

Symons Recreation Complex Natatorium Board Minutes June 10, 2024

The Natatorium Board met in person & virtually via Zoom on June 10th, 2024 at 6:00 pm. The following people were in attendance: Dave Turk, Mary Miller, Todd Coppernoll, Mark Chambers, Melony Walters, John Cler and Grant Worthington. Mike Hardy, Alan Lins, Barb Wentz, Dean Amundson, Joel Rewald, Lisa Rewald and Suzanne Fish were also present.

1. Call to Order - Cler called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.
2. Roll Call of Membership
3. Open Meetings Compliance - Verification was met, per Hardy.
4. Approve Agenda - Miller made a motion to approve the agenda. Walters seconded. Motion carried.
5. Approval of Minutes of May 13, 2024 – Turk made a motion to approve the minutes. Coppernoll seconded. Motion carried.
6. Public Comment – Joel Rewald thanked the Board and County for their support of Symons and for their commitment to hire experienced staff to lead the facility. He noted that public comment has greatly improved from members and other in the community who are more optimistic for Symons future than they have been in the recent past.

Administrative Reports:

7. Membership Updates – Hardy presented a report on May 2024 membership numbers. The summary showed a continued trend towards increased memberships, about 246 more than May 2023 memberships and 506 more than May 2022. Numbers are slightly below 2019 memberships but catching up with a recent uptick in new members joining this spring. Chambers noted that Wednesdays stick out with an average of 293 visits per day, followed by Fridays at 229 per day. He asked why those days were so heavily attended as compared to others. Hardy responded that Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays there are about twice as many exercise classes being offered, so that brings in more visits. Coppernoll noted that it is nice to see the increasing usage.
8. Staffing Updates- Hardy noted that Kyle Ewing was hired as the Assistant Director and started part time today (6/10). He is currently the Pool Director in Mauston and will be wrapping up his work there over the next month and be full time here before the end of summer. He is a certified lifeguard instructor with a lot of energy and should help recruiting guards as well as scheduling water activities and increasing revenues. We are still short on lifeguards, which has been an issue nation wide for the past few years.
9. Director's Report – Hardy updated members on the County staffing study which is starting this week and will provide a plan to address job description updates and pay scales for all county employees. He also noted that the sidewalk may be able to be replaced yet this fall, pending final Board approval next week. The sidewalk entrance to Symons has become cracked and shows significant gaps in areas that could cause a liability for the county and potential injury to visitors, especially noting the ages of some members using the front entrance. While there are still questions about the area around the entrance that may change based on the campus facility study and future use, the sidewalk was too much of a safety risk to put off longer to wait for study results. Finally, swim lessons at Symons begin next week. Symons is the only facility in the County that offers swim lessons presently.
10. Symons Recreation Complex Foundation Report – Barb Wentz thanked the Board, County and City for their commitment to Symons and the hiring of important positions to manage the Symons Complex. The Foundation is excited to be a part of the future growth of Symons by assisting with financial needs as well as marketing efforts.

Action Items:

11. Consider extending City/County Employee Discount to volunteer firefighters in the county—Hardy noted that he was approached by a member who asked if Symons would consider a discount to volunteer firefighters in the county. Presently, employees get discounts, as do volunteer firefighters from the City, but other county firefighters do not qualify. Coppernoll noted support and added that it should extend to all public safety volunteers including EMS. Chambers asked what discount is currently given to City and County employees. Hardy responded 25%, and he wasn't aware how many might take advantage of it. Turk added that it's a good incentive to extend to volunteers working in emergency management/public safety in the county. Coppernoll moved to extend the City/County Employee Discount to all volunteer EMS and Fire personnel who serve Richland County. Seconded by Chambers. Motion carried.
12. 2025 Budget Considerations – Hardy said that 2025 budget was due for County Administrator review at the end of July, so he would be assembling a budget over the next few weeks and would like any input from the Board discussed and possibly considered. Hardy plans to have a draft budget ready for next meeting, however asked if members have any items that should be included to let him know. The Air Handler replacement project was mentioned along with increase in lifeguard wages as priorities. No action taken.

Closing:

13. Future Agenda Items – Walters asked about the status of the City/County agreement update on Symons and if we could discuss that at future meeting. Coppernoll added that the current agreement is the original which was drafted in 1987. Turk answered that Attorney Windle has been working on updating that and when completed it will be brought back for discussion after attorney completes the draft.
14. Adjourn—Coppernoll made a motion to adjourn at 6:34pm. Walters seconded. The motion carried.