CALL TO ORDER

The New Hope City Council met in special session pursuant to due call and notice thereof; Mayor Hemken called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Council present: Kathi Hemken, Mayor
                John Elder, Council Member
                Andy Hoffe, Council Member
                Eric Lammle, Council Member (arrived at 7:03 p.m.)
                Jonathan London, Council Member

Staff present: Kirk McDonald, City Manager
              Tim Fournier, Director of Police
              Rich Johnson, Director of HR/Administrative Services
              Valerie Leone, City Clerk
              Chris Long, City Engineer
              Susan Rader, Director of Parks and Recreation
              Mark Severson, Recreation Facilities Manager

Also present: Joel Dunning, Wold Architects

POOL LISTENING SESSION

Mayor Hemken introduced for discussion Item 11.1, Listening session on outdoor swimming pool.

Mayor Hemken thanked the audience for their attendance, explained the process for the meeting, and emphasized that the City Council will not be making any decision at the meeting. She stated the purpose of the meeting is to allow residents an opportunity to offer public comment.

Mayor Hemken stated New Hope’s existing outdoor pool has served the community well, but it is 50 years old, has significant issues, and was scheduled to be replaced in the near future. She explained due to poor soil conditions on the Civic Center campus, in January 2017, a majority of the City Council decided to focus on the existing pool site as the location for a proposed new police station and city hall.

She indicated that when it became evident the pool would be relocated, city staff formed a resident committee to review broad concepts for a new community pool and make a recommendation to the City Council. The committee narrowed the pool options to two, which were presented at an open house in June. One concept featured a lazy river and a 25-yard pool; the second featured a current channel and a 25-yard pool.
In August, the City Council, with strong encouragement from competitive swimmers from across the west metro area and others, asked the pool committee to revisit the possibility of including a 50-meter pool, similar to the existing pool, in the new community pool complex.

Mayor Hemken stated the City Council wants to hear from as many New Hope residents and pool users as possible about the pool features and amenities they would value most in New Hope’s next community pool complex. She pointed out the focus of this meeting is not on saving the existing pool. She reported Council members are committed to constructing a new pool facility to replace the existing one, rather than make a significant investment to repair the existing pool.

She indicated all of the feedback received will be presented to the pool committee, which will be reconvening later this month.

Mr. Chris Long, city engineer, reviewed the timeline of the pool discussions:

April, 2015  Pool Study (pool assessment)
January 9, 2017  Authorized master planning (for new pool)
January – April, 2017  Pool and park committee meetings
May 15, 2017  Council work session
June 5, 2017  Dual pool and park meeting
June 27, 2017  Open house
August 2, 2017  Dual pool and park meeting
August 21, 2017  Council work session
October 2, 2017  Listening session

Mr. Long explained the condition of the existing pool which was constructed in 1965 has exceeded its life expectancy. He stated that in 2015 the estimated cost to repair the pool was $5.58 million, and the estimate increased to $6.5 million (based on 2019 construction year). He stated an additional $2 million is needed to include building replacement costs (concession stand, bathhouse, and mechanical buildings) for a total budget of $8.5 million.

Mr. Long reported on the master pool and park planning process, committee composition, goals and objectives, and various pool amenity options. He stated the committee decided a lazy river or a current channel would be the best options along with a 25-meter pool. Mr. Long commented on the challenge to balance the needs and site constraints. He stated the pool amenities required prioritization as the initial pool concepts were all higher than the available budget. He stated the overall budget of $10 million includes pool and park amenities. He pointed out the committee considered a 50-meter vs. a 25-yard pool. He stated a 50-meter pool costs approximately $2 million more than a 25-yard pool and has higher operation and maintenance costs. Regarding pool cost recovery, Mr. Long stated a pool with more features and amenities will draw a greater number of users resulting in higher cost recovery.

Mr. Long illustrated two pool concepts that were presented at the June 27 open house which fit within the overall budget. He stated concept 1 with a 25-yard pool and lazy river is approximately $8.8 million, and concept 2 with a 25-yard pool and...
current channel is approximately $8.1 million. He also illustrated a park concept for the Civic Center Park Master Plan.

Mayor Hemken opened the floor for comments. She asked persons to share what pool features and amenities they would like to see in a new outdoor pool complex.

The following persons addressed the Council:
- Dan Gates, 4520 Flag Avenue North
- Michelle Urbancic, 4509 Aquila Ave North
- Sharon Moran, Maple Grove
- LeeAnn Mateffy, 8424 28th Avenue North
- Larry Benshoof, Robbinsdale
- Kristi VanLaarhoven, Plymouth
- Heather Johnson, 3130 Boone Avenue North
- Shannon Johnson, 4070 Flag Avenue North
- Andy Inserra, 4940 Xylon Avenue North
- Carrie Moore, 3733 Gettysburg Avenue North
- Leon Griggs, Minnetonka
- Duncan Masterman, Brooklyn Park
- Heather Wilson, Plymouth
- John Jacobson, 4817 Utah Avenue North
- Steve Carpenter, Minneapolis
- Sara Swenson, St. Louis Park
- Shirley Markon, 5401 Quebec Avenue North
- Charis Linebaugh, 8208 28th Avenue North
- Mike Opat, County Commissioner
- MariAnne Younquist, 3017 Boone Avenue North
- Matt Linebaugh, 8208 28th Avenue North
- Jane Hansen, 9101 35th Avenue North
- John Chau, 8808 35th Avenue North
- Ed Schneider, 4217 Zeeland Avenue North
- Jeremy Hughes, 3635 Jordan Circle North
- Greg Heigel, 4948 Yukon Avenue North
- Gretchen Brey, Plymouth
- Beth Ducher, Minneapolis
- Mark Stiglicz, 5756 Boone Place
- Michelle Slotto, 8117 38th Avenue North
- Darrel Fields, 8224 49th Avenue North
- Brian Sostek, Minneapolis
- Molly Sanborn, 4301 Zealand Ave North
- Alec Madson, Minneapolis
- Jen Leonardson, 9117 40-1/2 Avenue North
- Hein VanLaarhoven, Plymouth
- Tim Donohoo, 4305 Zealand Avenue North
- Angela Weins, 8300 46th Avenue North
- Adel Hanson, 4089 Decatur Avenue North
- Megan McClellan, Minneapolis
- Andrea Richards, 8600 40th Avenue North
The audience was appreciative of the “Listening Session”. The majority of the speakers spoke in favor of a 50-meter pool. Comments included the following:

- 50-meter pool is a good asset if it is constructed by the school district and funded by several communities.
- Lazy river feature will draw visitors.
- Retain park green space as park is open year-round and pool is only open a short time (does not want park land converted to parking lot); consider offsite parking with shuttles to transport persons attending swim team or theatre productions.
- 50-meter pools are rare and the city will not receive revenue from swim clubs if a 25-meter pool is built.
- 50-meter pool is ideal for lessons and practice; swimming pool is a life-long sport; against lazy river (passive activity and does not help overweight persons); current channel does not work for therapy.
- Preference for unobstructed open view of all pool areas so parents can watch different age children (current pool layout).
- Diving boards and white slide are enjoyed and should be retained.
- Temperature of current pool area for younger children is too cold.
- Favors family pool for older children (can drive to Maple Grove pool for a lazy river); offer something different than Crystal.
- 50-meter pool works for all age groups; good for lap swimming.
- Try to market pool to draw more customers, broaden lessons by adding diving lessons, expand water aerobics, water sports or other activities, add lights for evening swimming.
- Rebuild the pool in same configuration as current pool, include green space.
- The costs to maintain a lazy river are greater than an open pool.
- Health benefits from swimming.
- Favors New Hope pool over the Crystal pool. Open pool encourages other active play, promotes creativity, builds community.
- Ramp into pool is needed for accessibility (zero depth entry).
- Willing to pay more for pool pass if a 50-meter pool is built. There is value in 50-meter pool.
- With significant bodies of water in Minnesota, it is important for people to learn to swim; water parks offer fun but are not conducive to swimming.
- Consult entire community to see what is desired; the pool is an asset; define budget and reprioritize design and location.
- City should “think big”, possibility of Hennepin County Youth Sports grant funding up to $400,000; other partnerships for funding; state bonding option.
- Suggestion to extend hours and season, add more lawn chairs, a locker room area for mothers of young boys, ensure proper ventilation in concessions building for employees.
- Concern regarding lack of transparency (committee meetings); lack of minutes. Need a mission for the pool project.
- Consider reciprocity with other communities. Consider free admission to parents of swimmers and to retirees.
- Be mindful that decisions made on footprint of pool will impact park.
- Swim clubs should contribute funds toward construction of a 50-meter pool.
- Offer amenities to middle-school age children.
- Consider allowing non-residents to serve on the pool committee.
Mayor Hemken thanked the audience for their comments. She encouraged the television viewing audience to provide comments to the Council by email or phone. She stated the Council will ensure that all comments are heard.

Mayor Hemken requested that even though Roger Landy chairs the pool committee, residents should direct comments to the Council or city manager instead of committee members.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Council Member London, seconded by Council Member Elder, to adjourn the meeting, as there was no further business to come before the City Council. All present voted in favor. The New Hope City Council adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Leone, City Clerk