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# Borough of Chambersburg

*A full service municipality in Franklin County celebrating over 65 years of consumer owned natural gas service over 120 years of community electric and a regional wastewater, water, storm sewer and municipal solid waste utility*

## CHAMBERSBURG ANNOUNCES DELAY TO 2020 AQUATIC CENTER SEASON

**Chambersburg, Pennsylvania** – As the COVID-19 health crisis impacted each local government organization across the mid-state, it became clear that one of the most unique municipal facilities in Central Pennsylvania was going to be impacted as well. Chambersburg Borough has operated a state-of-the-art aquatic center at Memorial Park for the last two swim seasons. The facility, complete with multiple bodies of water, three slides, picnic pavilions, an events space, beach volleyball and skate park, has seen more than 1,000 visitors per day at the height of each swim season in 2018 and 2019.

According to Borough Manager Jeffrey Stonehill, “Every day for the last six weeks we have been working on issues caused by the COVID-19 crisis and their impacts on the Borough of Chambersburg operations and our community. No issue has consumed more time and discussion than the Aquatic Center.”

Chambersburg is in Franklin County, just north of Maryland, and the Aquatic Center draws crowds from Harrisburg to Martinsburg to Gettysburg. “Pools are licensed facilities and must follow Department of Health guidelines,” added Stonehill. “We know that Chambersburg cannot operate the Aquatic Center during the Red Phase and it is unclear during the Yellow Phase, as determined by Governor Tom Wolf and the Pennsylvania Department of Health.”

As of today, there is no indication when Franklin County will enter the yellow or green phase under Governor Wolf’s plan for reopening of Pennsylvania.

“We want our guests to know that the chlorinated water of the pool should kill the COVID-19 virus. Our concerns revolve around social distancing inside the facility and finding a way to enjoy the facility and still comply with the Pennsylvania Department of Health guidelines.” A facility like the Chambersburg Aquatic Center would have a number of challenges to contend with should social distancing requirements continue.

“We want to make sure that we are protecting our lifeguards, our concession stand workers, and we aren’t exposing our citizens and workers to unnecessary risks,” added Stonehill. “We have been participating in meetings and conference calls for weeks hoping for clearer guidance on myriad details such as use of locker rooms, showers, the water features, and lifeguard uniforms and equipment. As of today, we really have too many questions to know how the Chambersburg Aquatic Center might operate safely and practically.”

**As a result, the Chambersburg Aquatic Center will not reopen as originally planned on Saturday, May 23, 2020.** Work will continue on preparing for a potential reopening later in the season although, as time passes, that becomes problematic as well.

“The Town Council has made a commitment to operate the Aquatic Center as an enterprise,” explained Stonehill. “The construction was funded by real estate taxes, but the operation of the facility requires a certain number of sunny summer days for the facility to cover its operating expenses. In the first two years, revenues exceeded expenses and money was banked for future maintenance and additions to the facility. If the facility is unable to open by the July 4 holiday, it is unlikely it would be cost-effective to open at all in 2020.”

When Town Council meets on May 18, 2020, it will have on its agenda a proposal from staff, to address the annual season passes that have been sold in advance of the pool season. The proposal would allow all previously sold passes to be used in the 2020 swim season (if one happens) and into the 2021 swim season as well.

The proposal requires approval of Town Council:

*Proposed Season Pass Policy Amendment 2020*

Any individual or family who purchased or purchases a Chambersburg Aquatic Center 2020 season pass EITHER before OPENING DAY OR BEFORE JULY 4, 2020 (WHICHEVER COMES FIRST), **SHALL** receive a complementary 2021 season pass at no additional cost. Therefore, while the Borough of Chambersburg does not know if we will have a 2020 season, buying a pass now will make good financial sense. Further, making that investment in a 2020 season pass will lock in a season pass cost for the 2021 season, as the Borough does not know if season pass rates will rise next year.

The Borough Recreation Department will continue to sell 2020 season passes for now.

Any individual who requests a REFUND of their previously purchased 2020 season pass can receive a full refund up to EITHER OPENING DAY OR BEFORE JULY 4, 2020 (WHICHEVER COMES FIRST).

Stonehill pointed out that “the community has been very supportive of the facility and sales in advance of the swim season have been strong, as usual, due to the discounts that the Recreation Department offers. It is my hope that people will continue to buy season passes and that Town Council will extend this policy to all annual returning season pass guests.”

Council approved the season pass rate at \$225 per family for Borough residents, before pre-season discounts. A non-Borough-resident season pass would cost \$375 for the entire family, before pre-season discounts. The daily entrance fee ranges from \$6 per person for Borough residents to \$10 per person for non-residents. To learn more about available ticket options and available discounts, call the Chambersburg Recreation Department at 717-261-3275 or email at [chambersburgrec@chambersburgpa.gov](mailto:chambersburgrec@chambersburgpa.gov).

Finally, there have been questions about the spray pads, the water playgrounds operated by the Borough at the Aquatic Center and at the Mike Waters Park on S. Second Street. Early in the season and late in the year, the Borough opens the Aquatic Center spray pad for enjoyment with no admission fee. In addition, there is never an admission fee for using the facility at the Mike Waters Park. Stonehill adds that “it seems unlikely that either of these spray pads will be on, and accessible for use, during the yellow phase under Governor Wolf’s plan for the reopening of Pennsylvania. That being said, the Borough is certainly hoping to find ways for the community to cool off during the summer.”

Please contact Julie Redding, Recreation Superintendent, for details about the operation of the Aquatic Center. She can be reached by calling 717-261-3275 or by email at [jredding@chambersburgpa.gov](mailto:jredding@chambersburgpa.gov).

If you have any questions about this information, contact Borough Manager Jeffrey Stonehill at [jstonehill@chambersburgpa.gov](mailto:jstonehill@chambersburgpa.gov); due to emergency operations, calling and visiting may be challenging to schedule.

Chambersburg is a unique community. Chambersburg supplies more services than any other municipality in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In addition to typical town functions, Chambersburg is Pennsylvania’s only municipality supplying electric and gas. Chambersburg is 1 of 35 Boroughs to operate a municipal non-profit electric utility. Chambersburg is the largest municipal electric utility in the State, twice as large as the second largest, Ephrata, Lancaster County; and, the only one to operate generation stations. Chambersburg is 1 of 2 municipalities in PA to operate a natural gas utility. The other is Philadelphia, which does not operate an electric utility. Nationally, Chambersburg is 1 of 2,000 communities to have its own electric system and 1 of 800 communities to have a natural gas system but 1 of only about 50 to operate both. Chambersburg manages a regional water system, a regional sanitary sewer system (not through an independent Authority), and a new storm sewer utility; one of the first storm sewer utilities to form under the new Federal mandate to regulate stormwater. Chambersburg currently has 20,508 residents (2013).