

Symons Recreation Complex Natatorium Board Minutes January 13, 2025

The Natatorium Board met on January 13th, 2025 at 5:30 pm. The following people were in attendance: Todd Coppernoll, Grant Worthington, Larry Engel, Mark Chambers and Melony Walters. Staff members Mike Hardy and Kyle Ewing were present. Symons Foundation members Barb Wentz, Alan Lins, Suzanne Fish and Dean Amundson were also present.

1. Call to Order - Coppernoll called the meeting to order at 5:32pm.
2. Roll Call of Membership
3. Open Meetings Compliance - Verification was met, per Hardy.
4. Approve Agenda – Engel made a motion to approve the agenda. Chambers seconded. Motion carried.
5. Approval of Minutes of December 9, 2024 – Walters made a motion to approve the minutes. Worthington seconded. Motion carried.
6. Public Comment – Al Lins reviewed a letter he sent to County Board members requesting that the County assign management of the campus gym to Symons, along with consideration of adding the Wellness Trail, soccer field and tennis court areas to Symons in the future. He requested the Natatorium Board consider making a similar request to the full County Board so that the community can start using the gym space and we can begin grant writing and fund raising to make needed repairs to the building. Engel commented that with the Pine River maintenance future in question, he would like to see the Board discuss possibilities of Symons serving as a site for river recreation in the future on a future agenda.

Administrative Reports:

7. YTD Membership Updates – Hardy provided a report of YTD December 2024 memberships. Current active membership is 1,982 members – an increase of about 100 over November. Membership continues to climb steadily, with another 88 new members already added in the first 2 weeks of 2025.
8. YTD Budget Updates- Hardy shared a spreadsheet with revenues and expenses through December 31, 2024. Revenues continue to exceed expenses, current YTD is 4% revenues over expenditures. Hardy noted that some revenues and bills will come in over the next 2 months before we can close 2024, but is projecting a positive finish to 2024 budget with 2-4% revenues over expenses for an expected surplus to end the year.
9. Staff Report – Hardy reported on meetings with the Richland School District Superintendent on possibly partnering in future Symons operations, as well as initial contact made with Richland Hospital HR Director in promoting membership to medical staff at the hospital and clinics. Ewing reported that a Free Pool Party is scheduled for January 25 with a generous donor providing rental to allow for free admission to anyone. Also, Symons has the annual Triathlon scheduled to begin in February and run through the entire month. Currently, The Yeti event is on hold due to the lack of snow with no significant snow in the extended forecast.
10. Symons Recreation Complex Foundation Report – Al Lins reported the Foundation has set a goal of donating at least \$50,000 in Symons equipment or facility upgrades again in 2025 to mirror what was done in 2024. He added that they are actively looking at grants, have a goal to continue to seek at least 10% annual membership increase in 2025 and have set a priority to seek ways to better reach out to the Hispanic community to promote Symons.
11. Update on Re-branding, Sponsorships and Partnerships – Hardy stated that he and Ewing have met with the Richland School District Superintendent to discuss adding Free swim lessons in 2025 as part of the school curriculum in 2025 as well as a program to train lifeguards as part of the high school curriculum who could then be released from school to lifeguard at Symons and be fully trained to lifeguard at the City's Woodman Aquatic Center in the summer. Hardy will hold a joint meeting with the Superintendent, City Administrator and interim

County Administrator later this month to discuss additional opportunities for the school to be more involved with the City and County in future programming to benefit both the school district as well as Symons. Pending potential future additions of property or facilities to the current Symons Complex, additional opportunities to raise funding through sponsorships are being explored with other partners.

Action Items:

12. Consider special family membership add-on rate for college students living at home –Hardy noted that a complaint was received from Jessica Huntamer who was looking to purchase a new family membership and felt that their 19-year-old daughter who attends college out of state should be permitted to be included on a Family membership rather than the Family Plus membership. Hardy provided the membership rate chart and definitions set by the Board and stated that the chart was shared with Ms. Huntamer when she first requested a membership. The difference between a Family and Family Plus membership is \$79 per year (\$6.58/month). The definitions which were created by the Board several years ago state a Family as 2 adults and up to 4 related children under the age of 17 living at the same address, while the Family Plus states the same as Family with an additional up to 2 extra adults who are 1)a child of one of the adults, 2) are under age 24, and 3) have the same address or a temporary college address. Hardy noted to Ms. Huntamer that staff does not have the authority to allow for deviations from the membership definitions without Board approval. He offered her a solution of getting a Family membership now and using the free week for her adult daughter when she was home for Christmas break, then she could make her request at the January Board meeting. Coppernoll stated that she had contacted him after she left Symons and that he had shared the same with her that Hardy did, that she would need to wait for the Board to discuss membership policy changes. After significant discussion, while several members recognize the need to account for adult college kids who only use the membership during breaks, they also felt our current policy was fair and cannot make special concessions for everyone. Coppernoll asked each member in attendance their thoughts and all came back with not making any changes to existing membership policies. Hardy added that we could consider a special college student promotion during school breaks that could be an add-on for members that would be cheaper than the Family Plus rate to account for the less frequent use, but more than the Family rate to account for the extra adult. He added that it could be an incentive for those who further their education by requiring a 3.0 gpa or a certain amount of credits if desired. The proposal was welcome by members and Hardy was asked to develop a special college student punch card offer and return at a future meeting.
13. Consider final recommendations for updates to the County/City Swimming Pool (Symons) Agreement – Hardy reiterated that he is in discussions with the Richland School District who may be interested in joining the County and City in future operations of Symons. Because of this he asked Attorney Windell to hold off on finalizing the agreement until this can be explored. More information will be available at the next meeting.
14. Future Agenda Items – 1) New City/County Symons Agreement; 2) Pine River/kayaking management opportunities; 3) College student membership special offers; 4) Recommendation to turn over management of campus gym, wellness trails, soccer field and tennis courts to Symons
15. Adjourn—Chambers made a motion to adjourn at 6:27pm. Walters seconded. The motion carried.