

Chair of the Toronto Sports Council, working with the Aquatic Working Group

TSC

- legacy of 2008 Olympic Bid, started in 2004.
- gradually building the sport network in City of Toronto.
- Completed Sport Framework in 2005: endorsed by Council and included number of recommendations many of which are still relevant today

I'm here today to support the pool agreement between the City and the School Board.

1. Cooperation
2. Revenues (not just costs)
3. Long term strategy

1. Cooperation

- very long time coming.
- Started in 2008 and now 4 yrs later, city is finally at the table.
- in times when everyone is strapped for cash, better for everyone to make a little contribution because no one can do it alone: TDSB/City/Province and community sport. Combine resources!
- LMW & TSC partnered to get H&S grant and now going to have pool signage on all TDSB pools – a partnership with money
- Empower and encourage city staff to adopt a “customer service mentality” and work with the community.

2. Revenues (v. costs)

- Increasing revenues through increased enrolment has never been part of the discussion – why not?
- Starting in 2004, TDSB charged over \$100/hr for pools and said close them, no one using them. TDSB agreed to try dropping the permit rate to \$50 and permit revenues went from under 500,000 to over \$1M and some the empty pools are now full. Not all. (like any business, if you price it wrong then affects the uptake and we saw this with pool fees)
- Business Model:
 - Price it right
 - Marketing, communication, signage – all helps.

- Programming matters and local demographics dictate kind programming, not one size fits all.
- Adopt a customer service attitude
- Need to measure what's working, and fix what isn't.

3. Long term strategy

- Comprehensive approach to facilities and providers, can't continue to operate in silos. This agreement and new approach to cooperation is the first step. Working with the AWG we can develop a much more robust aquatic plan for all the citizens
- London 2012, Ontario Summer Games...get ready for September – guaranteed we'll have more swimmers (and that means more money)

Finally, thinking forward to the Panam Games in 2015 everyone seems to focus on the medals we want Canadians to win. A greater long term impact on the city will be the volunteer effort needed to support the games. This workforce will have to come from the sport and recreation volunteers.

Having said this, we understand the fiscal challenges facing the city but it is question of priorities and we need to stop thinking of recreation and the health of our community as a luxury – it should be an essential service.

If we want families to stay and live in Toronto in high density areas;

If we want to increase participation;

Then, I encourage staff, councillors and educators to work together with us to ensure that we build a healthy community by providing more affordable places to compete, develop, learn, and playnot less

Thank you for your time today