

From: [Nino Amato](#)
To: [RWP Bob Pricer](#); [E. Schramka](#)
Cc: [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#); board@madison.k12.wi.us
Subject: 2025 Aquatic Fee Increases & the Questionable Financial Management of Goodman the Pool.
Date: Monday, September 9, 2024 11:50:16 AM
Attachments: [240909_BOPC_LETTER_AQUATICS.pdf](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear EG (Goodman Foundation Board Chair & ED) and Robert W. Pricer (Goodman Foundation Board Member):

Please See the attached letter by Alex Saloutos to the City of Madison Parks Department as it relates to their proposed 2025 budget cuts and increase fees for City Park Facilities & Pool Fees proposed by the Board of Parks Commissioners regarding aquatic fees, and the financial management of the Goodman Pool.

I've been working with Alex and hundreds of Madison residents who are strong supporters of the Goodman Pool — and we intend to vote “No” on the property tax referendum — because of the fiscal irresponsibility of city agencies, who are using scare tactics and a misinformation campaign to get citizens to vote yes on the City Tax Increase Referendum — which will cost the average Madison Home from 2024-25 to 2027-28 approximately \$2,839.80 according to the Mayors Chart she presented at Download Rotary. (See the attached letter and the Mayors Graph below).

Please share this with anyone you know that cares about the Goodman Pool and the under served children in South Madison. Nino Amato, 608-514-3317



Sent from my iPhone

September 9, 2024

Email: parksfpf@cityofmadison.com.

Facilities, Fees, and Programs Subcommittee
City of Madison

Re: 2025 Aquatic Fees and Fiscal Responsibility
Agenda item no. 10, Legistar ID No. [85066](#)

Dear Committee Members,

I am a resident of District 5 writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed aquatic fees for 2025 and the financial management of the Goodman Pool, our only municipal pool and a vital community resource. This agenda item lacks essential financial information necessary for making an informed and fiscally responsible decision. Therefore, I urge you to refer this item until the public and the committee have access to the required data.

Recently the parks division staff recommended closing Goodman Pool and seeking a private operator to manage it to achieve the 5% reduction in expenses requested by the mayor. I am concerned about this approach, particularly given that it appears contrary to current parks division practice. Not too long ago the private contractors who operated the golf courses were terminated to achieve efficiencies through in-house management. I seek clarification on how a private operator of the Goodman Pool could potentially be more cost-effective or financially beneficial compared to the current model.

Staff's recommendation to approve the proposed aquatic fees for 2025 is troubling in the absence of supporting financial information. Specifically, I request that the following details for the Goodman Pool be provided:

- Revenue and expenses for the past three years.
- Amount of any subsidies for individuals or programs for the past three years.
- Fees charged by comparable facilities in the area.
- Amount set aside in the reserve fund each year since opening.
- Reserve balance and capital improvement plans, including estimates for future capital expenses and reserve requirements by year.
- An objective analysis of the pros and cons of approving the recommended aquatic fees.

Without this information, it is difficult, if not impossible, to make a sound financial decision on the aquatic fees, which could be seen as fiscally irresponsible, especially given the city's significant structural deficits.

Additionally, the practice of staff making oral presentations at committee and commission meetings to make their case for approval does not provide sufficient transparency or due process. The public needs an opportunity to review and respond to this information, ensuring that all perspectives and relevant facts are considered.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the committee pass a resolution directing staff to provide the requested information and refer this agenda item until the public and committee have had a reasonable opportunity to review it. Making a decision without this information is fiscally irresponsible, particularly given the city's current financial situation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I appreciate your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Saloutos', written over the word 'Alex Saloutos'.

Alex Saloutos

Pc: All alders
Board of Parks Commissioners
Eric Knepp

From: [Alex Saloutos](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: 2025 aquatic fees and the financial management of the Goodman Pool
Date: Monday, September 9, 2024 1:48:46 AM
Attachments: [240909 BOPC LETTER AQUATICS.pdf](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello! Please see the attached letter regarding the proposed 2025 aquatic fees, and the financial management of the Goodman Pool. The fees are item no. 10, Legistar ID No. [85066](#), on the Facilities, Fees, and Programs Subcommittee of the Board of Parks Commissioners meeting today. This item is also on the agenda of the Board of Park Commissioners September 11. To be frank, I plan to vote “No” on the property tax referendum, and this is an example of why. The lack of financial information, and the apparent expectation this will be approved because staff recommends it tells me a lot. If I thought city hall was more fiscally responsible, I’d vote, “Yes” on the referendum. We need to do better. –Alex

September 9, 2024

Email: parksfpf@cityofmadison.com.

Facilities, Fees, and Programs Subcommittee
City of Madison

Re: 2025 Aquatic Fees and Fiscal Responsibility
Agenda item no. 10, Legistar ID No. [85066](#)

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Thank you for your attention to this matter. I appreciate your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Saloutos', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Alex Saloutos

Pc: All alders
Board of Parks Commissioners
Eric Knepp

From: [Alex Saloutos](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: 2025 Parks Division permits and fees, city policies, and fiscal responsibility
Date: Monday, September 9, 2024 3:46:56 PM
Attachments: [240909 BOPC LETTER PERMITSANDFEES.pdf](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Greetings, alders! Attached is important information that I thought you might like to know about. –Alex

September 9, 2024

Email: parksfpf@cityofmadison.com.

Facilities, Fees, and Programs Subcommittee
City of Madison

Re: **2025 Parks Division permits and fees, city policies, and fiscal responsibility
Agenda items no. 7 to 15, Legistar ID Nos. 85066, 85062, 85064, 85066, 85067,
85068, 85069, 85070, and 85071**

Dear Committee Members,

I am a resident of District 5 writing to express my concerns regarding agenda item numbers 7 through 15 on your agenda today related to approval of the Parks Division permits and fees for 2025. All of these items are on the consent agenda, and staff recommends their approval. However, there are not any fiscal notes, contrary to city policy, or information in the record that would provide a basis for staff's recommendations. In addition, it appears including these items on the consent agenda is contrary to city policy. Given the large structural deficits the city faces and the purpose of this committee,¹ these are legitimate and significant issues.

Most permits and fees will remain unchanged in 2025.

I prepared the attached Table 1— Summary of Changes to Parks Division Permits and Fees, to provide an overview of how many permits and fees will stay the same in 2025. My best effort was made to accurately count the number of permits and fees. In summary, if these agenda items are approved, four out five permits and fees will remain the same next year, some will be the same since at least 2020, and there is no historical information prior to this year for a significant number that would provide a historical perspective on how long it has been since the last increase and the amount of the increase. Given the city's financial situation, I have concerns about the ability of this approach to best serve the public interest.

Agenda items 7 to 15 do not include a fiscal note approved by the comptroller, contrary to APM 1-7.

None of these agenda items have fiscal notes, contrary to city policy. All resolutions must include a fiscal note approved by the comptroller. The drafter of the proposed ordinance or resolution may prepare a fiscal note, but comptroller's approval is always required.² Agenda items 7 through 15 represent a significant revenue source for the Parks Division. Given the plain meaning of the requirements in APM 1-7 that all resolutions include a fiscal note approved by the comptroller, how is it that these items do not include one?

¹ The Facilities, Fees, and Programs Subcommittee reviews policies, rules and regulations, operation standards, special event permit applications and makes program recommendations and recommendations on new and updated user fees and charges for all parks, Parks Division operated facilities, the City's golf courses and Forest Hill Cemetery. [MGO 33.03\(5\)\(a\)](#).

² City of Madison, Office of the Mayor, APM 1-3, *Fiscal Notes on Ordinances and Resolutions*, April 13, 2005, <https://www.cityofmadison.com/mayor/apm/1-3.pdf>, downloaded September 9, 2025.

The lack of a fiscal note or staff report for these items leaves a void of information for the public and this committee to make an informed and fiscally responsible decision on these permits and fees. At a minimum, to make an informed decision on these agenda items it would be helpful to know the following:

- How long it has been since the permits and fees were last increased?
- What are other municipalities doing with the permits and fees for their parks in this fiscal environment?
- For permits and fees that generate a significant amount of revenue, such as the use of the Olbrich Gardens for weddings, which is currently \$4,600 a day in high season, what are competitive venues charging?
- If staff do not recommend a change to a permit or fee, why? And what facts support this position?
- What effect will the recommended permits and fees have on the net revenue for the various Park Division enterprises in 2025, and the ability of the Parks Division to maintain the current service levels?

Unless staffing has changed, the city's Finance Department will have an analyst or analysts assigned to the Parks Division that can assist with this work.

Agenda items 7 to 15 to set 2025 fees on consent agenda.

Agenda item numbers 7 through 15 are on your consent agenda, which also appears to be contrary to city policy. A consent agenda is a process that allows a large number of agenda items to be bundled together and passed with one motion without discussion. Typical consent agenda items are routine, procedural decisions, and decisions that are likely to be noncontroversial. Items are placed on the consent agenda to save meeting time, and to help ensure meetings can focus discussion on substantive topics.³

In my opinion, I think an ordinary taxpayer would consider Parks Division permits and fees a substantive topic for this committee. Given the nature of these agenda items, the purpose of this committee, and the large structural deficits the city faces, I don't understand why setting the permits and fees for 2025 has been placed on your consent agenda. I encourage you to reconsider this and the message it sends to taxpayers.

Oral arguments for approval and due process.

In addition, I want to emphasize that the practice of committees and commissions relying on oral presentations by staff at their meetings to make the case for the approval of an agenda item does not provide sufficient transparency or due process. The public must have an opportunity to review and respond to the fiscal notes or a staff report with their comments explaining their recommendations to ensure that all perspectives and relevant facts are considered by the committee.

³ City of Madison, *Consent Agenda & Consent Agenda Document New Alder Onboarding 2023* PowerPoint presentation, <https://www.cityofmadison.com/council/documents/onboarding/council-office--consent-agenda.pdf>, downloaded September 9, 2024

For the above reasons, I ask that the Facilities, Fees, and Programs Subcommittee proceed thoughtfully and in a fiscally responsible manner with your consideration of these agenda items so you are compliant with city policy, fulfill your mission, and best serve the public interest.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I appreciate your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A Saloutos', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Alex Saloutos

Pc: All alders
Board of Parks Commissioners
Eric Knepp

Table 1—Summary of Changes to Parks Division Permits and Fees

ITEM NO.	LEGISTAR ID NO.	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
7	85061	2025-2026 Proposed Olbrich Botanical Garden Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 81 permits and fees on this schedule • No changes recommended, except for two special events fees. • No changes to 79 since at least 2023.
8	85062	2025 Proposed Shelter Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 138 park shelter fees and 30 misc. fees, a total of 168 are on this schedule. • Fees for three new shelters added in 2025. • Changes recommended to four misc. fees. • No changes to 135 shelter fees since at least 2023.
9	85064	2025 Proposed Park Division Fees—Mooring; Watercraft Storage; Violation Ranges; Disc Golf, Dog Park, Lake Access, and Cross Country Ski Permits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 permits and fees on this schedule. • One is new in 2025. • Seven are the same as 2024. • 27 are unchanged since at least 2023.
10	85066	2025 Proposed Aquatics Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 permits and fees on this schedule. • No changes to recommended. • No changes made since at least 2020.
11	85067	2025 Proposed Forest Hill Cemetery Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 106 permits and fees on this schedule. • 3% across-the-board increase on all line items recommended, plus the addition of \$30 burial administration fee.
12	85068	2025 Proposed Golf Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51 permits and fees on this schedule. • Recommendation to increase ten in 2025. • Five are new in 2025. • No changes to 36. • Ten are the same as 2023. • Four are the same as 2022. • 13 are the same since at least 2021.
13	85069	2025 Proposed WPCRC Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 64 permits and fees on this schedule • No changes recommended. • No history prior to 2024.
14	85070	2025 Proposed Special Event Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45 permits and fees on this schedule. • One recommended change in 2025. • No history prior to 2024.
15	85071	2025 Proposed Recreation Services Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37 permits and fees on this schedule. • No changes recommended. • Four are the same as 2024. • Two are the same as 2023. • 31 are the same as 2022. • No history prior to 2022.