

From:
Sent: Mon, 24 May 2021 20:00:39 +1000
To: City of Wagga Wagga
Subject: Public Exhibition Submission

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe. If you know this is a phishing email please forward to servicedesk@wagga.nsw.gov.au.

Hi, you have received a public exhibition submission.

Details

Name of document on public exhibition: Draft 2021/2022 Fees and Charges

Name: Gerard Horsley

Address:

Email:

Wagga Wagga Swim Club (WWSC) has long been established within the Wagga Wagga community. Having been established since 1897, WWSC is very much a key aquatic user group within the Oasis Aquatic Centre. WWSC has over 300 members, most of whom are not only regular users, but are members of the Oasis Aquatic Centre. The WWSC's relationship with the Oasis management and staff is a positive one. Staff and management frequently assist our members during our time at the pool. We are always very appreciative of the relationship our club shares with the staff. The WWSC has been using the council pool facilities for nearly 80 years since the Morgan Street facility was established back in 1953. During this time, the WWSC has hosted many regional and major swim meets, which have attracted hundreds of swimmers along with their families to Wagga Wagga. Attendance at a swim meet brings more than the competitors, but a

Submission: contingent of supporters in the form of family and technical officials. All of these bring a significant amount of revenue to the city. Annually WWSC also plays host to many local and regional school swimming events throughout February and March. Because of the technical and educational investment WWSC has made in recent years, the club is now hosting swim meets which were once held outside of Wagga Wagga. Each of these meets brings visitors to Wagga Wagga. WWSC utilises a range of pool facilities six days a week. WWSC members train in the mornings and afternoons, and into the evenings, five days a week, and once on Saturdays. Whilst WWSC was not contemplating increasing our membership and training fees for the upcoming 2021-22 season, the proposed Council fees and charges will leave the committee with no other option, but to review our position, with the inevitable outcome to increase membership fees by an additional \$320 per person per year. Any fee increase would be on top of the existing membership fee,

additional individual squad training fees, as well as the Oasis membership or entry fee. WWSC is a not-for-profit business. Money goes directly back into the enhancement of the club, and pool facilities. Over recent years, WWSC has been the successful recipient of both NSW Government and Community grants. The grants totaled in the vicinity of \$80,000. All of these funds went towards upgrading the 10 indoor 25-meter pool starting blocks at a cost of \$32,000. A further \$29,000 went towards purchasing an indoor electronic 10 lane timing board, and \$25,000 went towards purchasing an outdoor electronic 10 lane timing board. The timing boards are synced with the electronic timing system currently used by the WWSC. We are the only club in the Southern Inland Swimming area that has these as permanent fixtures in both pools. These are available to all users of the facility. In 2019, Swimming NSW held a performance training camp at the Oasis. We were aware they were hesitant about returning to the Oasis Aquatic Centre for training, unless the outdated indoor starting blocks were updated. We understand since the WWSC investment to the starting blocks in the indoor pool, this camp is scheduled to return to the Oasis in July 2021. We have been advised by Oasis Management; these fees will take affect for the 2021/2022 year. This is different from previous years. Our first short course swim meet is due to be held on the 24 July. If these Council fees and charges are enforced, it will not be financially viable for the WWSC to host the July meet. There are two fees of which are of primary concern to the WWSC. The wording in these outlined Council fees and charges need further clarification in the fee to avoid interpretation discrepancies. 1. The 'general' lane hire fee (as outlined in item number 0288/0289/0290) If this were applied to our current lane occupation over the 48 weeks of training, this would amount to a fee increase of \$100,800 per annum. This equates to a weekly increase of \$1938 per week to the club. This increase would have to be absorbed by the members to a cost of \$320 per year, per member based on current membership numbers. If there was a decline in membership this would further significantly increase the individual fee per person per year. WWSC is close to maximum capacity in lane space occupancy during training, particularly during the winter months. We would be unable to increase membership intake to offset this cost. This negative financial impact would significantly impact on our members and their ability to continue in the sport. 2. The 'general' lane hire fee (as outlined in item number 0283/0284). Due to the venue capacity limits we would struggle to make it feasible for the WWSC to host a swim meet. With fees and charges, the club would be hosting the meet at a loss. Based on the proposed Council fee structure it would cost \$750.00 to hire 10 lanes of the 25m pool over 5 hours. With venue capacity restrictions (as advised by management - indoor is currently 200 persons), and our attendees sharing the space with members of the public, this also makes marketing for entries extremely difficult. To hire the 50-meter pool it would cost the club \$1480.00. Again, it is not financially viable to conduct a meet, as in previous years our annual long course meet attracted over 150 swimmers alone. WWSC is requesting the proposed Council fee structure, not be applied to our community sporting group for training and competitions but instead is applied to commercial entities. It is of significant concern these proposed changes will place on our club to seek to host major meets. Swimming is a sport for life. Swimming either in the form of training, fitness or

competition has many benefits to the personal development of young adults. Swimming requires a level of ongoing commitment and discipline, each of which are skills which are beneficial throughout a person's life. Young swimmers are shown to have developed time management skills due to learning early the need to balance their education and social development, with their training commitments. In recent years WWSC has gone a long way in providing options for young adults to maintain a level of commitment to their swimming through the introduction of a master/recreational squad. This squad has grown over the past 2 years to 26 members. This number is larger than our senior or A squad. The club recognises the need to keep young adults or teenagers 'lapping'. At a time in a young person's life when there are many choices to be made, any significant increase in fees may be what deters this cohort from continuing. The WWSC committee has invested considerable time and effort to build up our membership base over the last several years. This has no doubt had a flow on effect for Oasis memberships. If the Council fee and charges were to go ahead, I do not believe it would be sustainable for the club. Ged Horsley President – Wagga Wagga Swimming Club. Mob: