. It only seems sensible that we continue to maintain the pool and keep it open

Happyland, although smaller, is similar to public parks with pools like Kildonan Park It provides a great meeting place for people from many cultures. In the past year I have witnessed newcomers from places like Morocco and the Ukraine as well as other parts of the world. It was heartwarming to see them become friends with people coming to the pool.

Happyland Pool is inexpensive to run when compared to any other pool in the city. Yet it provides incredible benefits to so many neighborhoods. Having a pool in the area is very attractive to land developers. It is profitable for vendors in the area as people shop for things coming to and from the pool. People go for ice cream at Doug and Betty's after a swim. They get gas at the nearby station and coffee at Tim Hortons. They support restaurants in the area. People get haircuts while their children enjoy the pool. When these businesses thrive they pay more taxes which is a win for everyone.This pool should not be looked at as a financial burden but a way to increase revenue to surrounding businesses and the city of winnipeg. With business growth comes the need for employment. Employed people spend money and pay taxes.

Happyland Pool brings excitement and profit to the area. I have spoken to businesses in the area and they are unhappy with the thought of the pool closure as they will lose revenue created by the pool attendance.

I would like to ask you to reconsider closing Happyland Park pool at this time. We would like an additional year or two to petition other levels of government and get some financial commitment from

them to keep this pool.Perhaps then the City of Winnipeg could add a lesser cost of operating this pool to their capital budget. There is certainly a lot to lose from the pool closure.

I would be more than happy to meet with councillors and go into greater detail about the financial benefits of keeping this particular pool open.

Thank you

March 13,2024

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: Saving Happyland Park Pool

On behalf of the South St. Boniface Residents Association, I strongly object to the proposed closure of the Happyland Park Pool.

Over 2300 people signed the petition to save Happyland Park Pool.

This should give you an idea of how many people believe that keeping the pool open is vital to the community.

They believe that the pool is an asset and provides many benefits to the current and future residents of the area and surrounding areas.

The pool is used by people in the Dufresne, Archwood, Holden, Norwood, St. Vital, Elmwood and other areas.

All these people signed the petition because they strongly believe that a pool is a necessity and should not be taken away regardless of where it is located but especially this one because this is a low income area that does not have any other amenities. It is needed for the children, teenagers, adults, seniors and people with disabilities.

The city needs to consider more than the budget when shutting down a pool.

It needs to think about all the benefits that having a pool provides.

The pool provides a safe atmosphere for children and teens which helps avoid exposure to drugs and crime.

Mayor Gillingham said that he wants to be proactive about preventing crime and this would be a great start.

The pool gives teenagers a safe place to go to and connect with their friends and develop social skills.

It provides hours of entertainment for everyone.

It provides relief from the heat as not everyone has air conditioning.

The pool provides jobs, fresh air, sunlight and promotes overall health.

It increases the value of our neighborhood.

It is walkable, safe and inclusive to everyone.

People are more likely to use the pool if it is within walking distance.

It also increases public safety by learning to swim. You cannot learn to swim in a splash pad.

Every year there are drownings and then city and government officials say that there should be swimming lessons for everyone. Well, this pool could offer swimming lessons like it did in the past. It could also offer exercise classes like aqua zumba + aqua arthritis for a fee

Every year when the leisure guide comes out there are hundreds of people wanting to enroll their children in swimming lessons but there are never enough spots.

The city should not be taking away recreational opportunities and healthy activities from the community, they should be providing them with more.

Children who grow up in poverty tend to have worse health outcomes, both physical and mental.

That is why we need the city to do more to help these children.

If not for compassionate and humanitarian reasons, for future costs like health care, drug addiction and crime.

Pools positively impact individuals and communities, contributing to a healthier, happier, and more connected society.

It would be a detriment to the community if this pool was closed.

When this pool was built, the City of St. Boniface had the foresight to put smaller pools, which were less expensive to build, in different areas of this community instead of one huge pool that was more expensive to build, that other areas have. This made it easier and more convenient for families to use.

This pool has certainly paid for itself many times over by providing enjoyment, exercise, swimming lessons, social connections and family time over the many years that it has been in operation.

We should not be punished because we were fortunate that the city at that time was wise enough to know how vital the pools were and still are to the community.

We were appalled to hear that the reason to close the pool was due to lack of use.

The pool was always being used and there were lineups to get in except when the city took the lifeguards away from this pool to send them to another bigger paying pool. With every lifeguard that they took away that was 25 people that could not get in. Many times there were signs on the door of the pool saying capacity was 25 or 30 people due to lack of

lifeguards. This has been going on for many years and it was brought to the attention of the city councillors and the media.

You can find many articles and news stories on this topic on the internet.

We have provided a few of those news stories to you along with the petition and letters from the community. I do hope that you all take the time to read the letters before making your decisions.

Also, the pool was closed every Saturday and Sunday all last summer. These weekends were when people were home from work and could go to the pool, but because it was closed, they could not.

And don't forget covid.

Very little money has been invested on this pool over the years.

Money that should have been allocated here was not.

When you compare our pool to others in the city, you must also take into consideration that the other pools attract more people because they are huge pools with a larger capacity and they offer more amenities but most people have to drive to get there and they are expensive to get in to.

This is also at a time when people can hardly make ends meet and so they would not be able to use these bigger facilities.

The city wants to develop the land on the Canada Packers site with low income residential housing.

The city wants to develop the neighborhood but then they want to take away all the amenities. A pool is very attractive to developers.

We do not have swimming pools in our back yards like some people, or cottages, or ways to get to a beach.

The city closed and demolished the Norwood Pool. The residents of this area were using the Happyland Pool and now they too will have nowhere to go again.

There is also the fact that Bonivital Pool is supposed to be shut down for renovations starting this spring.

If Happyland Pool stays open the lifeguards from Bonivital could come to the Happyland Pool.

If Happyland Park pool is closed, there will not be any pools close enough for the children to go to. They would not even be able to afford to go to another pool taking into account transportation costs and admission fees.

Happyland pool is central to everyone in the area and money should be invested in keeping this pool open.

Premier Wab Kinew had mentioned to us that he would be giving the city some money for recreation.

With a portion of the 20,000,000.00 allocated for splash pads, that only very young children could use, and a portion of the money from Premier Kinew, we could probably keep the pool open for a year or two.

More people would benefit from a pool than splash pads which are restricted to only very young children.

There is also the money set aside for the decommissioning of these pools that could be used to keep the pool open.

The city should have used the money saved from the Norwood Pool closure for the Happyland Pool as Happyland Pool now accommodates these people.

The city, as they did in the past, should have been putting money aside to repair, renovate or replace the pool over the years. This should have been budgeted for every year so that we would not have been put in this position to save the pool.

Again, by looking at the petitions and letters you can see that keeping this pool open is a high priority with many people.

These people come from all over the city, including your wards, and they believe that keeping Happyland Pool is a wise investment for today and the future.

Please do not dismiss the seriousness of our concerns regarding the health and wellness of our neighborhood.

This is not a decision that should be taken lightly as it impacts very many people.

If the city closes this pool the children and people in this area will have nothing.

It was brought to my attention that one of the reasons the pool was built was that 2 boys drowned in the Seine River.

If the pool is taken away, that is what we may see again.

The benefits of having the pool far outweigh closing the pool. It pays for itself many times over.

The city should strive to provide a better standard of living for its citizens, not make it worse.

We are here today to ask you to reconsider closing Happyland Pool.

I understand that it costs approximately $80,000.00 to operate Happyland Pool.

I believe that it is the least expensive pool to operate and it requires very little repairs as compared to other pools.

Happyland Pool is located in the center of the city and our neighborhood and people come from as far as East Kildonan and Elmwood as it is free and low income families can enjoy its benefits.

We would like to ask that you keep it open for 1 to 2 more years so that we can petition other levels of government for funding and perhaps do a fundraising campaign.

Sincerely,

Teresa Cwik
President

South St. Boniface Residents Association