

From: [Donna Holloran](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: ATTN: City Council MEMBERS OCT. 12th, 2023 meeting re PD Aquatic Center pool contract
Date: Saturday, October 7, 2023 7:21:12 PM



To the City Council of Palm Desert...

It is my understanding that you are considering a new contract for the management of the Palm Desert Aquatic Center. I can only imagine that it has everything to do with money. If that is the case, and you are considering a new vendor, then they must have low-balled the bid.

As an annual pass holder, as well as someone who attends the Water Fitness classes at the Palm Desert Aquatic Center, I can assure you that the Family YMCA of the Desert Management Service has done an EXCELLENT job over these last many years. As you all know, there is always a great deal of wind that impacts all of the pools, yet they are all very well maintained despite the windy conditions. I always see the staff (i.e., admin as well as the life guards) working...never sitting idle...they are either cleaning, training, watching the swimmers, etc.

Also, during COVID, the pool was a lifesaver for many of us, and once again, the staff rallied...maintaining the pool and the patio, and also making sure that everyone followed the additional safety rules.

Please note my strong objection to any changes without a very thorough investigation of another vendor's record of maintaining a huge Aquatic Center and even larger population of the community that uses the pools regularly. The complicated pool schedule boggles the mind given the number of groups that use the pools (i.e., swim teams, swim lessons, water fitness, water polo, swim meets, etc., etc.).

Additionally, the YMCA is a local non-profit organization with a very large presence in the community.

I cannot imagine that anything can be improved by switching to a profit-based company from Florida. This is a completely different climate here in the Desert area.

Sincerely,

Donna Holloran, resident of Palm Desert

[REDACTED]
Palm Desert, CA 92211
[REDACTED]

From: [Nancy Goin](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: The PD Aquatic Center
Date: Saturday, October 7, 2023 7:39:46 PM

A venue I use often and with great joy ! That is maintained well and managed in a stellar fashion by local group / peoples ! Why would you want to mess with that ?? Nancy Goin

From: [Marilyn Irvin](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Palm Desert Aquatic Center
Date: Saturday, October 7, 2023 10:10:50 PM



Why are you going to give a contract to an out of state company when it is run so efficiently as it has for the past 5 years with the YMCA. Why ruin a good thing!!!!!!

--

Marilyn Irvin



From: [JoAnn Efron](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Palm Desert Aquatic Center
Date: Sunday, October 8, 2023 8:21:50 AM

I have been attending Water Exercise classes for several years at PDAC and have found the programs to be instructive and energizing and they have been invaluable in helping me maintain my physical health.

I encourage the Council to retain the Family YMCA of the Desert for Management Services of PDAC.

JoAnn Efron

Palm Desert Resident

From: [Pierre Billard](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: PDAC
Date: Sunday, October 8, 2023 8:56:27 AM



THINGS HAVE BEEN OPERATING FINE FOR ALONG TIME. IT ITS NOT BROLE,
DON'T FIX IT

Pierre Billard

From: [Pierre Billard](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: PDAC
Date: Sunday, October 8, 2023 8:57:30 AM



We are objecting because:

We like that the Aquatic Center is currently managed by a Local non-profit organization with a presence in the Community.in fact in the park next door!

We like that YMCA's have successfully served Communities across the USA since 1851.

We like that YMCAs have successfully managed Swimming pools in MOST if NOT ALL of those Communities. (Not sure this is true for the new company being recommended.)

We like the Aquatic Center pools and the excellent way they are maintained.

We like our Water Fitness Instructors and the Classes that are offered six days a week. PDAC IS an important exercise facility for our Community and it offers healing opportunities for those recovering from joint replacement surgeries, strokes, and other health issues.



[Pierre Billard](#)

From: [Geoffrey Robards](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: management of Palm Desert Aquatic Center
Date: Sunday, October 8, 2023 9:12:29 AM

We understand that a recommendation has been made to Council not to retain the YMCA as management of the pool, but rather contract with an out-of-state for-profit company to manage it. We are two of the fellows who regularly attend exercise classes six days a week so we feel we have some skin in the game and yet no effort that we are aware of has been made to seek input from the pool's clients, decisions having been made opaquely and without transparency.

So, and not in order of importance, here are our objections to such a move:

- inevitably prices will have to increase in order to turn a profit, limiting use of the pool to those with more disposable income
- trusted and valued relationships with the extremely pleasant and polite regular staff are likely to be changed, if not sundered
- you are missing an opportunity to work more directly with local management to make positive changes (and there are always some available) by contracting with a remote management team
- when we were without bathrooms during the recent remodel, we attempted to convey before the fact that this would be foolish, given the relative age of your clients, but were disregarded and answered with dismissive political pablum. In the event, there were actually days when there were no bathrooms available and then, and only then, did we receive a half-hearted apology. This shows, to us, a disconnect between Administration and Management and we would suggest changing your administrative staff rather than your management staff.
- The PDAC is a pretty well-managed facility in our opinion; it certainly beats its Palm Springs counterpart. Communication could improve, but it looks as though the same could be said of the Administration and the Council.

It is our hope that you will, now, take our input into your consideration.

Thank you for your time.

Geoffrey and Stephen Robards

From: [Susie Detmer](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Palm Desert Aquatic Center
Date: Sunday, October 8, 2023 11:23:01 AM



I love the water aerobics classes the Y has at this pool. I'm season, I attend regularly. I'd hate to see a change in vendors at the pool if it results in fewer classes or significant price increases.

Susie Detmer



Rancho Mirage, CA

Sent from my iPhone

From: [LORI STEIN](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Proposed management change at PD Aquatic Center
Date: Sunday, October 8, 2023 12:59:08 PM

Esteemed Council-members,

I write to express strong disagreement to City Staff's recommendation to award a five year contract to the Florida sports management company for operation of the Palm Desert Aquatic Center.

I recommend asking the YMCA to continue, and if necessary, ask them to re-bid.

The Y is a community based organization, active everywhere in the greater Coachella Valley, and especially in Palm Desert. The Aquatic Center is likewise a Coachella Valley resource of great importance to residents of the entire area. There is much synergy between the two. The Y is responsive to the needs of all users of the Aquatic Center. Its employees are customer-focused. It manages the facility well and carefully, and is extremely responsive to its entire customer base. The Y is excellent at balancing the challenges of all types of users —competitive swimmers, swim teams, lap swimmers, children, families, seniors, aquatic exercise enthusiasts. Such a balancing act is not easy, and for this the Y's reputation as honest and forthright is unparalleled.

Bringing in a Florida based agency which is most likely profit motivated seems extremely contradictory to the purpose for which Palm Desert built this beautiful community facility. While the facility should not be dependent upon the city of Palm Desert to bail it out from budget overruns, neither should it be seen as a profit center for the city. We can all agree that the YMCA's values most closely align to those of the City's.

I use the Aquatic Center year round, 6 days a week, for water exercise and occasional swimming and water walking. The water exercise class instructors are uniquely excellent, well educated, kind. I hope that they will be retained, regardless of who is chosen to be the vendor.

Finally, as a Rancho Mirage year-round resident on a fixed-income, I pay the non-resident rate. If the rate increases more than a normative amount for inflation/rising costs—which is much more likely to happen with a for-profit company in charge—I'm afraid that I will have to give up my monthly membership.

It's not difficult to presume that others—residents and non alike—will also have to do the same.

Please give the YMCA a second chance.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Stein

Lori Stein


From: [Louisa Higgins](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Management of Palm Desert Aquatic Center
Date: Sunday, October 8, 2023 2:07:45 PM

Dear Palm Desert City Council Members,

I am a long time resident of Palm Desert, and a regular user of the Palm Desert Aquatic Center, which brings fitness and joy to my life on a weekly basis.

I am very happy with the instructors, lifeguards and overall management of the facility. I am pleased that it is run by the YMCA, and it is local and NON profit.

Please DO NOT hire an outside, out of state company to replace the current system which is running smoothly. Everyone I know is very happy with the current situation.

Thank you,
Louisa Higgins

From: [NANCY EDWARDS](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: PDAC
Date: Sunday, October 8, 2023 2:26:11 PM

I see on the board minutes that there is a motion to award an upcoming contract to a new company for the operations of the aquatic center . I have been very happy with the pool and I feel that it is one of our cities greatest assets . I have been going to water exercise for over 8 years and enjoyed the experience. The classes have increased in size and are very popular . I am afraid an outside company may not see the value in these classes. I am on cities Facebook page and read the Desert Sun daily so I don't know how I would have missed any reporting of a change management. Please keep the Y in charge of this community gem !

Thanks ,

Nancy Edwards

[REDACTED]

Palm Desert, Ca 92211

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Bonnie Hennessey](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: YMCA and the pool
Date: Sunday, October 8, 2023 4:01:18 PM

The pool is managed so well and it should be run by a local non profit.
This is part of our lives and not something to be taken lightly.
Why do this???

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Suzanne Kastil](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Palm Desert City Council Meeting - Aquatic Center
Date: Sunday, October 8, 2023 8:08:54 PM



I am writing to you to voice my concern over the possibility of a change in the management services for the Palm Desert Aquatic Facility. For the last nine years since moving to the desert I have driven from my home in LaQuinta four or five days a week to participate in the various aquatic classes offered. For the past six years I have been fighting stage 4 cancer and this pool is truly life saving for me.

I drive specially to this pool rather than to the one closer to my home. The reason for this is because of the cleanliness of the facility, excellent instructors, courteous staff, pristine water conditions/temperature, and reasonable cost to be able to take advantage of such a treasured pool.

It would be heartbreaking that the quality of this facility would decline due to a change in management. If the YMCA is doing such a stellar job why change anything?

Please consider the fact that the status quo is working extremely well in my opinion and in the opinion of extremely well attended classes and avid lap swimmers seven days a week.

Suzanne

From: [JoAnn Sachs](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: October 12 meeting of City Council , RE: change of PDAC management
Date: Monday, October 9, 2023 8:10:51 AM

I am writing as a longtime member of Palm Desert and as a recent total knee replacement recipient. The help of the exercise classes PDAC have helped my new knee immensely. Physical therapy at Eisenhower it was great, but the water classes have brought back the mobility to my knee as well as helped my recovery process overall.

The instructors, administrative staff, and maintenance staff who keep the pool in immaculate condition have become friends and our excellent ambassadors to our fine community. It would be A sad day to change something that operates so well and doesn't really need to be fixed. Everyone @PDAC is devastated by the thought the things at our pool might change, from a Respected organization like the YMCA to a profit driven management company. It's not always about dollars and cents it's about people.

I am hoping that cooler heads prevail and our pool management will remain the same.

Sincerely, JoAnn Myers Sachs

Sent from my iPad.

JoAnn Myers-Sachs

From: [Melanie Fernandez](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Palm Desert Aquatic Center
Date: Monday, October 9, 2023 10:07:39 AM



Changing the management of the Aquatic Center from the YMCA to a for profit company, is a terrible change for our community. I have read the sport company's proposal and see no difference than what the YMCA has done well for many years. The lifeguard shortage was universal around the country. It's unfortunate that the pool had to close, but we understand that safety is of the concern.

We are a unique small community. An out of state company will not understand our community and demographics. I swim daily, do water aerobics as many other people do. We have people from La Quinta and Palm Springs as well as tourists come to our pool because it is the jewel of the desert.

Please do not change what has been working for many years.

Melanie Fernandez

From: [shannon_metcalf](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: City council meeting Oct 12 regarding the Aquatic Center
Date: Monday, October 9, 2023 10:11:25 AM



We are objecting to the change over to a for profit entry to run the Aquatic Center because:

We like that the Aquatic Center is currently managed by a Local non-profit organization with a presence in the Community. in fact in the park next door!

We like that YMCA's have successfully served Communities across the USA since 1851.

We like that YMCAs have successfully managed Swimming pools in MOST if NOT ALL of those Communities. (Not sure this is true for the new company being recommended.)

We like the Aquatic Center pools and the excellent way they are maintained.

We like our Water Fitness Instructors and the Classes that are offered six days a week. PDAC IS an important exercise facility for our Community and it offers healing opportunities for those recovering from joint replacement surgeries, strokes, and other health issues. I personally have been attending classes nearly 6 days a week since the Aquatic Center reopened during the pandemic.

And many, many other reasons.

I believe things cannot truly get better for any of us by switching to a profit-based operator from Florida for this wonderful City Amenity. Please consider keeping the Aquatic Center running through the YMCA. We love the staff and the high level of communication they provide. Why fix/change something that isn't broken!

Kindly,

Shannon

Shannon Metcalf

From: [Anthony Mejia](#)
To: [Niamh Ortega](#)
Subject: FW: Contract for PD Aqua Center
Date: Monday, October 9, 2023 8:29:05 AM
Attachments: [50yearsresized_32178492-0560-4444-b657-c0c208d02055.png](#)
[50yearsresized_32178492-0560-4444-b657-c0c208d02055.png](#)
[50yearsresized_32178492-0560-4444-b657-c0c208d02055.png](#)

Please redact this person's contact information



Anthony Mejia
City Clerk
760.776.6304
amejia@palmdesert.gov | www.palmdesert.gov
73510 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, CA, 92260



From: Todd Hileman <thileman@palmdesert.gov>
Sent: Sunday, October 8, 2023 2:33 PM
To: Anthony Mejia <amejia@palmdesert.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Contract for PD Aqua Center

Sent from my iPhone



Todd Hileman
City Manager
760.776.6305
thileman@palmdesert.gov | www.palmdesert.gov
73510 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, CA, 92260



Begin forwarded message:

From: Shawn Muir <smuir@palmdesert.gov>
Date: October 8, 2023 at 2:28:42 PM PDT
To: Todd Hileman <thileman@palmdesert.gov>, Martin Alvarez <malvarez@palmdesert.gov>, Randy Chavez <rchavez@palmdesert.gov>, Chris Escobedo

<cescobedo@palmdesert.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Contract for PD Aqua Center

FYI

Sent from my iPhone



Shawn Muir
Community Services Manager

760.776.6481

smuir@palmdesert.gov | www.palmdesert.gov

73510 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert, CA, 92260



Begin forwarded message:

From: City of Palm Desert <webmaster@palmdesert.gov>

Date: October 8, 2023 at 11:10:06 AM PDT

To: Shawn Muir <smuir@palmdesert.gov>

Subject: Contract for PD Aqua Center

Reply-To: Patricia Diviney [REDACTED]

Message submitted from the <City of Palm Desert> website.

Site Visitor Name: Patricia Diviney

Site Visitor Email: [REDACTED]

Hello Shawn

I have been attending the Aqua Classes at the PD Aqua Center since 2014 -- I used to reside in Palm Desert but now in Rancho Mirage but still attend the classes.

I would like to say I fully support the pending Management changes for the Center. There seems to have been quite a severe erosion in the Management of the Center and a change would be welcome. The Center has been mismanaged --- it just seems to be getting scruffier and scruffier and things not working a lot of the time. Plus a few times over the past year there has been verbal abuse towards us Aqua attendees and there never seems to be anybody on site to deal with it. Turn a blind eye seems to be the answer! Totally unnecessary.

When summer classes are held for the children the parents seem to think it is OK to park in illegal spots such as the Handicap areas and they never seem to get reprimanded or fined. All part of the new entitlement era?

Anyway Shawn --- hopefully the changes will ring and also our Aqua Classes will be maintained. I would have to say that over the past year a couple of the instructors are not up to par and it is hard to believe that there are not other good potential instructors. Get the impression that there is an "old boys club" in operation

Thanks for letting me put my sixpence worth in!

Cordially

Trish Diviney.



From: [Marlynn Hall](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Message to Palm Desert City Council - regarding Palm Desert Aquatic Center
Date: Monday, October 9, 2023 11:50:42 AM



Dear Esteemed Council-Members,

I urge you not to simply Rubber-stamp the Staff recommendation to award the PDAC Management Contact to an out-of-State for-profit Company. Please reconsider leaving the contract with The Family YMCA of the Desert.

My husband and I have had a home in Palm Desert since 2002 and made it our permanent residence in 2013. My Husband is a golfer and this City offered us warmth, abundant sunshine and many golfing opportunities for our retirement. I am not a serious golfer but I now consider myself a serious "Water Fitness" fan, once I found my way to the Palm Desert Aquatic Center in 2015. This has become the perfect Retirement Life for the two of us. Alan hits golf balls at Desert Willow and I attend Classes at the Aquatic Center six days a week. We could not be happier to have found our way to the City if Palm Desert.

We like that the Aquatic Center is currently managed by a Local non-profit organization with a presence in the Community..in fact in the park next door!

We like that YMCA's have successfully served Communities across the USA since 1851.

We like that YMCAs have successfully managed Swimming pools in MOST if NOT ALL of those Communities. (Not sure this is true for the new company being recommended.)

We like the Aquatic Center pools and the excellent way they are maintained by Mike Marshall; The Warm and Friendly staff members that know us by name; the professional lifeguards who keep us safe.

We like our Water Fitness Instructors and the Classes that are offered six days a week. PDAC IS an important exercise facility for our Community and it offers therapeutic healing for those recovering from joint replacement surgeries, strokes, and other health issues.

I believe things cannot truly get *better* for any of us by switching to a profit-based operator from Florida for this wonderful City of Palm Desert Amenity.

I have enjoyed my participation at the Aquatic Center and the lovely friends I have made there. I established an email list to create more of a Community among the participants in the

Water Fitness Classes and to stay in touch with our many Seasonal friends throughout the year. That List has grown to over 260 people in less than 8 years.

In 2017 I also started organizing my fellow Mermaids and Aqua-Men to help Support the Annual YMCA Sustaining Fund to support their wide-ranging programs for Children and Families across the Coachella Valley, making sure that every child has a chance to participate despite their ability to paywhich includes Free Swim Lessons at PDAC.

Each Year we have raised more money for the YMCA, from \$5000 in 2017 to over \$15,000 in 2022 (an average donation of \$57 per each of the 260 Water Fitness participants), demonstrating our Mermaid/ Aqua-Men community Support for the YMCA.

We do Not want to lose the YMCA. If there are ways we can help them improve in the eyes of the City Council, we, their Community can help. Please Give us a chance.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilynn Hall and Alan Baskin

[REDACTED]

Palm Desert, CA 92211

[REDACTED]