

NORTH KITSAP POOL

CLOSING FACT SHEET

- Q: Will the pool really close on August 30th, if money isn't donated to cover the cost of subsidizing it?
- A: Yes. The School District can no longer fund the pool's subsidy and still balance the budget.
- Q: How much money is needed to operate the pool? The pool seems busy. Don't user fees cover the costs?
- A: The pool's budget for 08/09 is \$376,795 for staffing and operating supplies. Utilities are estimated at another \$180,000. The total cost of operating is about \$556,795. Revenues are at record levels, but are only about \$213,500; leaving a deficit of \$343,295.
- Q: Can't the pool make more money and recover its costs? Why not raise fees to make up the difference?
- A: In a study just completed by Ballard-King Aquatic Consulting, President Ken Ballard reported: "The financial success of the (NK) pool requires a very strong focus on programs, and there is already a very comprehensive and well rounded offering of these types of services. As a result, it will be very difficult to reduce the current operational deficit much below its current level." The School Board has raised fees repeatedly the last several years in an attempt to reduce the gap, and another 8% increase is slated for this fall (if the pool remains open). In short, a traditional competitive style pool like NK can NEVER recover its costs, and will always require a large subsidy.
- Q: If a "traditional competitive style pool" can never recover its costs, what about those water parks? Don't they make money?
- A: Yes they do. However - they must be diverse, exciting, and expensive to do so. Even though Bainbridge Aquatic Center is essentially an indoor water park, it also operates with a large subsidy. The current trend is themed water parks with other revenue sources associated, like Great Wolf Lodge near Centralia.

Q: Staffing is 87% of the pool's budget; can't it be reduced? Can't the pool run more efficiently to reduce costs? How about utility savings?

A: Staffing has been continually reduced to increase efficiency; however, the pool is staffed at a level that cannot be lowered without reducing programs and services. In 99/00 NK Pool had 5.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) permanent staff. We currently have 3.0 FTE. We're proposing reducing that to 1.5 FTE by combining operations with Olympic Pool in Silverdale in 08/09. As for utilities, cost saving measures can be added that would reduce costs significantly. Even though Puget Sound Energy will provide support of up to 70% for energy saving measures, the remaining 30% is still cost prohibitive, since these measures are very expensive to do.

Q: What's the solution then? How can we keep the pool open indefinitely?

A: The pool must be operated by an entity that can afford the subsidy. The existing public entities in our area don't have the resources to subsidize it. One option being worked on is the creation of a new entity that could operate NK Pool and possibly much more. The Bainbridge Aquatic Center is operated by such an entity: a Metro Park District. A regional Special Events Center is also in the planning stages, and if build, would be located next to NK Pool. A new Metro Park District could operate both facilities; and could potentially fund much of the recreation services in the county. There is a cadre of public and private entities currently working together on the Special Events Center project, as well as a permanent funding mechanism for the facility.

Q: So, how can I help?

A: Contact the Save Our Pool Committee. CPA Randy Borek, and attorney Andy Sargent are Co-Chairs. The committee email address is HYPERLINK "mailto:saveourpool@comcast.net" saveourpool@comcast.net. Donations can be made out to Save Our Pool fund and mailed to PO Box 1284 Poulsbo, WA 98370. Save Our Pool fund is a 501c3 tax deductible contribution.

For more information about NK Pool: contact Aquatics Manager Greg Schmidt at gschmidt@nkschools.org. or call 360-598-1067.