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Raytown Park Board Votes to Close Super Splash

Raytown, MO—On August 15, the Raytown Park Board voted to close Super Splash waterpark for one year while a strategic plan is studied for the future of the entire park system. “Generally, it was about the numbers,” said Terry Copeland, Board President. “For several years the city has subsidized Super Splash as the park aged and operational costs increased. It was a difficult decision; it’s really all about the numbers. We had to be realistic about the future of the park and sustaining the park fund for the long term.”

There was discussion about keeping the park open as a smaller community pool vs. a full service water park. However, the logistics of making that happen would be onerous with minimal savings. Although Super Splash had a better year in 2016 with slight attendance and revenue increases, it was not enough to sway the Board’s decision.

The substantial expenses that accompany a public swimming pool, including lifeguards, utilities, training and insurance can be the focus of budget fixes. Likewise, since public pools are usually used only during the summer months maintenance costs increase.

“The bottom line is public pools are open just three months a year,” said Kevin Boji, Parks Director. “With attendance dropping from 75,000 patrons in 2003 to 29,000 in 2016, the Board made a decision based on their fiduciary responsibility to impact the most lives with limited available resources.”

“For the last 10 years, Super Splash has remained open due to the dedication of our Parks staff that could repair just about anything,” said Kevin Boji, Parks Director. “Super Splash is 50 years old and showing its age; we face an extensive list of repairs, including leaks under the pool deck that will be very costly.”

As attendance and revenue declined over the past 10 years, the Parks and Recreation Department wasn’t able to add new attractions to keep the park fresh and inviting. The pool was challenged with broken water lines and closing 25 year old water slides due to structural concerns and the list goes on. Super Splash was one of the first waterparks of its kind in the Kansas City metro. Now, at 51 years old, estimated costs are nearly \$450,000 for repairs including pool painting, filter replacement, pool pumps, motors and general maintenance.

The Park Board also voted to “request a meeting with the Raytown Board of Aldermen to develop a strategic plan for development of a park system future generations will be able to enjoy along with a possible referendum in support of city-wide parks improvements and storm water projects and whether the community would support a new Raytown aquatic center”, said Terry Copeland.

Super Splash USA originally opened in 1963 as a private swimming facility, Raytown Municipal Pool. The City of Raytown purchased the property in 1988, changed the name to Super Splash and began a 15 year phased expansion plan, operating the park as an enterprise fund as a modern waterpark. Super Splash is a 10-acre park that includes three swimming pools, slides and a children’s area. It is located at 53rd Place and Raytown Road.

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