

From: [Nancy Goin](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Aquatic Center Palm Desert
Date: Tuesday, November 7, 2023 1:17:18 PM

Good afternoon as a user of the facility I was pleased to see that you were giving a second thought to changing the membership model from the community based Y to an out of state management group . Centers such as these as well as YMCA are pivotal and core to communities and changes must be made with great caution . While they're maybe the promise of more dollars and economic enhancements.. maybe ... at what cost ? Please reconsider and leave as is , if not broken don't fix it ! Nancy Goin

From: [Louisa Higgins](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Management of Palm Desert Aquatic Center
Date: Friday, October 27, 2023 6:39:52 PM



Good evening,

I understand that the vote on this contract has been postponed until November.

I would once again like to reiterate that I strongly object to a change in the management, when the current contract with the YMCA is running so smoothly. Although I understand that there are financial considerations, it's also important to consider the desires of the citizens of Palm Desert.

As a weekly user of the facility, I am happy with the staff, operations and fees associated with the PDAC. I can't imagine any new iteration that could improve upon what is currently in place. Promises from out of state, for profit companies don't mean much against a proven track record.

Thank you for your consideration of all voices.

Sincerely,
Louisa Higgins

From: [Amanda Stone](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Re: Contract for Sports Facilities management of the PDAC
Date: Monday, November 13, 2023 8:08:50 PM



Hello,

Attached, please find my letter in regards to the proposed change in management of the Palm Desert Aquatic Center. This is for use in the upcoming City Council Meeting scheduled for Thursday, the 16th.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yDwEFGHofq_38Rj8fuFYUyNkqkR0CdjccPNklJ5g3IE/edit?usp=sharing

Here is the letter copy and pasted in case, for whatever reason, that may not open.

November 13, 2023

Dear Palm Desert City Council,

I am writing to urge you to retain the YMCA as managers of the Palm Desert Aquatic Center and, by doing so, keeping this invaluable resource community focused and driven.

I remember when the pool was being built and I would walk past its construction where the date fields used to be. I remember when it opened and what an asset that was to my family. Our eldest joined the newly formed Palm Desert Swim Club coached by a now retired "Coach Bob". Our youngest and I would swim in the shallow end or the "baby pool" while they practiced. I trained for my first triathlon at PDAC in those same years and went on to coach for the Palm Desert Swim Club, US Masters and even for PDAC itself in my short role as their Aquatic Programs manager, years ago.

"Our kids", collectively, being all the swim and polo kiddos, basically grew up at PDAC. "Our" triathlon Clubs all train there, or have trained there, in their various forms over the years. Many of us became coaches on our kids' teams, some of us still are.

We know each other's kids, have watched them grow up from the "8 and unders" through High School Swim teams and Water Polo. We witnessed milestones at PDAC, graduations, scholarships, college acceptances, marriages and babies on the way. We celebrated together and we faced great challenges and grief together as well. There is a lot that happens on the deck and at the end of the lane. Our community is built through time and shared experiences, invaluable things that cannot be outsourced by a management company.

"Our Family" also extends to the guards who have gone through extensive training and work from the wee hours of the morning, when it can be nearly 42 degrees in the winter to over 110 in the summer. We know the guards, talk with them and know their stories. We know Nic who joined the Army, is now married and has a baby of his own. We know Hannah who swam

Masters and taught Yoga, we know Brandon and his love of music. We celebrate their victories and are happy when they “move on” but we are happy for the ones who stay as well. We know Mike and his lifeguards who guard at the local triathlons, which, without whom it would be completely impossible to run. Mike, who also works 7 days a week, on call whenever anything needs to be fixed at the pool and who also coaches one of the most fun swim groups around!

Speaking of these triathlons, keep in mind Ironman 70.3 Indian Wells that depends on Mike and the guards to keep all those athletes safe in sub 60 degree open water. Mike is an asset and his training and networking are what allows these races to happen. Where else are you going to find lifeguards at 5 a.m. to sit in a freezing cold lake to put on triathlons in the desert? Believe me when I say it takes a lot of work to find and staff an event like that, at that time of the morning, on a weekend. There are weeks of texts, lining up boards and constant reminders to corral that many young people. Mike has it down. This is “his thing” and, as a surfer, who else would be more competent in this arena of adrenaline and (really, really cold) open water?

All of these components are based on years of experience and built community. Sourcing this out is not an option.

This brings me to my last point. Collectively you have one of the most talent rich populations you could ever dream of running and using your facility on a daily basis. If you need funds, put it to your community to raise them. The philanthropy in the desert is unrivaled. The Masters swimmers raise tens of thousands of dollars in a few short weeks every year for Angel View’s 100x100s swim. Surely the pool of talent (pun intended) that we have coming in and out of the gates on a daily basis would be a better place to start than a low bidding, out-of-state management company.

Perhaps it is a matter of stating the need and seeing what we can come up with.

Sincerely,

Amanda Stone

PSUSD Teacher, Masters Swimmer and full time valley resident of over 20 years



Thank you for your time.

Amanda Stone

From: [Chris Stone](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Palm Desert Aquatic Center
Date: Sunday, October 29, 2023 2:01:29 PM

Dear Council Members:

I was going to make these comments at the City Council meeting on October 26th but since the discussion was continued, I will write them here.

My name is Christine Stone.

I have been a Palm Desert resident for 38 years. I am also a frequent user of the Palm Desert Aquatic Center(AC).

I was alarmed recently to read in the Desert Sun that the City was going to raise the monthly fees to nearly \$200. That immediately puts these services out of the reach of many residents.

Then we got another shock when we were told that the City was going to end its contract with the YMCA (Y)and enter into a contract with Sports Facilities Management, Inc.(SFMI) out of Florida.

I feel that the Y has done an outstanding job of administering the AC. They maintain it well and are constantly making upgrades.

Importantly, the safety of their patrons is paramount to them.

Their staff has expertise and years of experience. They have been asked to speak at statewide gatherings and contribute to the writing of national standards for ACs.

The AC provides a nice variety of water activities and dry land classes.

It is a place where people who have had injuries and surgeries can come to heal and build back their strength. It is likewise a place for childrens' birthday parties and family movie nights.

The City of La Quinta calls itself the Gem of the Desert but the Palm Desert Aquatic Center is truly the jewel of Palm Desert! I have heard for years people raving about what a beautiful facility it is. And I hear weekly swimmers expressing their gratitude for having such a beautiful venue for swimming.

The AC employs over 100 young people as lifeguards, concession stand workers, maintenance workers, etc. These young people work in a wholesome, safe and supportive environment.

Last summer, the Y gave over 1,200 swim lessons. This makes us a safer city. (I'm sure you're familiar with the statistic that drowning is the #1 cause of death in children 1-4 years old).

The staff are warm and welcoming, and they know our names and we know theirs. This is a community pool, a family pool!

I have read the proposed contract between the City SFMI. It states in bold print:

“The City has a goal of decreasing the current subsidy of the Palm Desert Aquatic Center and is open to considering creative solutions to increase revenue/decrease expenses to meet its goals.”

So it looks like the City has quietly changed its philosophy from providing quality services to all of its residents to instituting a revenue-generating model which talks about “youth sports

and event tourism”. This company is also a destination event promoter (a la Acrisure Arena).

I wonder how many City Staff and City Council members have ever used the Aquatic Center. If you haven't, are you really in a position to make such a momentous decision that impacts so many Palm Desert residents?

And if you haven't used it, you don't understand the wonder of it.

Sadly, it appears that one significant group of stakeholders was completely omitted from your decision-making:

The Actual Users of the Services!

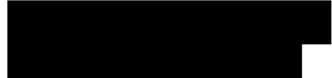
We are not merely numbers, we are people.

I do want to thank the City of Palm Desert for having provided a beautiful, affordable place for all of us to enjoy and maintain fitness for so many years. It is truly appreciated.

And I'm very grateful to the Y for having been there for all of us for so long. They have gotten us through many challenges and have been a source of joy and camaraderie.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Stone

 Palm Desert

From: [Mike Peyton](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Re: PDAC
Date: Monday, November 13, 2023 6:51:46 AM



Dear Council

It has come to my attention that the city of Palm Desert is considering handing the day to day operations of PDAC over to Sports Facilities Management, Inc. It is my understanding that this company is involved in "resort" type of pools.

I am concerned that the neighborhood "personality" of PDAC will change. Currently it is a local gathering place for recreational exercise, serious training, local swim team practice, water polo practice, water aerobics, fun in the sun, etc. On weekends it is the locals "country club".

The last few years there has been a trend that I feel is going in the wrong direction. Swimming the 50 meter length is only available on weekends, the pool does not open when it used to (5:30 AM) and frequently does not even open by 6:00 AM.

With a new management company possibly taking over I could envision "bankers hours". Open at 9:00 and close at 5:00.

I speak for myself but through conversations with many other regular swimmers at PDAC, we would like to see a return to what originally drew me to the pool. Open at 5:30 AM, swim the 50 meter length for 2 hours then switch over to the 25 yard length at 7:30. Keep the friendly, professional and community feel at PDAC that we have all come to love and appreciate. No degradation of service.

Sincerely

Thank you
Mike Peyton



From: [wanda bogin](#)
To: [CouncilMeeting Comments](#)
Subject: Urgent: The Vital Role of Our Community Pool
Date: Sunday, November 12, 2023 4:44:04 PM



Dear Palm Desert City Council,

I am writing to express the utmost importance of maintaining & supporting PDAC as a community pool. As a dedicated lap swimmer, a Master swimmer, and regular competitor, I have experienced firsthand the positive impact that our pool has on individuals.

The pool not only serves as a hub for health and wellness, but provides safe and accessible space for many of us to engage in physical activity. Personally, I have made it a routine to train at the pool most mornings at 6:00 am, finding motivation in the early hours to kickstart my day.

Beyond individual fitness, the pool plays a pivotal role in fostering a sense of community for families. It brings people together, creating a supportive environment where swimmers of all levels can interact, share experiences, and build lasting connections.

As a competitive swimmer, I can attest to the importance of having a first-rate, well-maintained facility for training. Our pool is not just a place to swim laps; it is a training ground for local athletes striving for excellence. By supporting the pool, the city council is, in turn, supports the pursuit of athletic achievements.

I urge the city council to prioritize the continued existence of this “community pool”. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Wanda Bogin

