

(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Cohen

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning

Informational Hearing - Summer 2023 Baltimore City Pool Closures

For the purpose of inviting representatives from the Department of Recreation and Parks, Department of General Services, the Mayor's Office of Infrastructure Development, the Office of the City Administrator, and any other relevant parties to: (1) report why Cherry Hill Splash Park, Lake Clifton Pool, and Patterson Park Pool have not yet opened for the 2023 season; (2) discuss the impact of these closures on City residents and the ability of the City to secure funding for future infrastructure improvements; and (3) discuss solutions to prevent future closures.

Recitals

Public pools are a beloved, taxpayer-funded public amenity. They are critical recreational havens and outlets for Baltimoreans of all ages. Public pools offer youth free, safe, and enjoyable recreation and are a critical part of Baltimore City's youth violence prevention network.

As of July 12, 2023, the Lake Clifton Pool and the Patterson Park Pool have not yet opened for the summer and the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks (BCRP) has announced that Cherry Hill Splash Park will be closed for the summer.

In State fiscal years 2022 and 2023, the Maryland General Assembly allocated \$3.5 million in capital funds to fix known, deferred maintenance needs in the Patterson Park pool and bathhouse; however, to date, the necessary repair work has not been completed. The repair work was initially scheduled to begin this summer, but BCRP agreed to delay the maintenance so the pool could open for the summer. Despite this agreed-upon maintenance delay, the opening date of the pool, originally scheduled for May 27, has been postponed multiple times due to technical challenges related to the deferred maintenance.

The failure to open public pools is a major disappointment to City residents, reduces trust in City government, and, if grants are not used in a timely manner, may impact the City's future ability to receive capital funding for similar projects. City government should ensure that pool closures are rare, last resort occurrences, and take decisive steps to limit and prevent future closures of these valued public amenities.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the City Council invites representatives from the Department of Recreation and Parks, Department of General Services, the Mayor's Office of Infrastructure Development, the Office of the City Administrator, and any other relevant parties to: (1) report why Cherry Hill Splash Park, Lake Clifton Pool, and Patterson Park Pool have not yet opened for the 2023 season; (2) discuss the impact of these closures on City residents and the ability of the City to secure funding for future infrastructure improvements; and (3) discuss solutions to prevent future closures.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Director of the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Director of the Department of General Services, the Mayor's Infrastructure Czar, the City Administrator, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.