Newsletter
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Is there really a need for a Metropolitan Park District to support the Friends Of The Pool's over $20 million dollar Methow Aquatics Complex???

https://nopooltaxes.com

Post by SOulman » Fri Aug 04, 2023 3:00 pm

Here is a response posted to the MVNews facebook page in response to their 08.03 story about Proposition 1. I shared the response with Justin Porter (whom I've been meeting and corresponding with) but he said he wasn't going to bother with a response at this time. My letter to the editor was published this week.

Six points about the proposed indoor aquatic center that were not included in the news article --

1. According to information from the National Recreation & Parks Association, there is NO comparable rural community in the country with an indoor aquatic center containing multiple swimming pools and other amenities. Indoor aquatic centers are expensive and require significant public subsidy.

2. The cost "in the vicinity of $20 million" is extremely preliminary and probably significantly off. Planning estimates for public projects are notoriously imprecise. Bold conceptual design almost always costs more than envisioned, leading to higher costs or lower expectations.

3. Construction is years away. If approved, the district would need to get organized and hire staff. A site would have to be acquired. More public outreach about the facility is promised. Planning, design and engineering is needed. Fundraising will take time. It's not unreasonable to expect that construction could be at least 5 years away.

4. Consultants who did the feasibility study estimated the cost in 2022 at $20.1 million. They included an annual inflation cost of 5% or $1 million per year. Assuming that construction could begin in 2027, four calendar years out, the estimated cost simply due to inflation would be $25.6 million. Operation/maintenance costs similarly rise over time.

5. The proposed governance structure is arguably biased against the majority population and assessed property valuation of the proposed district. If the towns want 4/5 representation on the governing body, they should pay 4/5 of the cost of the facility. (Yes, I understand that the towns appoint two "at large" members, but who really thinks that the town councils will appoint people who live outside town limits.)

6. A "Tonasket solution" is real. In-kind replacement of the outdoor Wagner pool could be done at a fraction of the cost proposed for the indoor aquatic center. It is an option that is not talked about.