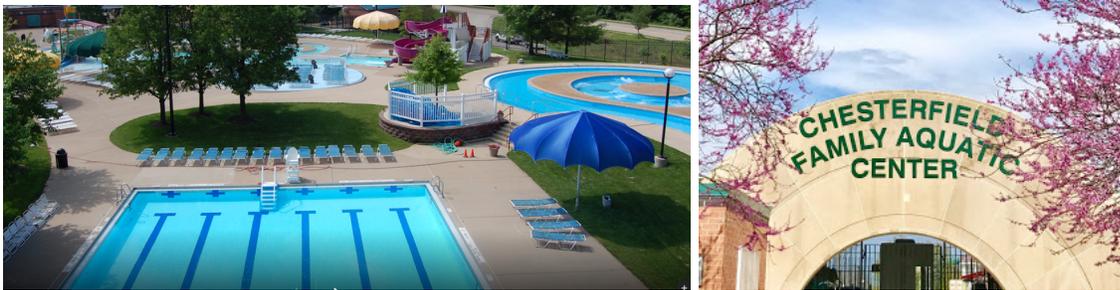


CHESTERFIELD CITY COUNCIL VOTES TO CLOSE AQUATIC CENTER AND CANCEL FIREWORKS FOR 2020 May 5, 2020

CHESTERFIELD CITY COUNCIL SUPPORTS STAFF' RECOMMENDATION TO CLOSE AQUATIC CENTER FOR 2020. It was a 5-3 vote on Monday May 4 not to open the Aquatic Center in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. The city staff had recommended closing the city's pools for the summer of 2020.

On the agenda for the meeting was to close the city's aquatic center for the 2020 season. The meeting was held as a teleconference since coronavirus rules set forth by the County Executive eliminate gatherings of 10 or more.



The staff recommended closing the center for 2020 for the following reasons relating to the pandemic.

1) Public safety ...the passing on of the virus. The question arose about the inability to clean pool side furniture constantly and the need to constantly clean restrooms.

2) Social Distancing ...Parks Director Tom McCarthy stated that if they got the okay from the County to allow groups of 10 or more they still could not open before the middle of June.

There is \$40,000 worth of repairs that need to be done prior to opening and not enough lifeguards have been hired. McCarthy said he was not sure that some college students normally hired as lifeguards would want to work this year.



3) Financial issues. With the city experiencing at least a two month severe drop in sales tax revenue and possibly much more, the cost of operating the Aquatic Center was another concern. The Aquatic Center is a loss leader costing the city about \$200,000 or more a year after selling season passes and collecting daily admissions.

Councilperson Barb McGuinness supported the 2020 shutdown. It is not realistic with the CDC regulations on social distancing. “If it opened the season would be shorter, but you would put the public at risk and employees at risk,” she said.



Barb McGuinness

Councilman Ben Keathley wanted to hold off on a decision to close the pools.

“The CDC’s opinions keep changing. It seems like we are jumping at this. It is one thing to close the pools for the whole season. I would ask the Council that we be able to open the pool later in the summer if possible,” said Keathley.

City Administrator Mike Geisel disagreed.

“If the County Health Department recommendations later change it will be a challenge to hire people and open the pools,” he said.

Mary Monachella added that some schools that shut down in March are talking about opening in early August, which would have an effect on pool attendance.

City Attorney Chris Graville spoke on the liability issue.

“I would venture a guess someone would test the City’s liability on this,” said Graville inferring if someone got sick with coronavirus that could be connected to a city swimming pool a lawsuit would be in the city’s future.

Tom DeCampi suddenly made this a very political issue and not a safety issue.

“We have the foot of Sam Page (Democratic County Executive) on our necks already. People voted for this (Aquatic Center). I don’t think there will be a risk at all. I don’t want my name anywhere near this thing (yes vote for cancelling the 2020 season).”



Tom DeCampi

The resolution to close the Aquatic Center for 2020 passed on a 5-3 vote.

Aye(to Close)

Nay (not to Close)

Mary Ann Mastorakos
Mike Moore
Barbara McGuinness
Dan Hurt
Mary Monachella

Michelle Ohley
Ben Keathley
Tom DeCampi

CHESTERFIELD CITY COUNCIL VOTES TO CANCEL 4TH OF JULY FIREWORKS

FOR 2020. The city faced social distancing requirements and the 10-person gathering issue. The moved will save the city \$75,000 as sales tax revenue has disappeared for two months due to County Executive order for closure of non-essential business to avoid the spread of the coronavirus. The fireworks event was cancelled on a 5-3 vote.

There was opposition debate on the issue.

City Administrator Mike Geisel said the city would have to cancel food trucks and not open children play areas if the program went on. He added there still would be the issue of social distancing and groups less than 10 people.

Geisel said this would likely be the last year the fireworks show would be held on the parking lots surrounding Chesterfield Mall due to future construction at the site.

“Social distancing requirements! There is no way we can do that (hold fireworks show),” said Councilwoman Barb McGuinness.

Councilman Tom DeCampi then made a motion to simply postpone the fireworks indefinitely, with the idea of holding them on Labor Day, Veterans Day or New Year S Eve.

Dan Hurt spoke in opposition of merely postponing fireworks and was in favor of simply cancelling the show for 2020.

“I trust our staff that they do a good job making a decision. I think my residents would be happy not seeing some sparklers in the air when we have employees furloughed and others taking a pay cut,” said Hurt.



Dan Hurt

The motion to postpone fireworks and not cancel them lost on a 2-6 vote with only DeCampi and Ben Keathley voting for it. This brought the issue back to deciding to cancel the fireworks.

Tom DeCampi: “The fireworks are viewed from throughout the city. We don’t need to cancel this. This is **pathetic!**”

Barb McGuinness: “We are not **pathetic!** I don’t want to plan a party when people are laid off, taking a pay cut and others are dying.”

DeCampi: “We need a party to celebrate our nation’s birthday.”

Ben Keathley: “We don’t need food trucks. We need to watch fireworks. We don’t need to tell people, ‘we don’t trust you to keep the distance.’”

The vote was then taken and the 4th of July fireworks show was cancelled for 2020..

Aye to Cancel

McGuinness
Moore
Hurt
Monachella
Mastorakos

Nay against Cancelling

Keathley
DeCampi
Ohley