



## ***Lompoc City Council Agenda Item***

**City Council Meeting Date:** November 4, 2008

**TO:** Gary Keefe, City Administrator

**FROM:** JoAnne Plummer, Recreation Manager

**SUBJECT:** LOMPOC AQUATIC CENTER OPERATIONS REVIEW

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### **Background:**

At the City Council Meeting of August 5, 2008, Councilmember Schuyler requested staff bring back to Council an update on the operational cost of the Aquatic Center.

The Lompoc Aquatic Center held its grand opening on October 21, 2006. Over the past two years, Recreation staff have developed a menu of programs that are aligned with our mission statement: to improve the quality of life in the community by promoting positive social behavior, interaction with others, self discovery and positive self esteem through the development, implementation, and coordination of a wide variety of recreation and cultural services.

In fiscal year 2007-08, the facility had over 88,000 visits from Lompoc residents and from consumers outside the area. These individuals utilized the facility for programs such as recreation swim, lap swim, swim lessons, adult exercise classes, party rentals and other specialty uses. In one year, the facility offered 400 swim lessons with 1,800 participants, 67 water exercise classes with 863 participants, 42 warm water therapy classes, with 639 participants, 536 hours of recreation swim, and 1,900 hours of lap swim. Additionally, there were 200 individuals that took advantage of the private and semi-private swim lesson program, 60 adults learned how to swim, eight different specialty courses were offered, six training programs for lifeguards and water safety instructors, as well as special events. The facility is home to Lompoc and Cabrillo High School's boys and girls water polo teams, swim teams, and the Tsunami Swim Team. Combined, these teams have utilized 780 hours of rental time in the water. Additional uses for the facility include a training location for the Fire Department, the American Red Cross, State Parks Department, and other water and/or rescue related services. Lastly, the private rental program of the Recreation Pool is extremely popular with 308 hours of rental occupancy this last fiscal year.

The data collected through our computer program registration/facility booking system reflects that 26 percent of our customers in swim lessons and water exercise classes come from outside the City limits, of which 6 percent travel from the Santa Ynez and Santa Maria areas. Additionally, 41 percent of individuals

that rent the facility for private use reside outside the City limits, with 26 percent coming from as far south as Santa Barbara and as far north as Arroyo Grande.

For fiscal year 2007-08, the Lompoc Aquatic Center generated \$276,897 in revenue through programs such as learn to swim, water exercise, recreation swim, pool rentals, lap swim and specialty aquatic programming. The subsidy received from the City was \$399,380. The expenses for this facility exceeded the combined revenues and subsidy by \$32,553, with a total expense of \$708,830 (See Attachment). Aquatic staff continuously evaluate programs offered making program adjustments when necessary to be fiscally responsible.

The primary consumer complaint is related to recreation swim opportunities. Recreation swim is the time when children and families can come to the pool to enjoy the slides, play structure and simply have fun in the water. The average cost to operate the facility for a two-hour recreation swim session is \$495, which includes all facility costs and part-time staffing requirements. In order for such a swim session to be cost effective, 248 paid patrons would be required. Staff continues to evaluate the Recreation Swim program to determine which days and times attract the highest level of participation, contingent on the season. When the facility initially opened, we were able to present a wide variety of weekday recreation swim offerings, attracting capacity usage. However, over time the numbers reduced and consequently program offerings were restructured.

For the current fall season, the facility offers recreation swim on the weekends, once during the week in the evening, Friday afternoons, and whenever the Lompoc Unified School District is out of school. At present, the evening and afternoon opportunities are not experiencing the occupancy numbers warranted to maintain those sessions, or to consider additional weekday recreation swim sessions. The weekend and school holiday sessions maintain sustainable occupancy numbers.

During the peak of summer, the facility typically reaches maximum capacity on a regular basis for weekend recreation swim opportunities, and, at times, customers were turned away. Due to the inconvenience to customers, the schedule was restructured to offer two separate recreation swim times on Saturdays. As well, the sales of early bird wristbands were made available 45 minutes prior to each swim opportunity, resulting in great success.

The Lompoc Aquatic Center has incurred some unforeseen expenses over the past fiscal year, which affected the facility's operating budget. Such expenses include:

- ✓ Additional safety equipment, such as a full body wash station, required by service vendors
- ✓ Addition of new computer software and support equipment to allow faster, more efficient customer service
- ✓ Replacement of equipment that failed outside of warranty

- ✓ Additional Automatic External Defibrillators for training,
- ✓ Replacement of lost or broken items due to vandalism and theft
- ✓ Costs associated with training of part-time staff due to high turnover
- ✓ Contractual service on equipment for annual maintenance
- ✓ Replacement or repairs to equipment due to the wet environment

**Conclusion:**

This past fiscal year over 88,000 people were served, and this year we are anticipating over 100,000 visitors. Through diverse program offerings, continuous program refinement, and excellent customer care, staff project that this fiscal year revenues will exceed overall operational costs of the Lompoc Aquatic Center.

Respectfully submitted,

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JoAnne Plummer, Recreation Manager

**APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL:**

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Gary P. Keefe, City Administrator

ATTACHMENT: [Aquatic Center Revenue & Expense Statement](#)