

Symons Recreation Complex Natatorium Board Minutes July 14, 2025

The Natatorium Board met on July 14th, 2025 at 5:30 pm. The following people were in attendance: Dave Turk, Todd Coppernoll, Melony Walters, John Cler, Rachel Schultz. Staff members Mike Hardy and Kyle Ewing were also present. County Administrator Tricia Clements and Attorney Michael Windle were present along with Symons Recreation Complex Foundation Board member Alan Lins. 1 member of the public was in attendance online.

1. Call to Order - Cler called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.
2. Roll Call of Membership
3. Open Meetings Compliance - Verification was met, per Hardy.
4. Approve Agenda – Walters made a motion to approve the agenda with item 12 (Symons intergovernmental agreement) moved up to follow Public Comment. Coppernoll seconded. Motion carried.
5. Approval of Minutes of May 12th, 2025 – Coppernoll made a motion to approve the minutes. Walters seconded. Motion carried.
6. Public Comment – none

Action Items:

7. Consider recommendations to the County/City Swimming Pool (Symons) agreement – City/County Attorney Mike Windle reviewed changes to the agreement, adding in some of the past feedback received from Natatorium Board and Symons Foundation Board members. The highlighted changes including renaming the agreement and replacing the UW representative with a representative from the Symons Foundation. Other areas of the agreement were also cleaned up and re-worked to acknowledge the changing role of the Board, noting the recent changes of both City and County going to an Administrator in overseeing City and County operations, as the Symons Board is now more advisory and policy-setting with daily operations and staffing left to administrative staff. Discussions on donation policy need took place with Coppernoll stating that the City incorporated a donation policy a couple of years ago. Walters asked about the City having a say in donation acceptance. Turk stated that monetary donations that cover expenses and don't add additional future costs to the County should not have to go to County Board for approval, as Symons Board should be able to approve those, for example the recent donations from the Foundation that are simply replacing older existing equipment. Discussion followed on the County owning the facility, therefore donations to Symons were technically owned and insured by the County, however those donations that could cause future maintenance costs would then be subject to City approval as well even though City would not have ownership, but have responsibility to maintain. Schultz moved to recommend the amended agreement to City Council and County Board for consideration, seconded by Walters. Motion carried.

Election of Officers:

8. Turk moved to elect Cler for President, seconded by Coppernoll, motion carried.
9. Coppernoll moved to elect Worthington for Vice President, seconded by Turk, motion carried

Administrative Reports:

10. Staff Report – Hardy provided budget and membership summary for 2nd Quarter and comparisons with 2024 2nd Quarter numbers. Symons pool and hot tub will be shut down the first week in August for annual maintenance. Badger Pools will come through at that time and do an inspection and repairs of any needed items. The school has been notified of water along the soccer field edge that may be standing following emptying of the pool. Budgets are due to County Administrator on the 18th.
11. Symons Recreation Complex Foundation Report – no report

12. Update on Re-branding, Sponsorships and Partnerships – Hardy contacted City Administrator and Public Works Director for updates on Innovation Grant RFP progress, but has not had messages returned yet and has not seen any RFPs released yet. Venture Architects were onsite July 1st with a team of 6 who went through the facility taking photos and notes for their study. They reported that they would have a report within the next 3 weeks.

Action Items:

13. Consider request from Kinship Richland County to provide passes for Kinship mentors & mentees– Hardy reviewed an e-mail received from Kinship requesting free passes. Discussion on the Kinship program and how it is a good community program happened, however the issue of open a can of worms in relation to other school, 4-H, etc groups expecting free passes occurred and where to draw the line. Members didn't think there was an income restriction to belong to the Kinship program, so consensus was that while we support the program, we are unable to give free passes at this time. No action taken.

14. Consider request from Gunderson Health for discounted memberships for healthcare employees – Hardy presented an e-mail from Emplify Health by Gunderson which the Hillsboro Hospital is a part of and several employees asked Symons to offer discounts. Gunderson does not take part in corporate discount programs and would not contribute to the discounts, they simply wanted to know if they could get a discounted membership for employees. Discussion had happened earlier this year on giving discounts to Richland Hospital and Clinic employees, at which time the Board elected not to do at this time, but to perhaps work on a partnership opportunity in the future. No action was taken.

15. Consider 2026 Membership and Visitor Rates – With the 2026 Budget due to County Administrator next week, Hardy needed some input as to 2026 Fees and Charges to support our approximate \$500,000 spending budget. Membership and visitor fees have covered approximately 80% of our expenses in the past, with the remaining 20% covered by County and City tax levies. It was noted that 5% increases were made in past years, except for the year following COVID when rates were unchanged. Hardy proposed continuing with a 5% increase in 2026, with the exception that Student and Senior rates will pay the same (to reduce confusion) so their rates will be slightly less (seniors) or slightly more (students) than 5% so they can be at the same level. Also Hardy recommended eliminating the "Family Plus" plan that required college age children living at home pay a higher fee than the regular family rate, which was put in place 3 or 4 years ago. Hardy recommended that Family rates include adult children living at home up to age 24 be included in a Family membership. Coppernoll moved to approve the 2026 Membership and Visitor Rates as presented, seconded by Walters. Motion carried.

16. Consider 2026 Budget requests – Hardy presented a report showing 2024 and 2025 budgets with final and year-to-date revenues/expenses. He stated that he is planning on similar operating expenses in 2026 with county-set COLA increases for staffing as well as some minor considerations for inflation, but the goal remains not to increase any staffing or operating costs, with the hope of continuing to reduce future tax levy support. Current levy support accounts for approximately 20% of the budget, Hardy wants to continue to work toward reducing that support to 10%, which will help both entities as the area continues to lag behind due to the lack of development (net new construction) that the state requires for raising taxes. To do this without cutting services, we need to be more aggressive in soliciting donations and writing grants, as well as continuing to bring in new revenues with new programming without raising expenses or raising membership fees too much where we outprice availability to pay. While the budget is still a work in progress, Hardy wanted members to have access to past and current numbers and have the opportunity to provide feedback for consideration in changes to the operating budget. No comments or suggestions were received for any changes in goals set in building the operating budget for 2026.

17. Future Agenda Items – None.

18. Adjourn—Coppernoll made a motion to adjourn at 6:52pm. Walters seconded. Motion carried.