

August 2, 2023  
Boyertown Borough Council Boyertown Pool Update

On Wednesday August 2, 2023, at the Finance Committee Meeting of Borough Council, there was a discussion on the current situation regarding the Boyertown Community Swimming Pool. The meeting was attended by committee members Charles Heller, Chairman; Charles Neubauer, Jeffrey Cascino, and ex-officio member Frank Deery, Council President. Also in attendance were Councilman Barry Christman; Borough Manager Patricia Loder; and Mayor Lorraine Carnes.

There was also a representative from the Greater Philadelphia YMCA and over 20 interested citizens in attendance.

Chairman Heller started with a presentation and discussion on the current condition of the pool and what costs Borough Council has incurred to date. These include \$31,500 for a Void Detection Survey to detect and delineate voids under and around the pool. There was also pressure testing done on the underground piping to determine if the piping would hold pressure. The only pipe that failed was the main drain line from the deep well of the pool to the pump house. This line is approximately 14 feet underground and goes from the center of the deep well to the pump house. Excavation will need to be done to find the leak and if it is under the concrete floor of the deep well, the concrete will need to be cut and excavated to repair and/or replace the line. A rough figure of over \$100,000 has been given as a target budget to repair this line. In addition, there is an estimated \$100,000 in work needed to reseal the pool joints, repair skimmer pots, and make repairs to the pool wall at various locations. All of these issues are contributing to the loss of 25,000 to 30,000 gallons of water per day.

Mr. Heller reminded the audience that all these repairs and costs are paid for by the owners of the taxable 1,417 parcels of property in the Borough. No funds are received from any surrounding municipality. Committee member Neubauer also added that if a neighboring municipality would have an interest in partnering to fund the pool repairs and operations, this would require an Inter-Governmental Agreement between the Borough and the other municipality.

The discussion then turned toward winterizing of the pool. In July several members of Borough Council, the Borough Manager, and the Mayor met at the pool with Mr. Brent Boyer of Aquatic Facility Design, Inc. whom the Borough had used in the past for design work and also upgrades to the pool facility. During that site visit there was a lot of discussion on the integrity and future of the pool as it is constructed. One item that was stressed to those in attendance was the fact that if there was any chance to salvage the pool, it will need to be “winterized” and be able to hold water over the winter. To accomplish this would mean replacing the expansion joints that exist in the concrete structure and plugging the main drain to not allow water to escape where it leaks. If the pool was left empty the potential of water expansion due to freezing could damage the concrete structure beyond repair.

It was explained that other repairs would be required to make the pool operational with the understanding that these would only be for a year or two and then more repairs would be required. It was also discussed about funding opportunities. It is understood that a Feasibility Study is required to apply for a grant through DCNR (Department of Conservation and Natural Resources). The Borough did get a quote for this study from Aquatic Facility Design and the cost including core borings and pressure testing is approximately \$43,100.00. This is money spent just to recommend what options the Borough has regarding the pool facility. Mr. Neubauer also explained that if a grant would be applied for and possibly granted for repairs this is only looking at the pool and that there would need to be a commitment to the entire facility including the pool house. The pool house is in desperate need of repairs, it has apparent roof issues along with outdated and non-ADA compliant restrooms. It was pointed out that the current facilities have plywood stalls and the roof at the entrance is actually falling down and in need of immediate repair.

It was also stressed that if we would be fortunate enough to get grants to assist that the pool would need to be upgraded to current standards. Anyone that has used the facility knows that there is no entry or egress from the pool for handicapped users as it is either steps or ladders. It is our understanding that a zero or beach entry would need to be installed to allow accessibility into the pool. Lastly, it was stressed that the worst potential for the facility was to make the decision to close the pool and demolish the pool and building. An estimated cost of over \$200,000 was given to demolish the structures.

Members of the Committee did not present this as a proposition that it will cost too much to repair. The presentation was done to educate those in attendance about the potential costs that the Committee and Borough Council are reviewing to assist them in making an informed decision. Mayor Carnes asked what it would take to get the pool operational for next summer. She quoted a rough estimate from Mr. Boyer for the repairs to the skimmer boxes, expansion joints, return lines, and other repairs to make the facility usable next season. The figure did not include the main drain leak which put us in the situation we are currently experiencing.

No decisions have been made in any direction at this point in time. The Finance Committee wants to say that the information and figures discussed are very rough estimates, relying on Mr. Boyer's experience with facilities and want to express again that no decisions have been made regarding the future of the pool. It was the recommendation of the Finance Committee to forward to Borough Council at the August 7<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting for the Borough Manager to request a quote from Aquatic Facility Design to do the necessary work to winterize the pool to keep the facility viable till future decisions are made.

The last discussion was that the Borough would keep the Borough of Boyertown website up to date with any decisions regarding the pool. You will find the updates on the home page under "News and Notices". It was strongly expressed that this will be the only "Official" location to obtain information on this subject.

There were several excellent questions from people in attendance, which were already covered in the presentation, or the answers were reiterated to those in attendance. The Mayor, Borough Council and Borough Manager thank everyone for their concern and understanding as we deal with this difficult decision(s) for the future of a viable asset to the Borough of Boyertown and surrounding communities.