

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee of Council
Held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building
On Monday, February 3, 2020**

The Chairman, Ward 1 Councilman Bob Butkowski, called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Committee Members Present:

Chairman, Ward 1 Councilman Bob Butkowski

Councilwoman-at-Large Tammy Holtzmeier; Ward 2 Councilman Dennis McBride

Others in Attendance:

Law Director John Gasior; Council President Brian Fischer; Ward 3 Councilman Tony Moore; Ward 4 Councilman Scott Radcliffe; Councilman-at-Large Craig Witherspoon; Finance Director Bill Logan; Aquatic Center Coordinator Tom Fattlar; City Engineer Ryan Cummins

Discussion of Pool Fess for 2020

Mr. Fattlar stated that he has worked with the Law Director and the Mayor in regard to an Ordinance for the pool fees and has looked through some recommendations for this year based on different goals and different ideas of what we have done over the last couple years. In particular, the idea was to maintain past prices for the most part, the same this year as it has been since the pool opened. There have been some different tweaks over the years for some revenue increases without making great impact on some different things. For instance, the guest passes were adjusted across the board. He said that two years ago, when Westlake's pool was down, they approached the Administration about permitting a limited number of their residents admission to our pool, with a ceiling of 150 passes. After that season was over, we obviously looked at that from a revenue standpoint. It did not seem to make a significant difference in terms of how it impacted attendance at the pool so the choice was made at that time to continue attracting non-residents of Avon. So with that in mind, the Friendship Pass continued. We did not have a function of charging anything from the Ordinance standpoint different than the highest rate that was there, which was the normal rate.

Mr. Fattlar said that we have three different price points for selling passes: the renewal rate which is the lowest discounted rate, the early bird, which is the second discounted rate, and the regular rate, which is the least used because people take advantage of the discounts. So that was the only price that was available to those persons for the Friendship Pass. Because it was a successful program in terms of the revenue production, this year we are recommending to continue it and to increase that price so it is basically a non-resident rate or a higher rate than would be available to our residents and produce an additional revenue for the pool and for the City. Again, the number of people would be limited. If you limit it to 150 people, you have an average of 560 – 600 people a day. Even if all those people with a Friendship Pass came on one day, it would be a small percentage of the total attendance.

Mr. Fattlar said that the other pass that they are looking to change is the VIP card and that is really just a prepaid card, multiplying your guest pass fee. Then since this is the fifth year since the pool opened, in celebration of that, the renewal rate for a season pass would be available to all residents for this year only. And those are the changes that are recommended here.

Mr. Butkowski asked how we define the Friendship Pass. What is the justification for who gets it and who does not? Mr. Fattlar said that they have advertised and opened up the door because it is on a first come,

first served basis. Mr. Butkowski asked, so the Friendship Pass would be about the same range of 150 people for this year? Mr. Fattlar said, from a revenue perspective, it is probably a driving force.

Mrs. Holtzmeier stated that it is hard to believe that the pool is five years old; it does not look a year over one. It has been an excellent amenity to our residents and to those that are using it. She said that we have always had a goal of having the pool be revenue neutral, and she can appreciate that when we are looking at fulfilling that goal, that if there are areas of season passes or daily passes that are dipping or the weather is not cooperating with us or whatever else might be happening that season, she appreciates that Mr. Fattlar is always looking for creative ways to solve some of these debts. Mr. Fattlar stated that outside of memberships, we have rentals which we are fairly aggressive with and we have a swim team program that produces some additional revenue. Mrs. Holtzmeier noted that the Friendship Pass specifically looks to represent about 4-1/2% of the total season pass revenue for this last year and that is important that we do not forgo that. Mr. Fattlar said, and he thought that will increase this year if you bump up the rate, or increase the numbers. Mrs. Holtzmeier asked if he was recommending that 150 pass limit? Mr. Fattlar answered that we do not notice 150 and he did not think we would notice 175. Mrs. Holtzmeier said that she liked the idea of having a limited amount of passes at first demand; it helps reach those numbers.

Mr. McBride asked, so what should that limit be? Should it be 200? Mr. Fattlar said, again, the 150 is your maximum number of people holding a pass; it does not represent who comes in on a daily basis so we are not taking 150 people and jumping up our attendance. He thought you could easily go up to 175. Mr. McBride asked, in terms of revenue, how much do the outside groups generate? Mr. Fattlar said it is in the \$20,000. range plus concessions, so about \$25,000 and then you have sponsorship money, which has been another \$50-60,000. over the last couple years. Mr. Logan added that concession revenue has always held pretty steady at \$4,500. to \$5,000. and then the sponsorships were \$57,000. last year and we are still waiting on one to pay; we sold \$68,000. worth of sponsorships.

Mr. Butkowski noted that we had talked about bringing in U.S. swim meets for the long course at the pool and he asked if there were other meets that we are going to have outside of the Avon summer swim program meets. Mr. Fattlar responded that we do have one meet called the Avon Classic which is organized by Lakeshore Swim Club and that is revenue producing for us. We charge for that so that we offset the loss of gate revenue. It is a nice balance with the swim meets and it does support work with the team that is coming in from 6:00 – 8:00 A.M. Monday through Friday in June and July. The meets are a great showcase for our facility and we are one of the few pools in the area that is the required size. Mr. Butkowski asked if there was a way that we might be able to leverage that or utilize that more for those meets because it brings in so much more of the intangible benefits. Mr. Fattlar said that he thought that our balance is pretty good. You have to bid for a zone meet or something like that and that is something that would be sporadic. He said, though, every other year we will be bidding for the summer swim league championships. That is a Friday night/Saturday morning event so we can still open up Saturday afternoon and Saturday evening. We do run a Master's swim event and again, it is small numbers, but it is just being out there with the adult swimming population. He added that he did not know if they knew, but a world record was set two years ago at our pool. It was the Master's National long course record for the 90-95 age group 200 yard butterfly. So we do try to get in the swimming world and get what we can without going overboard and starting to knock our residents out of opportunities to swim. And we keep the leisure pool open while those meets are going on.

Mrs. Holtzmeier said, so Mr. Fattlar is looking for us to review his recommendations and to either change them or approve them. Mr. Fattlar responded, yes, he would like to go on sale with the Friendship Passes

on March 3rd. Mrs. Holtzmeier asked if the passes would be available for purchase online and Mr. Fattlar said, no, the people would need to come in to show us different documentation.

Mr. Logan stated that we put this Ordinance on the agenda for a Special Meeting tonight with the assumption that Mr. Fattlar wanted to start selling the passes this week if possible. But since that is not happening, Council does not necessarily need to act on the Ordinance at the Special Meeting if you want to think about it. Mr. McBride asked Mr. Fattlar if he would prefer to start selling sooner than later and Mr. Fattlar said that he would prefer to be able to advertise it because we get people calling asking about it so if we pass it tonight then they have notice and they can make their plans to take advantage of a lead time.

Mr. Butkowski said that the Finance Committee can at least vote on the recommendation from a Committee perspective and then pass that on to Council for a decision at the Special Meeting tonight. Mrs. Holtzmeier and Mr. McBride agreed.

Mrs. Holtzmeier stated that there were some members of Boy Scout Troop 462 in our audience tonight and they are here watching this meeting because they are earning their "Citizenship in the Community" merit badge on their route to become Eagle Scouts and to further their Scouting experience. It is not often that we get young people here with opinions on matters that directly impact them. She asked if any of them had anything they would like to share with us or would like us to listen to regarding the pool.

One of the Scouts whose name was Nate came forward and said that he felt that his family used the Friendship Pass to their advantage last year with his cousins who live in Westlake. Mrs. Holtzmeier asked what he thought of our pool and Nate said that he thought it was great because it is open to all ages, from one year olds to seniors.

Mr. Butkowski called for a vote in regard to the way the Ordinance is written with the recommendations that Mr. Fattlar has described for us tonight.

A motion was made by Mr. McBride and seconded by Mrs. Holtzmeier to approve the Ordinance as written and pass it on to Council for a decision later tonight. The vote was all ayes.

Adjourn

Mr. Butkowski adjourned the meeting at 7:21 P.M.

Transcribed by Gail Hayden, Assistant Clerk of Council