

## MEMO

Date: 02/05/13

To: Metropolitan Park District Commissioners

From: Sustain Tukwila Pool (STP)

## SCHOOL DISTRICT RELATIONSHIP

### BACKGROUND:

Sustain Tukwila Pool was formed in May of 2011 by a group of citizens dedicated to keeping a pool as a community resource available in Tukwila. STP members have been working to restore swimming in the Tukwila School District, even before the group was formalized. In fact, in 2010 citizens advocating on behalf of the pool, approached the Tukwila School Board and the Superintendent's Office intent on rebuilding a relationship with the citizens and the school. This continues to be a focus and a goal of STP. Past activity taken to realize this goal include: initial conversations and lobbying to encourage the continuation of the school land lease; an MPD campaign that emphasized kids in the pool; continued conversations and meetings with the past and current interim School Superintendents as well as School Board Members and School Staff since the successful MPD campaign. In an act of commitment, STP volunteers, in conjunction with the school, provided a location and manpower to support the successful school levy in 2012.

Dr. Mellody Matthes, Tukwila School District Interim Superintendent, and STP had expressed a mutual desire to get together to discuss the future vision of swimming in the Tukwila Schools. A meeting was arranged for February 2, 2013 during the STP regular meeting at Freindz Cafe.

### SUMMARY OF TUKWILA SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT MEETING: 2/2/13

#### Attendance:

Allan Ekberg, Bryan Nelson, Christine Neuffer, Dave Puki, Di Myers, Ellen Gengler, Gene Achziger, Jacque Carroll, Jeri Frangelo-Anderson, Amy Kindell, Dr. Mellody Matthes, Vanessa Zaputil.

At the opening of the meeting Dr. Matthes shared that she had been a lifeguard and on the swim team in high school and was a supporter of kids learning to swim. Members of STP shared the history of the Tukwila Pool from the King County beginnings to present. STP members, including Commissioner Ekberg explained the status, both in governance and operations, of the Tukwila Pool MPD. Commissioner Ekberg and others explained how the MPD Commissioners are charged with operating the pool, which differs from their other role as council member.

**Dr. Matthes shared that swimming had been included in the Fall 2013 high school course brochure which had recently been sent to press.** The STP members were very enthusiastic regarding this news as this was one of the primary goals of STP. To have the school embrace swimming as a program in their curriculum was unprecedented and very welcome. As the details of the program moves forward, both STP members and Dr. Matthes recognize the need to include the Commission in the discussions.

Still in the planning stages, the program currently includes that boys and girls would be scheduled separately and book-end the school day. (First and last period to minimize time spent changing, etc.) Other details were still in development and a minimum of 20 students would need to sign up during enrollment between February and May. Dr. Matthes also indicated her desire to include more comprehensive adaptive recreation programming at the pool for students with special needs of all ages (elementary through high school.) She also saw opportunities during summer school and after-school programming, as CSC was moving toward including PE components.

Attendees expressed concern that lack of supplies, swimsuits in particular, should not be a barrier to having the Foster High School students sign up for the fall swimming schedule. STP members agreed to research and solicit donations, both private and corporate to provide swimsuits for participants in need.

Finally, it was the mutual desire for the High School swim program to be successful, and discussions ensued on how best to ensure this success. Suggestions included promoting in coordination with the Grand Re-Opening, utilizing the Backpack Express, and a Foster High School Field Trip to the newly renovated pool.

## **CONCLUSION**

Sustain Tukwila Pool is delighted with the addition of swimming in the Foster High School Fall 2013 Schedule, and will continue to encourage an even more comprehensive program throughout the Tukwila School District in the coming years.