



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: David Gill, Parks and Recreation Director

DATE: April 24, 2024

SUBJECT: Summer aquatic staffing update

History:

The City of Concord has operated seven outdoor pools since the 1930's and the tradition of operating pools continues to this day. The city has pools in the following neighborhood parks: Rollins, Kimball, Garrison, Rolfe, Merrill, Keach and a splash pad at White Park. We are very fortunate to continue to operate these pools. In the 1930's there were very few private outdoor pools, while today we have over two hundred private/homeowner pools in Concord/Penacook.



To operate all of our outdoor public aquatic facilities, seven days a week this summer the Parks and Recreation Department needs to hire forty-five certified lifeguards. This number includes full time and part time lifeguards. Over the past five to six years hiring enough lifeguards to operate all pools has been a challenge and unfortunately this year is no different.

To help with the staffing shortages the city has annually increased the pay rates for our seasonal lifeguards and first year lifeguards now make \$16 an hour. After completing summer employment, the city also reimburses the cost of taking the lifeguard class, a \$380 value. Summer lifeguards working full time this summer can earn close to \$5,800.

Since COVID (spring of 2020) we have been unable to open all outdoor aquatic facilities. During the summer of 2020 all outdoor pools were closed, in 2021 we managed to open four pools for the entire summer (Heights, Merrill, Rollins and Rolfe) and Kimball for a few weeks.

During the summer of 2022 we again managed to hire enough staff to open four pools (Heights, Merrill, Rollins and Rolfe) and we had White Park Pool open for a few weeks. Last summer we managed to have six of the outdoor aquatic's facilities open, with Garrison Pool remaining closed.

Discussion:

The Parks and Recreation Department along with the city's Human Resources Department has been very active in trying to hire enough employees to open all outdoor aquatics facilities. Our job openings have been listed on the city's web site since early February, posted on our social media sites several times, shared with all local high schools and universities. In addition, we have posters up at Memorial Field, Community Centers and for several weeks we had a road message board on South Fruit Street advertising we are hiring. Parks and Recreation Department staff have also been to local schools with an information table highlighting all summer positions.

We have currently hired seventeen returning certified lifeguards and have another six returning staff who have to be recertified. As long as all returning staff pass their certification class we will have twenty-three returning staff.

In addition, to date we have received thirty-one new applications for lifeguard positions and all thirty-one have been contacted for an interview. All but one of these new applicants need to take and pass the lifeguard class. Fifteen of them have responded and have either been interviewed or scheduled to be interviewed. Five of the new applicants have accepted and they need to take and pass their lifeguard certification course before early June.

Over the next thirty days the department needs to hire at least another fifteen certified lifeguards to open all pools. We will continue to interview and hire potential lifeguards. However, time is running out as many of the American Red Cross Lifeguard certification classes are close to being full. American Red Cross Lifeguard certification classes are offered locally by Swim NH located on Hall Street in Concord. Employees also are required to take part in approximately twenty hours of paid staff training provided by the department.



For anyone looking for summer employment please visit the cities web site at www.concordnh.gov and look for the employment tab. The department currently has cemetery labors, camp counselors and lifeguard positions open.

The Parks and Recreation Department does not anticipate being able to announce pool schedules (hours, days of week etc.) until early June. This will allow us as much time as possible to hire the required number of employees.

