



MEMORANDUM

TO: CBJ Assembly Human Resources Committee

FROM: CBJ Aquatic Facilities Advisory Board

DATE: July 15, 2014

SUBJECT: Aquatic Facilities Advisory Board Report and Recommendations

**Review of Activities During the Past Fifteen Month Period**

The CBJ AFAB held six regular and two special meetings since our last official report to the Assembly. One of the major matters we addressed at the beginning of this reporting period was to petition the Assembly to consider continuation of the AFAB, rather than permitting the body to sunset as provided for in the original enabling ordinance. We reported to the governing body a comprehensive list of goals and accomplishments and noted that subsequent meetings and work product might better be accomplished by meeting at least quarterly rather than the monthly schedule that had been our practice during the initial three years of AFAB existence. The primary purpose for reducing the number of meetings was to address the expressed administrative impact noted by the Parks and Recreation Department. We were pleased that the Assembly took action to continue the AFAB per our recommendations.

When the CBJ Administration advised the Assembly this past Spring that significant budget shortfalls would necessitate serious reductions in personnel and services and most specifically the prospective closure/moth balling of Augustus Brown Pool, both the AFAB and public response led to the need to schedule additional meetings to hear input from pool customers. Additionally, it was important for Board Members to meet with CBJ Administration to brainstorm ideas and alternatives to this proposal.

Specifically, the AFAB recommended to the Assembly that they consult with the Borough Attorney to move forward whatever alternative that was necessary to replace the AFAB with an empowered Board which would be responsible for oversight /management of the pool system. (The Assembly has indeed initiated this process with intent for this matter to appear on the October ballot as a Charter Amendment.)

Additionally, the AFAB provided a strong recommendation to the Assembly that the FY 15 budget reinstate the previous year Monday closures, and that if the proposed budget cuts became a necessity, they requested that such reductions to the pool facilities be crafted to affect the fewest patrons, in the least impactful manner. Further, the AFAB requested that the Borough staff work closely with the Board as budget reductions are considered, and that they include an opportunity for maximum public input, as well as consider the expertise/input of the Board as those recommendations were considered.

The members of the CBJ AFAB have continued to address the package of goals adopted by the Board during its initial three year period. These include:

- Continue to address a smart, integrated, aquatic facilities system that meets the needs of Juneau's diverse community interests;
- Work closely with the Aquatics Manager and CBJ Administration to find ways to meet cost recovery goals;
- Help establish effective marketing of the pool system;

- Help establish pool scheduling that was friendly to all user groups;
- Establish and maintain swimming opportunities for low income residents;
- Determine what a realistic cost recovery rate for the pool system should be – taking into account that the original 70% rate envisioned by the original consultants was not likely given the geographic dispersal of communities in Northern Southeast Alaska;
- Continue to support the existing School District Learn to Swim Program, while meeting with School District personnel to explore ways to expand the program. Additionally, to support increasing swim lesson opportunities in both locations -- which the AFAB considers to be both a quality of life and public safety matter for the citizens of the Borough.

The AFAB has continued to be successful in meeting many of these goals while at the same time keeping pertinent issues in front of CBJ administrators and the public.

- Despite significant budget shortfalls, the School District has been able to continue the Learn to Swim Program, although it has been limited to fourth graders.
- In collaboration with the Juneau Community Foundation, a scholarship program has been established to assist low income families take advantage of swimming lessons. Several free swims are offered during the year, such as those sponsored by the Glacier Valley Rotary Club.
- Board Members worked to secure funding for new aquatics features at Augustus Brown Pool (such as the newly installed climbing wall,) to better serve the primary users of the facility, most of whom hail from downtown Juneau and Douglas Island.
- Members of AFAB were drawn into the considerable conversation about how best to address the CBJ Budget shortfalls for FY 15 and 16. Additional meetings were held with the Administration and to hear comments from the user public groups, as the Board considered a number of alternatives. The AFAB also provided testimony to the Assembly noting the two major recommendations identified at the beginning of this report.
- The AFAB has been made aware that the downtown facility is in need of some major facility renovations. The Board stands ready to help the Assembly problem solve this undertaking, and hopefully, if the Charter Amendment ballot issue is successful, to take a larger role in insuring that a systematic and comprehensive course of action is put in place to provide the required repairs and modernization that will provide additional life span for this facility.

When the AFAB provided this report to the Assembly a year ago, the continued existence of the Board due to prospective sunset was a major concern. We were very pleased that the Assembly elected to continue the AFAB for another three years. However, the Borough budget crisis and ensuing alternatives related to aquatic opportunities in Juneau changed the urgency to provide additional oversight through an empowered Board structure, as is currently modeled through a number of other CBJ enterprises. Should the Charter Amendment ballot measure be successful, the AFAB stands ready to work with the Assembly and the administration to provide the best possible transition to the new business model. Most of the Diamond Park post construction problems have been addressed, thanks to the continuing diligent attention of the aquatic management staff. We continue to believe that more can be done to maximize the benefits of a pool system while minimizing the costs. We believe that there is much to be learned from the exemplary work of the Eaglecrest Board re: marketing opportunities that would increase attendance at both pools. The AFAB continues to value the contributions of managers and staff at both facilities, and looks forward to continuing to work with these employees while moving forward to enhance this important contribution to overall quality of life in Juneau.

Member	7/9/2013	8/6/2013	10/24/2013	1/22/2014	2/19/2014	4/1/2014	4/15/2014	4/21/2014
Phil Loseby	P	P	A	P	P	P	A	A
Rosemary Hagevig, Vice-Chair	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Chris Krenz	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Tom Rutecki	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Robert Storer, Chair	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Michelle Umbs	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
Kate Walters	P	A	P	A	P	P	P	P