



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, February 03, 2004

Study Session

Item -2

Discussion Concerning Use of 1/2 Cent Sales Tax for Aquatics

City Council Agenda Memo

From: Steve Paustian, Parks & Recreation Director
Meeting: 2/3/2004
Subject: Aquatics / 1/2 cent sales tax
Presenter: Steve Paustian, Parks & Recreation Director

Background

For many years the City of Grand Island has discussed the need for additional and/or updated aquatic facilities. Many enhancements have been accomplished to various aquatic facilities including Island Oasis and wading pools located in Pier, Lincoln and Grace Abbot Parks. Additionally a great deal of discussion has occurred among various organizations including the School District, YMCA and Hospital concerning enhancing the aquatic system in Grand Island. Currently expansions to Island Oasis and an up-grade or replacement of Lincoln Pool have been included in the 1/2 sales tax discussion.

Discussion

During the Study Session the City should discuss the aquatic system of the community. It appears that with many citizens and organizations having great interest in this subject it may be time to conduct a comprehensive look at the aquatic system in Grand Island. Other communities have engaged in an aquatics study aimed at surveying all facilities, evaluating each facility, measuring need, and developing a plan which provides an implementation scenario for the future. Such a study can eliminate duplication, streamline tax investment and bring about collaboration among interested parties. Additionally, Hastings, Nebraska is in the process of building a water park which may have an impact on Island Oasis. A study of the market will help us understand the dynamics of the area and help us react to changes. After a study is completed projects could be earmarked for funding using the 1/2 cent sales tax.

Alternatives

It appears that the Council has the following alternatives concerning the issue at hand.

1) Discuss the direction of our aquatics system as it relates to the 1/2 cent sales tax and proceed with the hiring of an aquatic consultant to assist in future planning.

2) *Move forward without outside assistance.*

3) *Delay discussions.*

Recommendation

City Administration recommends that the City Council consider moving forward with a study to help determine aquatic projects to be developed with the ½ cent sales tax or other revenue sources if sales tax funding is not available.

Staff Contact: Steve Paustian