

**Notes of the Aquatic Working Group (AWG) Meeting**  
Monday, June 8, 2009  
Canadian Tire Conference Centre, 2200 Yonge Street  
5:00 – 7:00 pm

These notes were written by Nicole Swerhun, Meeting Facilitator. Questions, comments, and results of discussion are integrated throughout the Notes.

## **I. Welcome & Update**

David Crombie opened the meeting and welcomed participants. He thanked the many people who have worked very hard to get us to this point, and reminded participants that the TLC/AWG would be going to the TDSB Board on June 24<sup>th</sup>. David also explained that when he was originally asked to look at the 39 pools, it was in his capacity as an individual. Now he is participating as the Chair of the Toronto Lands Company (TLC). That means the report will now come from the TLC, with a significant contribution from the AWG.

Nicole Swerhun, Facilitator, led a round of introductions (of all participants) and reviewed the agenda.

## **II. Current State of Affairs**

Karen Pitre, Consultant to Toronto Lands Company, reviewed. Key points from Karen's remarks:

1. The provincial commitment to contribute to required capital infrastructure improvements in the pools has now been confirmed in writing by Minister Smitherman (in a letter to the TDSB), provided the pools stay open. The TLC will oversee the investment of the provincial capital into the pools.
2. At their May meeting, the TDSB decided to adopt the TLC/AWG recommendation to move to a flat \$50 permit fee. The TDSB is also looking to the TLC/AWG to review the permit fee over the course of the next year – which allows us to do more due diligence and refine the model, if necessary.
3. In terms of philanthropy, the Toronto Community Foundation (TCF) has the Swim Toronto Fund set up. It is accessible through the Canada Helps website. Receipts will be issued for donations greater than \$25. The TCF will also take sponsorship funds.
4. One of the swim clubs (North Toronto Aquatic Club) has drafted a letter to go out with their membership mailing letting people know about the opportunity to donate to the pools. We'll get a copy to AWG members.
5. Partnerships continue to be developed – since our last meeting the Toronto Star, for example, has agreed to give the YMCA funds to put kids in swimming this summer. The YMCA is also looking at opportunities for after school program in a number of schools.
6. Funding applications are going in on a number of fronts, including an application that has gone into the Province to expand offering of the Swim to Survive program to every grade 4

- student. There are also opportunities to go after with the Ministry of Health Promotion – through the Healthy Communities Fund (deadline July 24<sup>th</sup>).
7. To help with marketing the pools, a pool attribute sheet has been developing that gives people one place to check things like pool width, depth, lane markers, etc. so users can determine which pool best meets their needs. *Note from participant – we may want to add info on the attribute sheet about parking, subway access, availability of lifts or ramps, etc.*
  8. We've been working to get signs on schools this summer – which would include the contact info for the permit holder(s) at the pool – so the information is available as people drive by.

### III. Sponsorship – Aqua Titans

Debbie Gordon and Robert Jordan delivered a presentation reviewing the work done to develop a sponsorship program. The Sponsorship & Philanthropy Organizing Committee (SPOC) was formed on May 6<sup>th</sup> and the goal was to explore opportunities to raise the \$1.1 million required to cover the incremental operational costs of the pools. Ultimately there would be a need to develop a permanent program (i.e. raise the \$1.1 million year after year), but the initial effort is to cover the first year to avoid pool closures.

A copy of the power point presentation was distributed to the full AWG email list on Sunday, June 14, 2009. Some key aspects of the presentation include:

- AWG logo
- Recognition wall and price scheme
- Media release
- Thoughts on appropriateness of different sponsors (e.g. Nikkon on pool bottom to promote underwater cameras, sponsors that focus on learning, large billboards on top of schools, etc.)

Discussion after the presentation focused largely on the respective responsibilities of the public and private sector in supporting the pools, as well as the role of David Crombie in the sponsorship effort. The follow key points were discussed:

1. A number of participants said they felt the presentation was excellent and great work had gone into it.
2. The Kiwanis have expressed an interest in donating \$20,000 to the pools. They would like David to attend one of their functions.
3. The SPOC had discussed the influential role that David Crombie could play in the sponsorship program, from signing of solicitation letters to attending meetings/events. David indicated that he is happy to support the AWG in the sponsorship program, however discussion needs to continue to determine how best to do this. Some considerations with respect to the pool-related sponsorship efforts include:
  - Importance of continuing to push for all 3 levels of government to be involved.
  - From the beginning the AWG always discussed the importance of not letting governments “off the hook” with respect to their pool priorities. As a result, it’s important to position the private sector sponsorship of pools as a supplement to the public responsibility, and continue to acknowledge that government should carry the load.
  - The sponsorship effort should also be careful not to create a situation, particularly for equity reasons, that pools are closed because “the community didn’t care”.
  - Recognition that since David is the Chair of the TLC, and as a result, if he was to take a lead role in sponsorship efforts, he would need to first discuss that role with the Board of the TLC. He would also want to consider the personal impact that kind of role would have

(e.g. creating an expectation that he would be available to attend several events over the next couple of months). David expressed his interest in finding a way to take a balanced approach (i.e. participating in different times in different ways, but not “leading the charge”) and indicated that he’s happy to work with the SPOC to blend himself with the sponsorship team.

#### IV. Pool-Specific Update

Karen indicated that it looks like there are about 10 pools where revenues have started to increase. She also requested that people focus primarily on getting additional permits for programs rather than putting a rush on calls to hold birthday parties in TDSB pools – she reported that the TDSB were getting a number of these calls.

Two pools representatives provided the following updates:

- **Humberside** – There is a small group emailing and phoning to increase permit hours and raise funds. They are working on collecting donations from the school community, and have had some success. They’ve also approached some local sponsors. It’s been tough because local businesses are having a tough time. The group have also received local media attention.
- **Forest Hill** – A representative from this pool wondered if permit hours increased would it be possible the pool could we move to the “lucky 13” (i.e. those pools that the TDSB has agreed can stay open because their permit revenues substantially cover the incremental operating costs)? *Karen indicated that the more permit hours a pool has, the more likely it will be viewed favourably by the TDSB.*
- **Downsview** – Now has a pool captain that’s very interested in getting the pool used.

Just before wrapping up the pool-specific reports, David Crombie asked Bob Johnson, visiting sports architect from BC, to share his thoughts. Highlights include:

- Observation that AWG discussion is the same one that’s happening across the country. For example, last week in BC it was reported that \$5 billion in infrastructure renewal is required in the province. Many of these were centennial projects built in the 60s and reaching the time when they need significant renewal or replacement.
- The AWG is at the forefront of renewal efforts because the group is actually taking action. A number of people are watching what the AWG is doing – particularly to make sure pools are financially viable and used.
- Advised that rather than “bring in leisure” to keep pools open, suggest that AWG stay focused on programs. This is because the lifeline of pools is always based in programming – NOT based around leisurization. Also don’t lose sight of the importance of pools to seniors.
- There are three things used to design pools (1) variations in water temperature, (2) variations in water depth, and (3) variations in water motion. The AWG seems to be covering these too. AWG is definitely on the right track.

#### V. Next Steps

Participants closed the meeting by discussing strategies around next steps. Questions were raised and comments made. The following points highlight the remarks. Note that responses, where provided, are in *italics*.

1. Does TDSB base funding include an expectation that pools will be open? And if so, what happens to base funding if pools close? *We understand that the funding formula to the TDSB is based on square footage, but we don't know what impact pool closures will have. We can ask and get back to you.*
2. Might we be moving to a 2 tiered system for permits? *We've been asked by the TDSB to monitor what happens with permits over the next year and report back, so the AWG can determine what makes the most sense (in future meetings).*
3. What happens in 2011 when the City of Toronto agreement to use the 33 TDSB pools expires? *We don't want to have the same issues we have now with 39 pools to come around again with an additional 33 pools. We have a meeting with the Mayor tomorrow and will raise it with him.*
4. Will the city be offered the \$50 rate? *That's unlikely since there is an existing agreement between the City and the TDSB.*
5. How do I encourage our principal to take advantage of the pool in our school?
6. We should think about where kids go after Swim to Survive – maybe there's an opportunity to create an aquatic directory – then each instructor could hand it out when each kid completes the program (i.e. a handout that says "here's all the clubs you can go to" to continue learning to swim).
7. What happens at the end of June? 13 pools stay open, as decided by the TDSB in April. The issue is what happens with the remaining 19, including the TLC/AWG 7 recommended be closed (in the March 2009 report).
8. Are we only providing one option to trustees? *Response from Trustee: My guess is that no pools will be closed unless nothing is happening at them. There are a lot of activities happening – the school in my area is fundraising with alumni and someone is setting up a teach to swim program. The community is bursting with enthusiasm.*
9. How do you think the vote will go? *I think we've made tremendous progress given where we were a year ago. The TDSB will need to view the TLC/AWG report with some credibility. Also it's an equity issue. We hope we're moving things to a point where the costs of getting rid of pools is not worth the cannon. We would like the TDSB to give us another year – and that they see that we have enough practical understanding of the opportunity to make it happen.*
10. Do you think in a year we could set up an adequate number of programs? *We've been amazed at the amount of interest that's been generated even just in the last couple of months.*

In terms of next steps, David and Karen indicated that the TLC/AWG will need to submit an update to the TDSB that reviews work completed/underway since the April meeting. This will include a recommendation that the TLC continue beyond June 2009 with management and oversight of the pools, with the TDSB continuing to operate the pools. The update will also include reference to:

- Increasing revenues
- Decreasing costs that will come with capital improvements
- Results of the fundraising campaign, sponsorship, etc.
- The Provincial commitment for capital improvements is now in writing
- Recognition and a big thanks to all the swim clubs, Canadian Tire, YMCA, and others.

We think we have a compelling case to make to the Trustees. A decision needs to be made in June because it's also the meeting where the TDSB has to approve their budget. We do not want to create a situation where there will be cherry-picking of pools – right now we think our best case, and the strongest logic, focuses on keeping all pools open. For example, a pool like Downsview has no permits or swimmers, but does have a great opportunity to develop an ethnocultural theme – but we need time to make that happen. It will require a bit of trust that we can bridge the gap.

The report will be clear and sharp, and we'll send it around to people at this meeting for review before sending it to Trustees. If you're interested in helping write it, please let us know.

## Appendix A. Participant List (from meeting sign in sheets)

Canadian Tire	Dan Thompson
Cannon Design	Laura Zamprogna
Cannon Design	Bob Johnston
City of Toronto	Mark Edelman
David Crombie Associates	Robin Crombie
Earl Grey Sr. PS	Janet Dabrus
Facilitator	Nicole Swerhun
Forest Hill CI	Robert Jordan
Glenview	Monda Rozenblum
Humberside CI	Katherine Trimble
Let's Make Waves	Heidi Wilson
Northern Captain/Deer Park	Eileen MacDonald
NTAC	Glenna deHaan
Riverdale	Debbie Gordon
SPOC	Lisa Jorglasen
Sports Architect	Bob Johnson
Swimming Dragon	Yang Gao
TCDSB	Richard Francki
TDSB Trustee	Sheila Cary-Meagher (Ward 16, Beaches-East York)
TDSB	Barbara Langenberger
TDSB	Rob Milligan
TDSB	Rick Daigle
Toronto Lands Company	David Crombie
Toronto Lands Company	Karen Pitre
Toronto Swim Club	Laura Pratt
	Andrea Demchuk

**Pool Attributes**

SCHOOL	Elem or Secondary	Pool Length (m)	Pool Width (m)	Diving (Deep) End Depth (m)	Turning (Shallow) End Depth (m)	Number of Lanes	Lane Width (m)	Starting Platforms	Flags and False Start Rope	Electronic Timing	Sound System	Lane Markers (yes/no)	Parking (spaces)	Swim Ontario Certification (yes/no)	Lift/Ramp
A.Y. Jackson Secondary School	Secondary	23.6	9.7	2.25	0.9	5	1.6	5							
Allenby Junior Public School	Elementary	18.5	6.3	2.1	0.9	4	1.5								
Carleton Village Sr PS	Elementary	23	11	2.7	0.9	6	1.85	6	YES	NO					
Central Commerce Collegiate	Secondary	15.3	6.7	2.35	1.05		1.6		NO	NO					
Central Technical School (1)	Secondary	23	11	2.7	0.9	6	1.8		YES	NO					
Central Technical School (2)	Secondary	15	6.6	1.65	0.9		1.7		NO	NO					
Danforth Collegiate & Technical Institute	Secondary	15.4	6.3	2.4	0.9		1.55		NO	NO					
Deer Park Public School	Elementary	23	7.7	2.7	0.9	4	1.8								
Downsview SS	Secondary	23.7	8.5	2.7	0.9	4	1.8	4	NO	NO					
Earl Grey Sr PS	Elementary	23	11	2.63	0.9	6	1.85	6	YES	NO					
Fern Avenue Jr & Sr PS	Elementary	18.3	6.1	2.55	0.9	3	1.5	0	NO	NO					
Forest Hill CI	Secondary	23	13	3	0.9	6	1.8	6	NO	NO					
George Harvey CI	Secondary	23.7	11.6	3.6	1.08	5	2.2	5	YES	NO					
George S Henry Academy	Secondary	23	9.2	2.7	0.9	5	1.9		YES	NO					
Glenview Senior Public School	Elementary	23	11	2.7	0.9	6	1.9								
Harbord Collegiate Institute	Secondary	25	11.5	3.15	0.91	6	1.8								
Humberside Collegiate Institute	Secondary	23	7.7	2.4	0.9	5	1.9								
Jarvis CI	Secondary	23	11	3	0.9	6	1.8	6	YES	NO					

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Keele Street Jr PS & City Community Centre	Elementary	25	11.8	3	0.95	6	6	NO	YES	NO					
Kensington Community School Jr	Elementary	16.2	9.2	1.35	0.75			NO	NO	NO					
Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute	Secondary	23	7.9	2.7	1.25	5	1.5								
Malvern Collegiate Institute	Secondary	18.5	9.4	2.55	1.05	3	2.2								
Monarch Park	Secondary	23	11	2.7	0.9	6	1.8	6	NO	NO					
Newtonbrook Secondary School	Secondary	23	9.2	2.7	1.35	5	1.8	5	YES						
North Toronto CI	Secondary	15.3	9.4	2.7	1.05	4	2.3		YES	NO					
Northern Secondary School	Secondary	18.3	6	2.4	0.9		1.5	3	YES						
Queen Alexandra Sr PS	Elementary	18.3	6	2.7	0.9	4	1.6	4	NO	NO					
R.H. King Academy	Secondary	25	12.9	3	0.9	6	2.1	6	YES						
Riverdale CI	Secondary	25	12.8	3.7	1.37	6	2.14	6	YES	YES	YES				
Rosedale Heights SS	Secondary	23	13	3.75	1.05	6	2.1	6	YES	NO					
SATEC @ WA Porter CI	Secondary	22.86	13.8	3	0.9	6									
Stephen Leacock Collegiate Institute	Secondary	23	11	2.25	0.9	6	1.8		NO						
Western Technical-Commercial School	Secondary	23	11	3	0.9	5	2		YES						
Westview Centennial Secondary School	Secondary	22.9	9.2	2.75	0.9	4	1.8	4	YES						
Winona McMurrich Jr PS	Elementary	23	11	2.7	0.9	6	1.8	6	YES	NO					

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Carleton Village Sr PS (operating school) !	Elementary	23	11	2.7	0.9	6	1.85	6	YES	NO	
Earl Grey Sr PS	Elementary	23	11	2.63	0.9	6	1.85	6	YES	NO	
Fern Avenue Jr & Sr PS	Elementary	18.3	6.1	2.55	0.9	3	1.5	0	NO	NO	
Keele Street Jr PS & City Community Centre	Elementary	25	11.8	3	0.95	6	6	NO	YES	NO	
Kensington Community School Jr	Elementary	16.2	9.2	1.35	0.75			NO	NO	NO	
Queen Alexandra Sr PS	Elementary	18.3	6	2.7	0.9	4	1.6	4	NO	NO	
Winona McMurrich Jr PS	Elementary	23	11	2.7	0.9	6	1.8	6	YES	NO	
Central Technical School (1)	Secondary	23	11	2.7	0.9	6	1.8		YES	NO	
Downsview SS	Secondary	23.7	8.5	2.7	0.9	4	1.8	4	NO	NO	
Forest Hill CI	Secondary	23	13	3	0.9	6	1.8	6	NO	NO	
George Harvey CI	Secondary	23.7	11.6	3.6	1.08	5	2.2	5	YES	NO	
George S Henry Academy	Secondary	23	9.2	2.7	0.9	5	1.9		YES	NO	
Jarvis CI	Secondary	23	11	3	0.9	6	1.8	6	YES	NO	
Monarch Park	Secondary	23	11	2.7	0.9	6	1.8	6	NO	NO	
North Toronto CI	Secondary	15.3	9.4	2.7	1.05	4	2.3		YES	NO	
Riverdale CI	Secondary	25	12.8	3.7	1.37	6	2.14	6	YES	YES	YES
Rosedale Heights SS	Secondary	23	13	3.75	1.05	6	2.1	6	YES	NO	
SATEC @ WA Porter CI	Secondary	22.86	13.8	3	0.9	6					