

Town of Dover  
Board of Health  
Monday, June 26, 2023  
6:30 p.m.  
Charles River School Swimming Pool  
Meeting Minutes - ZOOM Recorded

Present: Chair Kay Petersen, Member Steven Kruskall, Member John Quackenbush and Health Agent Jason Belmonte

Also Present: Elizabeth Clayton, Associate Head of School/Acting Head of School; Gabe Bernstein, Incoming Head of School; Katherine Witten, Director of Admissions; Zachary Swale, Director of Facilities; Molly Carney, parent at CRS, a camp parent, and the chair of the Parent Association at CRS; Leslie Judge, parent at CRS and the president of the Board of Trustees; and Jessica Thompson, Somal, Dover resident and past parent, and a past camp parent CRS.

1. Meeting began at 6:32 p.m.

Health Agent Belmonte summarized for attendees by noting that he visited the Charles River School Pool the previous Tuesday, June 20th, to perform the pre-opening inspection for the Charles River Camp. He commented that he was, “Thrown for a loop” to find that the pool was an above-ground type, noting that it is very unusual for commercial pools, and some other things while he was inspecting it, as follows:

- No signage around the pool.
- No shepherd’s hook.
- Only one ladder going into the pool.
- No emergency phone.

Health Agent Belmonte noted that he was speaking with staff of the Charles River School and the person who would be taking care of the pool this season from Pool Pals. He let them know that he had some questions and would do some research and get back to them. He combed through the pool codes and consulted with the state. During his research, he also found some other items required:

- 4-foot clear walkway around the entire pool perimeter.
- Backboard with straps, which the school does have, but it was tucked away in a shed.

He received a call from the state in response to his email, in which they instructed him to not let the pool operate, as it is not compliant. Health Agent Belmonte called the school to explain what had taken place. Since then, the school has been doing everything they can to make the pool compliant as they can for the start of camp, which was today. He believes that there were seven or eight items that needed to be addressed, but now the list is down to two or three items, which are:

- Emergency phone, which is supposed to be installed this week.
- The walkways will need to be fully compliant.
- The pool needs to have a main drain line in the floor area of the pool, which it doesn't currently have as it's an above-ground pool.

Health Agent Belmonte wished to have the input of the Board to have them make a decision as to how the pool should be for this season and moving forward. He also noted that every public (or semi-public) pool is required to have two ladders. CRS only had one but they rectified that two hours prior to the meeting.

Chair Petersen asked Health Agent Belmonte to speak to the safety issues associated with the items still outstanding.

Health Agent Belmonte noted that the state requires a permanent, fixed, landline telephone that is easily accessible, with clear dial tone so that the person answering may respond to any emergencies, as necessary. The walkway required is to be able to easily access the pool from any given point around the pool. He observed that only one side of the pool meets that requirement. The drain is required to be able to drain the pool and for water circulation. There is a requirement that the contents of the pool (the entire volume of water) needs to pass through the circulation once every eight hours.

Ms. Clayton noted that on Friday the 18,000 gallon pool was calculated to turn every nine hours.

Chair Petersen shared that she learned that an above-ground pool can't have the type of drain required by the regulations. Health Agent Belmonte noted that it can be done, "It's just a nightmare to try to do." Mr. Swale said, "This had not been recommended by the contractor or Central Pools, which deals with these on a regular basis." Health Agent Belmonte noted that the regulations are written with the idea of it being an in-ground pool and that in his eight years of experience in three towns, he has never seen a commercial above-ground pool and he would deny someone applying for such. There doesn't seem to be a precedent of an above-ground pool used in this capacity.

Chair Petersen commented that the meeting was to determine what could be done in the short term about this pool and whether or not it could open while ensuring it operates in a safe manner, which is the number one concern. She asked for discussion about strategies to approach the three outstanding deficiencies

Landline phone: Health Agent Belmonte mentioned that he thought that would be in place on Thursday. Ms. Clayton answered that they have the phone and the encasement that it will be installed in. The Verizon technician is scheduled for this upcoming Thursday, the earliest appointment they could get, and they will use cell phones in the interim until that happens.

Member Quackenbush commented that the plan for the phone is perfectly reasonable. He noted that the bottom drain requirement is to provide increased circulation and that he thought CRS had

two possible options: One being to upgrade the pump to get greater turnover, although he was not sure that would be a great investment, given that the pool is 15 years old. The other one would be to perform more regular testing on the water quality to make sure that there's no coliform bacteria building up in the pool.

Ms. Clayton said that both those options had been discussed with Health Agent Belmonte . They would be able to purchase a new pump and filtration system that would increase the turnover. It does come at a cost of \$3,500 - \$4,000 and considering they might not be using the pool next summer, it is something to seriously think about. She said, “She had asked Pool Pals, who is our pool administrator for the summer, to look into labs, where they could perhaps do some additional weekly bacterial testing, to make sure that the water stays safe.” She noted they are researching. She asked if Dover had any recommendations for a state lab. CRS would reach out to them and make sure they start as soon as possible.

Health Agent Belmonte noted that he had just sent her a link for state-certified labs for pool testing, as not every lab does the same thing. BOH cannot give recommendations.

Mr. Swale noted that the pool was in use for only six hours per day so the turnover is always being done before the next time someone is in the pool. He also mentioned that his contractor said that they don't usually build four-foot decks around above-ground pools. He noted that they have only had one variance for this pool when they had a wheelchair cart installed in 2010 enabling a person who is handicapped to get into the pool.

Chair Petersen asked, “Would Pool Pals collect the specimens and deliver them to the lab?” Ms. Clayton noted that they could ask them to do that and add to their contracted visits per week. The camp runs for eight weeks, starting today and finishes August 17th.

Chair Petersen noted that the safety issue of the walkway concerns rapid access and one of the lifeguards getting to the other side of the pool. She felt that sitting on the edge would make that very difficult. Ms. Clayton noted that state regulations call for one lifeguard for every 25 swimmers and they never have more than 15 swimmers in the pool. They are proposing to have three lifeguards (they have had two previously), stationing one in the center and one at each end to be able to get into the pool quickly if anyone was in distress. The pool measures 30 feet x 18 feet and four feet deep.

Health Agent Belmonte noted that lifeguards are not required, but the Board of Health can request for you to have. If you don't have a lifeguard, CRS would need to post large-letter signage stating that there was no lifeguard on duty. Ms. Clayton noted that they employ four lifeguards and would, at times, have all four there. She commented that the safety of the children is their number one priority and the pool has run with this same system over the past 14-15 years with no child getting sick and no emergencies. They would be happy to add to the system to make sure that remains the case. She noted that they also have some long-term decisions to make. She added that CRS does not have time to add a pool deck or main floor drain but will investigate and “see what that entails for future summers.”

Health Agent Belmonte asked if there was swim testing done to identify swimmers abilities. Ms. Clayton provided that the lifeguards assess their ability to swim on their first visit to identify the strong swimmers and the ones that would need help. She added when there are smaller children in the pool, they have the four lifeguards. Mr. Swale added that they have an abundance of life jackets for the children to wear, if needed.

Chair Petersen asked if all the children were tall enough to stand up in the pool? Ms. Clayton noted that most are able to stand and have their heads out of the water, but some that can't as heights vary.

Member Quackenbush had no further questions.

Member Kruskall noted his questions for the lifeguard presence had been covered and having the water tested weekly would lower contagion risk to a very acceptable level.

Director Belmonte noted that the drain and water turnover would be for water quality issues. If the water is being sampled, BOH would be able to see its quality. He felt that would be a good compromise.

Chair Petersen asked whether a protocol was in place for the cell phones. She suggested checking to make sure there are two cell phones at the pool when daily chemical water testing occurs. Ms. Clayton offered that the Administrator on duty could check in between classes to ensure the lifeguards had cell phones at the ready, until the permanent phone is installed. Chair Petersen advised that although this would be only until the phone is installed, Thursday, this would be the backup plan if Verizon has trouble with the installation.

Health Agent Belmonte noted that there are two specific things to be testing for in the weekly water testing; coliform and pseudomonas. He emphasized that if either of these tests came back outside the proper range, then the pool would need to be closed and not reopen until retested and proved in the correct range. BOH will be looking at every test result.

Ms. Clayton requested that they be allowed to open the pool tomorrow and start testing concurrently as the system is up and running; so they are not waiting for the testing to come back before they open the pool. She said, "All of the tests that were done at the beginning for water quality came back really excellent." Mr. Swale noted that a new liner was installed in May and all new water was brought in from a pool company.

Member Kruskall suggested that water be tested on Mondays or Tuesdays for a 48-hour turnaround rather than longer on weekends.

MOTION made by Member Quackenbush to grant the Charles River School special permission to allow the operation of their pool for this year's eight week camp provided that there are:

1. Three lifeguards on duty at all times when children are at the pool; and
2. A protocol is developed and implemented that requires at least two individual's cell phones to be present at the pool until the landline is installed; and
3. The school institutes coliform and pseudomonas bacteria testing on Mondays with as rapid turnaround as possible.

SECOND: Member Kruskall

*All voted in favor.*

Discussion about long-term picture. Options about removing the current 18-inch decking and the handicap access being on a concrete slab and the accompanying issues were brought forward by Mr. Swale.

Health Agent Belmonte noted that there would need to be a plan in place for 100% compliance for the next camp season and he is not sure if that means working with this pool or installing a new in-ground pool, which is up to CRS. Leslie Judge noted that the Board will need to be updated about this conversation while they look at campus planning and the long term to do things right moving forward.

All were in agreement that this special permission given would last through the end of this camp season only, expiring then.

Adjournment: 7:31 p.m.

Submitted by,



Priscilla Steenbergen