



Borough of Chambersburg

A full service municipality in Franklin County celebrating over 65 years of consumer owned natural gas service over 120 years of community electric and a regional wastewater, water, storm sewer and municipal solid waste utility

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GREEN LIGHT TO START MEMORIAL PARK POOL CONSTRUCTION

Chambersburg – With a vote on Monday, February 27, 2017, Town Council awarded the construction contract to build the new Memorial Park Aquatic Center to [Lobar, Inc.](#), of Dillsburg, Pennsylvania in accord with sealed bids opened on January 12, 2017. The construction cost is anticipated to be \$7,098,800 and with other non-construction related expenses, the price tag of the new facility is anticipated to come in around \$7.7 million once done.

The Chambersburg Memorial Park is a 37 acre park providing several amenities. The Chambersburg Pool, built in 1969-1970, located at 1 Memorial Drive off of Stouffer Avenue, is inside the Chambersburg Memorial Park grounds.

A 2009 pool consultant evaluation was done by Wade & Associates. At the conclusion of that evaluation, Town Council elected to do only minor additional fixes to the facility to extend its useful life. According to Council President Allen Coffman, “the general feeling was that despite excellent preventative maintenance, the facility is both reaching the end of that useful life as well as no longer meeting the desired market for municipal facilities. Unfortunately, the fiscal realities of operating a municipal pool facility impacted the final decision of Town Council with respect to how to proceed at the time.” Recreation staff continued to urge a complete upgrade of the facility.

In 2015, Town Council authorized the Recreation Department to hire an aquatic engineering and design firm with sufficient knowledge and experience to assist our staff with evaluation of the existing municipal pool complex. The consultant selected, the team of [MKSD](#) architects and [Councilman-Hunsaker](#) aquatics, identified issues of technical, health, safety, and mechanical in nature, proposed conceptual solutions including a variety of choices and alternatives and worked with the Town Council in preparing for a public debate on the cost-benefit of the various alternatives, which would extend the useful life of this important community asset for generations.

According to Recreation Superintendent Guy Shaul, “the old Chambersburg Memorial Pool is no normal pool. Unlike a backyard pool, the old pool is a vast system of concrete and pipe as large as any big-city pool in Philadelphia or New York.” On January 25, 2016, MKSD and Councilman-Hunsaker presented a new Aquatics Feasibility Study and 3 alternate action plans for the renovation or replacement of the Pool. The Study presented project goals, a feasibility process, an audit of existing conditions and options for consideration. The consultants discussed both physical obsolescence (i.e. aging facility – codes and standards) as well as functional obsolescence (i.e. definition of aquatics – user expectations of a modern pool facility). The consultants gave Council three choices: repair the existing pool facility for \$2.89 million, renovate and improve the existing pool facility for \$6.3 million or replace the entire facility with a modern family aquatic facility for \$6.9 million. The consultants reviewed the three options at a town hall meeting. At the third of three Council meetings on the subject on February 22, 2016, Council selected a complete replacement of the entire pool facility.

At a fourth public meeting on the subject on March 14, 2016, Town Council dismissed any talk of a pool bond referendum vote and instead decided to move ahead with borrowing enough money through a dedicated recreation bond issue to pay for the upgrade of the pool, as well as a dozen other recreation related infrastructure projects. According to Borough Manager Jeffrey Stonehill, “it was decided that the Borough would borrow \$9.75 million and that Council would levy a dedicated recreation tax, beginning in 2018, to retire that debt. It was understood that this would be the source of the \$6.9 million to \$7.25 million needed to build a new aquatic facility and get it operational.”

On September 19, 2016, Town Council approved the recreation bond sale for \$9.75 million. It is estimated that beginning in 2018, a Borough-wide assessment of 3 mil of property tax will be needed to retire this debt or about \$50 per year for the average single family home inside the Borough. The money borrowed, above the cost of the pool, is earmarked for a list of other park improvements all over the community. The full list of all the park projects is available on the Borough website, www.chambersburgpa.gov.

On January 12, 2017, the competitive bids to build the new facility were opened electronically and Lobar, Inc., had the low bid. However, their bid price has been further reduced by some additional changes to the original contract design. Stonehill explained to Council, “We wanted to start with a price tag in our original range of \$6.9 million to \$7.25 million so we entered into some engineering to lower the cost before we asked Council to award the bid.” Change order #1 was approved at the same time as the contract.

While it seems impossible that the new pool will be operational anytime in 2017, construction will begin as soon as possible. It is most likely that there will be a grand opening of the new aquatic facility around Memorial Day 2018. A business plan created by the consultants anticipates four times the number of annual visitors to the new pool than ever visited the old facility. Council has yet to adopt the annual fees for the facility, but they have pledged to keep the cost about the same as the old pool, and there are programs for families that cannot afford to buy annual memberships at the pool. The new pool will have a lot of new programming and activities. Call the Recreation Department at (717) 261-3275 for details.

Chambersburg is a unique community. Chambersburg supplies more services than any other municipality in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In addition to typical town functions, Chambersburg is Pennsylvania’s only municipality supplying electric and gas. Chambersburg is 1 of 35 Boroughs to operate a municipal non-profit electric utility. Chambersburg is the largest municipal electric utility in the State, twice as large as the second largest, Ephrata, Lancaster County; and, the only one to operate generation stations. Chambersburg is 1 of 2 municipalities in PA to operate a natural gas utility. The other is Philadelphia, which does not operate an electric utility. Nationally, Chambersburg is 1 of 2,000 communities to have its own electric system and 1 of 800 communities to have a natural gas system but 1 of only about 50 to operate both. Chambersburg manages a regional water system, a regional sanitary sewer system (not through an independent Authority), and a new storm sewer utility; one of the first storm sewer utilities to form under the new Federal mandate to regulate stormwater.

Chambersburg currently has 20,508 residents (2013). www.chambersburgpa.gov