**Centralia Parks and Recreation Department**

**Municipal Swimming Pools Closed for 2020**

**The Centralia Park Board met on Friday, May 1st to discuss the upcoming Swimming Pool Season. Due to the numerous requirements of operating a public swimming pool in this time of COVID-19, and with the guidance of Park and City staff as well as the aquatic industry, the Park Board has joined numerous other communities in closing the swimming pool facilities for the 2020 season. This decision was extremely difficult as we all want to return to normal functions as soon as possible, but many considerations related directly to operating the swimming pools had to be taken into account,which made it abundantly clear that operating the swimming pools this summer was not feasible.**

**If the swimming pool opened, numerous restrictions regarding sanitization would mean that the pool would have to close several times during the day to re-sanitize restrooms, chairs, tables, lifeguard chairs and lockers. These requirements on sanitization would also likely eliminate shared features of the pool including the slide. All of these issues would greatly diminish the experience for our customers.**

**Social distancing policies would require that limits be placed on the number of swimmers allowed in the facility as well as staff being required to strictly enforce social distancing. It would require enforcement of social distancing at the concession stand as well as at the front desk, deck, diving boards, splash pad and in the water. These requirements would take away from the staff’s most basic responsibility of life saving and likely mean we would have to hire additional staff to enforce these requirements.**

**A number of the swimming pools’ regular activities including swim team, swim lessons and pool parties would have to be eliminated or greatly changed in order to operate. The limits on these activities would result in diminished experiences for our customers as well as an extremely adverse effect on revenue. This loss of revenue coupled with spiraling expenses associated in complying with all of the regulations including additional chemical, supplies, staffing, and PPE for employees would mean pool operations would become unsustainable.**

**In closing, all of these obstacles made this decision necessary and unavoidable. We all look forward to returning to the normal functions of our community and our park system. We appreciate your understanding.**