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February 13, 2019

Dear Friends of the Newton Pool:

I hope this correspondence finds you well this winter season. I am writing to you as the Newton Town Manager in order to provide an update on the status of the Newton Town Pool for the 2019 summer season.

The Newton Town Pool has been a great amenity for the families of Newton and surrounding areas for many years. Children have grown up enjoying the facility as they engaged in swim lessons, organized team events, birthday parties, and other positive, life-enriching activities. We have been fortunate to have so many residents and visitors alike enjoy this facility during its lifetime.

Unfortunately, we find ourselves in a position where we are facing some severe structural issues with the pool facilities. Specifically, there are:

- ❖ Multiple cracks in the plaster;
- ❖ Multiple bubbles in the plaster that can break at any time;
- ❖ Several broken tiles w/sharp edges causing injuries;
- ❖ Cracked coping at the top edge of the pool;
- ❖ A broken hydrostatic valve in main drain causing the pool to leak;
- ❖ Severed electrical line to exterior lighting;
- ❖ Lack of ventilation moisture build-up and oxidation of pipes; and
- ❖ Tearing of the funbrellas.

While some of the aforementioned issues are cosmetic in nature, many of them are more severe and cause us concern for the future safe operation of the pool. During our annual budget process, I discussed these concerns with the members of the Town Council and the associated \$250,000 estimate to repair/fix same. As a small community of 8,000, with a pool with limited membership sales, this type of significant capital expense must be scrutinized as intelligently and thoughtfully as all other capital project requests. In addition, the Town has spent \$1.5 million in the past two decades on the pool facility. In order for us to move forward, we must ensure the tax dollars we are entrusted to spend wisely are just that, spent in the most prudent fashion possible.

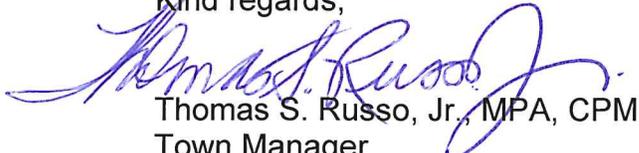
In an effort to be fair to the Newton taxpayers – most of whom do not utilize this amenity and pay for the bulk of the cost to operate and maintain same – and to the patrons who rely on the pool for summer fun and recreation as well as lessons and organized events, we have decided to invest time and dollars into a professional engineering review of the current facility and its need for renovation.

Therefore, the Newton Town Pool will be closed for the entirety of the 2019 summer season. While we are closed at this time, the Council has directed me to begin the process of allocating resources to study and analyze the pool in great detail for the next 3-6 months so we have a well-thought-out plan for the future. Plans may include renovations, upgrades, modifications, as well as the potential for permanent closure or retrofitting the pool to a splash pad. All options are on the table and will be reviewed by both professionals and staff. Recommendations will be made to the Governing Body in the fall for consideration so we can plan accordingly.

As the Town Manager, I am charged with the responsibility of managing the tax dollars entrusted to me. It is a responsibility I take most seriously. I also understand we are a service-based organization and residents and visitors look to us for a variety of needs, including recreation. Please know I will work diligently to present real data and facts to the Town Council for their review. We will work collaboratively on this problem to find an affordable solution that works for the Town of Newton taxpayers first and foremost.

I am grateful for the time you have spent reading this letter. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please call me at 973-383-3521 x224 or email me at [trusso@newtontownhall.com](mailto:trusso@newtontownhall.com). Thank you for your support of the Newton Town Pool.

Kind regards,



Thomas S. Russo, Jr., MPA, CPM  
Town Manager  
Town of Newton