

Symons Recreation Complex Natatorium Board Minutes February 10, 2025

The Natatorium Board met on February 10th, 2025 at 5:30 pm. The following people were in attendance: John Cler, Dave Turk, Todd Coppernoll, Grant Worthington, Larry Engel, Mark Chambers and Melony Walters. Mary Miller attended remotely via online. Staff members Mike Hardy and Kyle Ewing were present. Symons Foundation members Barb Wentz, Alan Lins, Suzanne Fish and Lisa Rewald were also present.

1. Call to Order - Cler called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.
2. Roll Call of Membership
3. Open Meetings Compliance - Verification was met, per Hardy.
4. Approve Agenda – Chambers made a motion to approve the agenda. Coppernoll seconded. Motion carried.
5. Approval of Minutes of January 13, 2025 – Engels made a motion to approve the minutes. Chambers seconded. Motion carried.
6. Public Comment – None

Administrative Reports:

7. Staff Report – Hardy provided a summary of January revenues and expenses. Revenues amounting to 8% and expenses of 7% were received, leading to a positive 1% surplus for the month. This amount does not include any tax subsidy payments, so this is self-sustaining revenues. With the news of a good revenue month, it was expected that membership was up again in January. Hardy reported that January 31 membership was 2,195 which was an increase of 209 members in the last month. The 6-month increase in memberships (August 31 – January 31) was 503 new members, an increase of about 20%. Hardy noted on the attendance at the January 29 Community Forum which featured the status of the campus building was about 60-70 people, and several people have contacted SRC to ask about how to support more space at Symons. A survey has been created and was released January 30 to collect input from both supporters and non-supporters of SRC growth to help get public input into SRC future plans. So far in just over a week, 228 responses have been received. Hardy is hoping for at least 500 responses by the end of February and will provide results to the Board at their March meeting.
8. Symons Recreation Complex Foundation Report – Barb Wentz noted that the Foundation Board held their regular meeting at 1pm and they had approved donating just over \$21,000 for 2 new treadmills, 2 recumbent steppers and several dumbbell hand weights. She commented on the great work being done by SRC management in bringing in new members and making so many upgrades to the facility.
9. Update on Re-branding, Sponsorships and Partnerships – no report

Action Items:

10. Consider recommending acceptance of February donations from SRC Foundation – Chambers made a motion to recommend the County accept \$21,545 in donations from SRCF for 2 new treadmills, 2 recumbent steppers and several replacement dumbbell hand weights. Seconded by Walters. Motion carried.
11. Consider final recommendations for updates to the County/City Swimming Pool (Symons) Agreement – Engels asked about the status of Richland School District's interest in possibly joining the partnership. Hardy noted that it is still being discussed at the staff level, while the Superintendent is a little hesitant under the existing unclear status of the gym and future structure of SRC partnerships, but all sides are very optimistic and continue to work for similar cooperation goals. Coppernoll added that he and Hardy were at a staff meeting earlier with reps from City and School District and added that there is a lot of optimism and support between all sides to expand the partnership. Members discussed the need to have representatives from the school attend the next meeting

to discuss options, either Superintendent or Board President. Engels made a motion to invite Richland School District representatives to the next meeting for a discussion at the Board level. Coppernoll seconded. Motion carried.

12. Consider Pine River/kayaking management opportunities – Engels had previously asked for this item to be included on the agenda, but has since dropped his request. There was no further discussion.
13. Consider recommendations for updates to Campus Reconfiguration Committee on proposed management of former UW-Richland facilities: gym; soccer field; tennis/BB courts; wellness trails – Walters asked if the Reconfiguration Committee is ready to discuss allowing SRC to manage any properties at the campus. Hardy noted that the current structure and footprint of SRC does not allow for the facility to ever be self-sufficient so it will always need outside financial support to offset the significant cost of swimming pool. He added that in addition to SRC being able to increase memberships and programming to increase revenues, if the Board ever wanted to explore private or YMCA ownership in the future, they would need to add space like the gym as a corporate or YMCA owner will not be interested unless they have ability to at least break even. Coppernoll added that Walters had talked to the YMCA a couple of years ago and LaCrosse had zero interest, but Madison sounded like they might be interested but only if the gym were included. Members discussed the difference between requesting temporary use of the gym vs. permanent management/ownership. Turk noted that the County already owns the gym and owns Symons, so requests for temporary use would not need an MOU like the school is working on. Engels asked why the school has a MOU being finalized for gym use and SRC doesn't. Turk noted that the school asked and SRC hasn't. Hardy explained that technically the request should come from the Natatorium Board, as he was hired under the new structure of the Board in which the Director is hired and overseen by the County Administrator. Hardy does not feel comfortable making a direct request of a County Committee or Board without Administrator knowledge or approval, and that respectfully unless the current structure of his position is changed, the Director needs to make requests through the County Administrator. He stated that he had asked former Administrator Pesch to use the gym over the winter months for overflow fitness classes last fall, but was told to wait until the Reconfiguration Committee completes their study. Engels asked how to move this forward and make sure that the County knows that Symons wants to use the gym now and manage it in the future to expand programming. Turk suggested that the Board have Hardy talk to Interim Administrator Kalish to request permission to temporarily use the gym. Coppernoll made the motion to recommend that the interim County Administrator look into the ability of SRC using the gym while the Campus Reconfiguration Committee completes their recommendations. Seconded by Engels. Motion carried.
14. Consider membership rate discounts: College Students; Richland Hospital and Clinic Employees – Chambers moved to table the discussion until next meeting. Seconded by Copernoll. Motion carried.
15. Future Agenda Items – 1) Discussion with School District reps on future partnerships; 2) College student and healthcare employee membership discounts.
16. Adjourn—Engels made a motion to adjourn at 6:55pm. Chambers seconded. Motion carried.