



January 17, 2024

ITEM TITLE: UPDATE ON COMMUNITY SWIM PROGRAM AT MAR VISTA AQUATIC FACILITY PROVIDED BY THE CITY IMPERIAL BEACH. (0930-15 & 1010-20)

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:

Parks & Recreation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Staff is providing City Council with an update on the community swim program provided by the City's Park & Recreation Department at the Mar Vista High School Aquatic Facility located at 505 Elm Avenue.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is recommending that the City Council receive the update related to the community swim program provided by the City's Parks & Recreation Department taken place at the Mar Vista High School Aquatic Facility.

OPTIONS:

- Receive and accept the report
- Request additional information and return to a future City Council meeting
- Provide direction to City Manager

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

On November 2, 2022, the City Council authorized a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Imperial Beach and Sweetwater Union High School District (SUHSD) for the use of the Mar Vista High School Aquatic Facility. The joint use agreement includes access to the pool by the community for lap swims and programs at various hours during the week and weekends which is being managed by the Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department.

The City of Imperial Beach, SUHSD, and the South Bay Union School District (SDUSD) have been partnering since the original pool at Mar Vista High School was built in 1965. The parties formalized the use of the pool through the execution of a Joint Powers Agreement for community swim lessons and programs, lifeguard training, and 4th grade swim lessons. The pool was decommissioned on June 7, 2021 due to age and deferred maintenance. In December 2022 the school held a ribbon cutting for the new pool. The pool includes a 10,000 SF Olympic sized, measuring 62-meter with various amenities. Some of the amenities of the new pool include 21 swim lanes, 3 shallow lanes for swim lessons, a new pool deck that can host two water polo matches at a time, LED scoreboard, bleachers, shade structures, and restrooms with showers.

The new MOU between the City of Imperial Beach and SUHSD includes open community swim time, youth and adult swim lessons, water fitness classes, and public safety personnel training.

The term of the proposed MOU commences from January 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024 with the option to renew the agreement for three (3) consecutive one (1) year renewal periods. Representatives from SUHSD and the City will meet at least every six (6) months to review the administration of the MOU. The MOU requires that the City contract with the County of San Diego to pay for the full costs of one full time School Resource Officer (SRO), who began work on April 7, 2023. The cost of the School Resource Officer is approximately \$270,000 per year with an annual escalation of based on the City's contract for law enforcement services.

Additionally, the City is responsible for providing lifeguard services during its use of the pool. Since the City did not employ pool lifeguards, the City attempted to recruit pool lifeguards to operate the pool, but the recruitment was unsuccessful due to availability and general qualifications. Therefore, staff recommended contracting for this specialized service to operate and manage the pool during the times that the City is allowed access to use the pool through the MOU. At the City Council meeting on June 21, 2023, the City Council voted to approve a 3-year agreement with EXOS to become a contractor and operate the community swim program with lifeguards, learn to swim instructors, and aquatic fitness instructors at the Mar Vista High School Aquatic Facility. The initial term of the agreement is for two years with an additional one-year automatic renewal with mutual consent, though either party could terminate the agreement with 90 days written notice. The total estimated monthly cost would begin at approximately \$15,500 a month with a 5% annual increase, though expenses would change depending on programming and operation modifications.

The Imperial Beach Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) Department operates the registration, marketing, and collection of fees for the community swim program. The PRCS Department also opens and closes the aquatic facility and has staff onsite during all programming per the City's agreement with SUHSD. SUHSD is responsible for the daily maintenance, utilities, pool chemicals and repairs of the aquatic facility.

The community swim program began on Thursday, October 19, 2023 with adult lap swim hours. Adult lap swim pool lane rentals are currently held on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 5:30 am – 7:00 am, Saturday from 6:30 am – 8:00 am and Sunday during the open facility time from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm.

On Sunday, October 26, 2023 EXOS and the City were able to increase programming to offer swim lessons for ages six-months to adults on Sundays between the hours of 9:00 am – 3:00 pm. The Winter 2023 learn to swim program was very popular during this first session of enrollment at the Mar Vista Aquatic Facility. During the registration period for swim lessons all youth classes filled to capacity resulting in a waitlist. EXOS was able to add additional learn to swim lessons to accommodate some of those on the waitlist. During the first Winter learn to swim program in Imperial Beach a total of eight learn to swim classes were offered to forty-four participants aged six-months to adult. Unfortunately, there were an additional twenty-two youth on the waitlist that were unable to take swim lessons.

The lap swim registered participant totals were four hundred and forty for the months of October through December 2023. The busiest days for lap swim participants were Tuesday and Thursday during the 5:30 am – 7:00 am time frame with an average of fourteen participants each day.

This first season of community swim programs has not come without some challenges and learning lessons. The community swim programs offered, including both lap swim and swimming lessons, had cancelations with participants being credited or refunded for the day use fee of six dollars (\$6). The closures were due to chemical issues and/or scheduling conflicts. The closures for pool chemical imbalances occurred on Tuesday, October 31st, Sunday, November 5th, and Sunday, November 26th. Additionally, we had scheduling conflicts with the high school sport teams and were unable to hold lap swim on Friday, November 10th and Friday, November 17th.

All closures require approximately two staff hours to contact participants. SUHSD is working with their vendor to have fewer closures for chemical imbalances in the 2024 year as this also affects the high school students swim programs.

For the upcoming swimming lessons in January 2024 staff has worked with EXOS to increase the number of youth swimming lessons offered, add private swim lessons, and also add an adult water aerobics class. There will also be adult and child lap swim hours added per request by community during the Sunday lap swim time frame.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

Not a project as defined by CEQA.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The City of Imperial Beach does not own the Mar Vista Aquatic Facility but has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Sweetwater Union High School District for use of the pool during the non-school operational times. Per the MOU, the City provides a full time Student Resource Officer (SRO) at Mar Vista High School.

The community swim program is not a cost-neutral program but does provide the opportunity for residents of all ages and abilities in Imperial Beach to take learn to swim classes and have opportunities for low impact physical activity. Staff has applied for a USA Swimming Grant in the amount of \$10,254.00 to offer free swim lessons for youth in second to fourth grade. Staff will have notice if grant is awarded by Summer 2024.

Below is a chart of expenditures and revenues for the months of October – December 2023.

	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
Expenditures Supplies (Operating and Subscriptions)*	\$9,540.94	\$3,691.84	\$0
Expenditures Staffing Lifeguard Services (EXOS)	\$15,347.75	\$15,347.75	\$15,347.75
Expenditures Staffing City	\$1,821.21	\$3,475.41	\$1,821.21
Total Expenditures	\$26,709.90	\$22,515.00	\$17,168.96
Revenue from enrolled participants	\$2,820.00	\$1,098.83	\$1,646.94
Net Cost to City	(\$23,889.90)**	(\$21,416.17)**	(\$15,522.02)**

*Supplies: First aid, cleaning supplies, shelves, oxygen tank, safety cones, equipment, signage, pool testing kits, uniforms, hydrorack, hydrobouy, kickboards, pool noodles, aqua jogger, etc.; subscription: Hydroapp membership for operation management and Councilman Hunsaker membership for operations report.

**Amount does not include the cost of the SRO (budgeted cost = \$18,216 a month or \$218,592 annually).