

PRESENTATION TO:
CALGARY CITY COUNCIL STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
Re: CLOSURE OF INGLEWOOD AND BELTLINE SWIMMING POOLS
By: CALGARY DOLPHINS SWIM CLUB
Presented September 11, 2019

I am Karl Gossen, President of the Calgary Dolphins Swim Club. I am here today asking Council to consider keeping Inglewood Pool open.

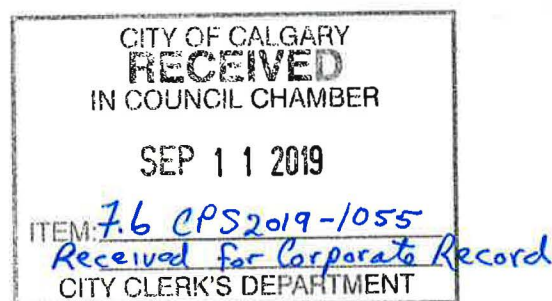
I will take a moment to explain who we are at the Dolphins:

- We are a parent-run, not-for-profit Swim Club for teens and young adults with Down Syndrome.
- We have 33 member athletes, ages 12 to 32, all with Down Syndrome.
- We run a learn-to-swim component and competitive component in our program. Our swimmers compete with at swim meets with “typical” youth from other swim clubs in the city.
- We have been using Inglewood Pool for years and it is perfect fit for us. It is centrally located and so is accessible for our families city wide. It has a seating area poolside so that parents can assist if a coach is having difficulty with a swimmer. It is a perfect size for us.

I have several practical points to offer in this is presentation.

From what I have heard, pool closure has been attributed to under-utilization at Inglewood and at other city pools. I need to challenge that point.

City staff are helping us to try to find a new pool, either within other City facilities and at other sites such as SAIT, YMCA etc. They are working together with us but without luck.



We are thankful for the City staff efforts, but after more than a month we have nothing. There is no pool available for us.

POOLS IN CALGARY ARE DEFINITELY NOT UNDER-UTILIZED.

From what I have learned, it seems part of the problem right now is the City criteria that 25% of facility access needs to be held for open public access. I think that means for drop-ins.

IN TODAYS SITUATION, IF COUNCIL STILL WANTS TO CLOSE INGLEWOOD POOL AFTER TODAYS INPUT, PLEASE CONSIDER RELAXING THIS HURDLE SO THAT LONG TERM USERS LIKE US MIGHT CONTINUE TO OPERATE AT SOME OTHER CITY FACILITY.

I have also been advised that Churchill Pool will be closing soon for 6-8 months of renovations.

I DON'T BELIEVE THE CITY SHOULD BE CLOSING OTHER FACILITIES LIKE INGLEWOOD AND BELT LINE AT THE TIME THAT A 3RD POOL IS ALSO GOING OUT OF SERVICE. This will only add to the problem city wide.

It is sometimes tough for people with Down Syndrome to find a place to fit in for recreation and fitness. That is why our Swim Club exists. It was established by parents who wanted to provide opportunities for their children. When you have a Down Syndrome child, parental care extends well past their age of 18 or 25 or 30.

I AM ASKING COUNCIL TO PLEASE MAKE SOME CHANGE IN PLAN SO THAT OUR CLUB CAN SWIM AT SOME CITY POOL, PREFERABLY AT INGLEWOOD.....BUT WE NEED SOMEWHERE.

Our Club's recent experience confirms pools in Calgary are not being under-utilized. I think money is the real problem.....somewhat like the discussion about golf course viability several years ago.

I appreciate that use of city pools is subsidized by general tax funds. Thank you very much for that.

I am not here offering to pay full cost, but I can obviously see that our fee does not cover cost of operation and staff at Inglewood.

I think we can pay a bit more at Inglewood because the alternative is to lose our Club. If you went so far as to double our fee, I might swallow hard but we can pay a bit more than we do now.

During Administration's presentation today it was encouraging to hear that other "business and service continuity options" will be considered. The November 30 Report date to Council on this leaves very little time however until the end-of-year intended shutdown date for Inglewood Pool.

IT WOULD SEEM ADVISABLE TO DELAY ANY DECISION OR ANY ACTION ON A FACILITY SHUTDOWN BY SAY 6 MONTHS, FOR COUNCIL TO HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO ASSESS THIS REPORT.

In Closing I think the parents in our Club have taken a great personal initiative to better life for the Down Syndrome communittee in Calgary, but now we need your help to keep going.

Thank you for your time.

