

## Merrimack Pool Annual Meeting Minutes

June 30, 2022

Merrimack Pool Board President Robert Dohner called the meeting to order at 7:18pm, noting that this was the first in-person Annual Meeting since 2019. He welcomed the approximately 45 Equity Members in attendance and introduced fellow Board members Scott Arnold, Carol Cadou, Derek Dickey, Jeannine Mosca, Chris Robinson-Beers, and Board Treasurer Michael Brooks. Dohner noted the minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting that had been posted on the pool website, and they were, without objection, approved.

Dohner noted that the past two years had been challenging, but, in 2022, Merrimack was back to a normal summer. He mentioned the sports court/basketball court that was installed in 2020 and the new children's playset with soft, woodchip base installed over the winter. The swim and dive teams are back in full operation, with over 200 swimmers and 60 divers on the teams. Mack's Café is open for the second year under its new operators, and Merrimack will host several at-the-pool events, starting with the Adult Social Night on July 8, featuring music by the local band, *General MacArthur and the Boulevards*.

The 2022 season also saw a substantial revision in the pool's wait list policy. Before this year, Merrimack had three separate wait lists (for Equity Members, Full Summer Affiliates, and Late Summer Affiliates). The Equity Member and Late Summer Affiliate wait lists were closed to new applicants in February. Starting then, all new applicants to Merrimack joined the end of a single wait list. Merrimack bylaws require that families living within the quadrant formed by Goldsboro Road, MacArthur Boulevard, Wilson Lane, and River Road ("in-boundary families") be given preference for new Equity Member slots as they open. Additional Equity Member slots, if available, will be filled from the now-closed Equity Member wait list, until that list is exhausted. After that, vacant Equity Member slots will be filled first from in-boundary families and then from the longest-tenured Full Summer Affiliates.

Next, Treasurer Mike Brooks reported on pool's income statements for 2019-2021 and its 2022 budget. Merrimack had a faster than anticipated recovery from the losses we experienced during the 2020 Covid year, primarily due to a more rapid return to full participation by our members and Full Summer Affiliates. Last year the pool had a surplus of about \$14,000, including the non-cash depreciation expense item.

In 2022 we expect this surplus to be a bit higher. We were also able to use the Small Business Administration Economic Injury Disaster Loan that we obtained during the pandemic to pre-pay a substantial portion of the higher interest rate loan from Eagle Bank, while still maintaining a substantial cash position.

Discussion then turned to the nominations to fill two available vacancies on the Pool Board. Under the bylaws, Board member terms last three years, with a maximum of two consecutive terms. In 2022 Robert Dohner completes his first term as a Board member and the Board nominated him for a second term.

The Board also nominated Jason Kressel to fill the vacancy created by Scott Arnold's retirement from the Board. Dohner noted, with particular thanks, the good sense and measured decision-making that Scott brought to the Board and hoped that the Board could duplicate what Scott Arnold had brought to his two terms. Dohner noted that the Board was excited to nominate Jason Kressel, who had grown up in, and recently returned to this neighborhood, noting that the Board had been impressed by his enthusiasm, the fact that he had young children whom he hoped would become active swimmers, and his desire to create new activities on and new uses for the pool complex.

*[Jason Kressel self-introduction]*

The members in attendance voted to approve the nominations of Robert Dohner and Jason Kressel for three-year terms on the Board.

The meeting next turned to questions and issues of members, starting with those that had been included in RSVPs for the meeting.

One member asked if it was possible to provide group swimming lessons for beginners. Dohner referenced the popular Merrimack Minis program that had been expanded in size this year. There were slots enough to accommodate both Equity Member and Full Summer Affiliate families, although not all who applied were able to get into the program this year.

One member asked whether it was possible to have a summer camp at the pool, similar to what is offered at Palisades pool. Dohner said that the Board had discussed this early in the spring but concluded that there was insufficient time to develop a program for this season. What is necessary to set up a camp is a group of counsellors, a program of activities, and a sense of potential interest among the membership. But most of all what was needed was a volunteer who was willing to drive this program through to establishment.

One member had asked about music at the pool and events, including a game day. Dohner noted that the Board had decided to install a new sound system at the pool, with 6-8 fixed point speakers to replace the current portable PA system that the pool uses. The new system should be suitable for music as well as announcements. The Board also plans to have various events at the pool, starting with the Adult Social on July 8.

The Board received a couple of questions about the total number and residential location of Merrimack members, including how many lived in the community and how many were DC residents. Board member Chris Robinson-Beers summarized the membership data. Thirty-five percent of total patrons (Equity Members and Full Summer Affiliates) live within the boundaries defined by Goldsboro Street, MacArthur Boulevard, Wilson Lane, and River Road. (The vast majority of these are Equity Members.) Sixty-one percent live in the zip codes 20812 through 20818, and 37 percent live in DC. There are in total 340 Equity Members (of whom 13 are inactive this summer) and 234 Full Summer Affiliates; this is somewhat more Equity Members than in the past, a smaller number of Full Summer Affiliates, and a total membership that is less than approximately 290 in the past.

There was a lively discussion of whether the pool should have a more community-concentrated membership and whether this would decrease pool vehicle traffic. Comments noted that both Merrimack and Bannockburn pools were in the 4-street quadrant boundary area, which would limit the ability to geographically concentrate the membership. One comment noted that even families within that area would often drive to the pool. One member spoke in favor of the current geographic pattern of membership, arguing that it gave children (and adults) the opportunity to meet people out of the immediate community.

One member mentioned the accumulation of trash in the pool parking lot and suggested that the Board notify all members to stress the importance of their family, including their children, to dispose of trash properly.

Another member suggested that the pool should pave a walkway to the pool along the fence from Pyle Road or construct a barrier that would push back cars parked facing that fence a sufficient distance to create a paved walkway. He also suggested that the Callander Drive gate be opened, and that Pyle Road be designated as the pool entrance and Callander Drive be designated as the pool exit. Dohner noted that the Board had painted walkway lines from the end of the Pyle Road sidewalk to the beginning of the grass margin along the pool fence and had decided to use the grass margin as a pedestrian walkway to the pool entrance. The member noted that this was not an ADA-compliant sidewalk.

There was much discussion about opening the Callander Drive gate. Some members thought that this would reduce vehicular traffic and parking on Pyle Road and Kenhowe Drive. Other comments noted that an open gate on Callander would encourage cut-through traffic by delivery vans (which now had to turn around at the end of Callander) as well as the parking of heavy construction vehicles as existing homes were torn down and rebuilt on Callander Drive.

With no more questions from, Dohner thanked the members who attended, and brought the Annual Meeting to a close.