

City to consider floating another pool before voters

Officials preview outdoor pool at Hard'ack

By MICHAEL FRETT
Staff Writer

ST. ALBANS CITY – St. Albans City officials are hoping to once again float a municipal pool before voters this coming March.

Revealed during the city council's Monday meeting, the new proposal would see a seasonal outdoor pool built near the base of the Hard'ack Recreation Area, with infrastructure in place to eventually make the pool a year-round amenity.

The project stands in contrast to a proposal considered by voters earlier this year, when a joint project proposed by both St. Albans City and St. Albans Town would have seen a \$5.5 million year-round pool built at the Hard'ack Recreation Area.

While St. Albans City voters overwhelmingly backed the proposal this past March, St. Albans Town voters narrowly defeated the pool by only 32 votes during a Town

Meeting Day election that saw more than 2,000 St. Albans Town voters head to the polls.

The project previewed during Monday's city council meeting would be undertaken exclusively by St. Albans City and downsized somewhat from the pool voted on earlier in March.

At a reduced \$4 million, a completed pool would only be seasonal, with both the inflatable dome featured in the earlier \$5.5 million pool and weatherization required for a year-round pool stripped from this current proposal to make it more cost effective, according to city manager Dominic Cloud.

The proposal would divide the pool into different conjoined sections, allowing for use of the pool even as different clubs and organizations rent out separate segments of the pool for club activities.

The proposed pool would also be heated, allowing the pool to open earlier during the spring and later in the fall than what's currently allowed at the city's aging pool on Aldis Street.

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ST. ALBANS CITY/ARNOLD & SCANGAS ARCHITECTS

St. Albans City is weighing bringing another pool project before voters this coming March after voters in St. Albans Town narrowly defeated a similar project earlier this year.

Proposal Details

St. Albans City officials previewed Monday a \$4 million pool project city voters may be asked to consider in March.

Under the proposal, St. Albans City could see:

- A seasonal pool built at the Hard'ack Recreation Area with room for its eventual upgrade to a year-round pool; and
- Improvements to Houghton Park within the city's interior to make up for the loss of the city's existing pool on Aldis Street.

If the current proposal is approved, the park would take the city's current pool's place as a summer free meals site and as a pick-up location for the city's "Aqua Van."

The project's \$4 million would be paid for entirely through user fees and the city's local options tax.

City staff will likely revisit the proposal in the coming weeks and months, considering, among other things, whether to include the trappings needed to make the proposed pool available year-round.

Citizens of the Year: Franklin County Special Olympics organizers

By BRIDGET HIGDON
Staff Writer

ST. ALBANS — Bill and Rhonda Mercier were named Citizens of the Year Tuesday by the Rotary Club of St. Albans.

The Merciers are the organizers and leaders of the Franklin County Maple Leafs, an all-season, multi-sport program for Special Olympics athletes.

Tom Hungerford, a Rotarian and chair of the Citizen of the Year committee, said the Merciers were selected because of the time, encouragement and immeasurable love they give to their athletes.

The first Citizen of the Year Award was presented by the Rotary in 1993.

Since then, the recognition has been given annually to members of the community who go above and beyond to improve the lives of others.

"This is not a popularity award, as many of our recipients work behind the scenes, in the trenches and miles away from press and recognition," Hungerford said.

The names of the recipients of this award are inscribed in stone in the Rotary grove, in the southeast corner of Collins-Perley Sports and Fitness Center for all to see.

Jeff Rouleau, the parent of a child who participates in the program and a teacher at Bellows Free Academy, nominated the Merciers. His

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City hires Lamothe as police chief

By MICHAEL FRETT
Staff Writer

ST. ALBANS CITY – The St. Albans City Council approved Monday evening appointing St. Albans's interim police chief Maurice Lamothe as the department's permanent chief.

Lamothe had served as the department's interim chief since July,

taking over in the wake of then-longtime SAPD chief Gary Taylor's announced retirement in May.

The city council's vote was unanimous Monday, backed up with similarly unanimous support from the city's police chief hiring committee following a nationwide search for candidates, according to St. Albans

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