



FACTS CONCERNING A LIMITED PROPOSITION ON THE GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT FOR NOVEMBER 4, 2008

The Board of Commissioners of the South Whidbey Parks & Recreation District in Island County has placed a Limited Proposition on the General Election ballot for November 4, 2008.

The proposition will authorize the South Whidbey Parks & Recreation District to add a regular property tax levy of \$.174 per \$1000 of assessed valuation for property taxes to be collected in the years 2009 – 2029. The following questions and answers are pertinent to this proposition:

Q. What is proposed?

A. 15.2 million dollars in bonds to build a multi-purpose community recreation, fitness, and aquatic center on land already owned by the Parks District adjacent to the Community Park entrance on Maxwellton Road. This facility will include a leisure pool, lap pool, two multi-purpose rooms, a child care room, kitchen, staff offices, changing rooms, and parking. A portion of the total bond amount will go toward the construction of the infrastructure needed to add tennis courts on existing Parks land adjacent to the recreation center facility. This work will include architectural and engineering work, clearing, grading and the pouring of footings for a facility that will be built and funded by a community tennis association at a future date.

Q. Why does the Parks & Recreation District think it needs to build a Community Recreation Center?

A. The mission of the Parks District is to provide not only parks and open space, but a diverse array of recreational activities to the citizens of South Whidbey. In the face of this broad mission, the District has no central facilities of its own around which to organize the diverse range of recreational activities for residents of the South Whidbey, ranging from basketball, swimming, and yoga, to weightlifting and dance. The District heard this feedback loud and clear when the citizens of South Whidbey responded to a 2005 Recreation Needs Assessment survey, and heard it again in the two years of public meetings that followed as the District developed its Master Plan for park facilities. Based on that community input a plan for a Community Recreation Center (CRC) was developed.

This Community Recreation Center will enable the district to increase its capacity to offer all these activities and more to individuals and families, young and old alike. The District will have covered, climate-controlled spaces in which to conduct much-needed after school programs, summer day camps,

adaptive recreation, and special events. The pool facilities included in the Center will enable the District for the first time to offer swimming lessons, organize swim teams, conduct aqua therapy programs, teach water safety courses, and facilitate other water sports to expand the scope of recreational programs available to the residents of South Whidbey.

Q. Will the Parks & Recreation District need to increase the Maintenance and Operations (M & O) levy to cover the maintenance of the new community recreation center?

A. At this point the District believes the existing Maintenance and Operations levy, approved by the voters last year, will cover the cost to operate the CRC when it opens in 2010 or 2011.

Q. How much will it cost per person to visit the Community Recreation Center on a daily basis?

A. A feasibility study conducted by an outside consultant specializing in pool construction and operation concluded the usage fee for someone walking up to use the facility for a full day would be approximately \$3.50. For residents of the South End, including families, youth, and seniors, monthly and annual passes will be available at reduced prices.

Q. The design shows two pools, what will the difference be between the two pools?

A. The indoor pool, also referred to as the Leisure Pool, is designed for the whole family with two lap lanes for swimming and aqua therapy, a lazy river feature for fitness, therapy, and for the enjoyment of users young and old, and a zero-depth entry area, water slide, and spray features for the kids. This pool will be kept at 86-88 degrees. The outdoor pool will have 6 lanes for lap swimming and the water temperature, though heated, will be a cooler 81 degrees.

Q. Why can't the cost be reduced by just building a pool and not all the other stuff in the proposed design?

A. The surveys the District performed and community meetings organized with citizens of South Whidbey indicated the District needed to provide facilities for such as basketball and dance and yoga and group meetings and swimming. The dry-side and wet side activities go hand in hand.

Q. What will the district do if the measure does not pass on November 4?

A. Based on the overwhelming feedback received to date from the public indicating a facility of some sort is important

to the community, the district would spend time gathering community feedback from this ballot measure and revise the plan for the facility as necessary. The revised facility would be put on a future ballot as soon as practicable.

Q. When will the Community Recreation Center be built if the measure passes in November?

A. Absolutely as soon as possible. Construction would likely begin in 2009 and the CRC would open in early to mid 2010.

Q. Aside from the debt incurred by the construction of a community recreation facility, does the district have any other outstanding debts?

A. Yes, the District has a small bond of less than 3 cents per \$1000 of assessed value that several years ago paid for the purchase of what is now the Soccer Complex on Langley Road. The District is also repaying a bond passed by the voters in February 2008 at less than 2 cents per \$1000 of assessed value, funding a host of Park improvements and major maintenance items.

Q. If the Community Recreation Center passes, will the district hire new employees?

A. Yes, according to the feasibility report prepared by our outside consultant, the CRC will require a combination of new part-time, full-time, and seasonal staff. These new hires are accounted for in the maintenance and operations plan for the facility.

Q. How large are the District's cash reserves now?

A. The district has a policy of retaining a 30% cash reserve to account for unplanned events and emergencies. That fund balance currently sits at a level of approximately \$131,000, typical for this balance over the past several years.

Q. What are the Parks & Recreation District's sources of revenue?

A. The Park District has four sources of revenue:

- Annual property tax levy (15 cents per \$1000 assessed value)
- Fee-based recreational programming and classes
- Concession agreements with vendors
- Grants