



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>

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Consider the costs

Dear Editor:

Take a look at your real estate tax statement. Note the levy amounts on each of the services (divide by property value). There will be two new services to vote on: The Hospital District 1 (Three Rivers Hospital) bond issue and Twisp pool (formation of a Methow Aquatics District). Let's compare the two as the net taxpayer cost will be about the same: more or less \$500.

Renters, your landlord will pass these increased onto you in rent increases. It's very important to note, the pool directors will be appointed thereby limiting accountability. This will be the only recreation district with appointed directors (why?), all other recreation districts have elected directors. They also will have unlimited authority to determine the levy amount, whereas all others local services require a public vote and directors are subject to open election.

The hospital directors have outlined specific costs of the new facility. All pool costs are conjecture. If the pool advocates want a pool, they should examine rebuilding an outdoor facility; as Tonasket has done for considerably less money.

Duncan Bronson
Winthrop

Better ideas needed

Dear Editor:

While I believe Friends of the Pool (FOP) has good intentions in their attempt to build a new pool in the valley, what they've presented to us has become a mangled mess that has caused nothing but confusion. It doesn't help that recent public statements made by FOP are in conflict with their own feasibility study and ballot proposition.

Voting for a Metropolitan Park District (MPD) is a huge ask of taxpayers. An MPD is a permanent and unnecessary

taxing authority that has enormous power. The vast majority of MPDs in Washington state have mitigated the inherent lack of accountability of MPDs by allowing voters to elect its board members. FOP chose not to give taxpayers that right. Taxpayers will be paying for the expenses of the pool(s) and should be treated as partners, not cash cows to be milked.

FOP seems unaware of the effect of increased regressive taxes on lower income families. FOP's feasibility study shows that 20.3% of the households in the Methow School District have a median income of less than \$25,000. In her book "Dividing Paradise," sociologist Jennifer Sherman writes about "the clash between long-standing residents in the Methow struggling with economic precarity and well-heeled urban newcomers who are attracted to the community's amenities but blind to their own class privilege." An expensive taxpayer-funded amenity like the mega-pool complex and future taxpayer-funded recreation facilities planned by FOP may only increase this divide.

Without lifting the MPD's levy lid, FOP's dream of a mega-pool complex may only be a pipedream, as FOP's feasibility study uses words like "unlikely" and "difficult" to describe many potential sources of capital for indoor recreation projects. In my opinion, a lot more thought and discussion was needed before FOP's proposition was rushed to the ballot. Almost everyone wants a pool in the valley. The current pool will need to be operating for a couple of years no matter if the proposition passes or doesn't. If the proposition fails, I hope a pool with a more taxpayer friendly recreation district and levy rate will be proposed.

Dave Hopkins
Twisp