

# OAK ISLAND RECREATION COMPLEX

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT MEETINGS

S Z O S T A K D E S I G N , I N C .

May 3, 2007, 9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

### Group 1 - Steering Committee and Staff

#### Attendees:

##### Steering Committee:

Jerry Walters, Town Manager  
Kellie Beeson, Parks and Recreation Director  
J. C. Moss, Recreation Advisory Board **Chair**  
Amanda Hall, Recreation Advisory Board  
Gene Kudgus, Public Works Director

##### Rec Department Staff:

Billie Jayroe, Recreation Center Manager  
Rebecca Squires, Recreation Athletics Supervisor  
Christy Ferguson, Recreation Program Supervisor  
Stephanie Stiller, Recreation Program Assistant  
Deanna Eddinger, Community Resource Center Manager  
Karen Derr, Special Programs & Facilities Coord.  
Linda Johnson, Recreation Center Assistant  
Kyle Hurlburt, Recreation Center Assistant

##### Design Team:

Craig Beckwith, Szostak Design, Inc.  
Roger Spears, Szostak Design, Inc.  
Rhonda Zack, Szostak Design, Inc.

#### Meeting Notes:

1. Introduction of Steering Committee and Staff given by J.C. Moss
2. Introduction of design team and explanation of process by Roger Spears
3. Slide Show presentation of recreation facility design elements by Rhonda Zack
4. Q&A (hat game), group discussion led by Roger Spears

#### Facts:

Lack of space at current rec center

Island is becoming more family oriented  
More kids, fewer retirees: 60% / 40% senior to kids

Fastest growing municipality in Brunswick County, 8th in the nation!  
Strained infrastructure

Current facility serves 1000's of people a year

More senior oriented  
Seniors defined as those who are 55+

Have a fear of joining in

Year-round population 8,000 and growing; 35,000 seasonal population

Rec center has outstanding existing programs

Oak Island is a beautiful place and is growing  
We have outgrown ourselves

People want to take ownership in youth and senior programs

May to September is the tourist season

Not expanding program to meet needs due to lack of facilities and administrative space.  
Using additional space outside of existing facility

Day camp limited to 12 to 13 kids  
Camps offered elementary thru 9th grade

Bad traffic in summer - especially around check-in/check-out times

Baby boomers 50-60 want new recreation opportunities  
Flag football hot with 35 to 45 year olds  
Softball leagues for 50+ and 30+ growing

Middle school and high school have only current gyms  
Southport has gymnasium but it is outdated and has limited seating capacity, and a non-regulation court  
Also a gym in Ft. Caswell, privately owned

Great need for childcare

Town has 4% growth, larger sewer means more growth

Great staff compensating for lack of facilities  
9 fulltime staff / 30 part-time in summer

Great need for storage

Limited sites for this facility; on-island vs. off-island

1/7th of the town served by new sewer

Town is looking to extend town limits

Fitness Center: 2 rooms @ 30 x 30, serve 80 people a day on average  
140 on a big day, stay 30 mins to 1 hour  
More equipment and hours means more people will come  
Users are flexing their schedules to use facility to avoid crowds  
Hours are M-F 6:30 a.m. to 8:45 p.m., Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., closed Sunday  
Unappealing space  
Need open house to convince people

## **Worries and Concerns:**

Taxes and/or fees will go up to pay for new facility  
Currently fees are \$1/day residents, \$5 non-residents  
with optional yearly, monthly, weekly memberships

Not enough parking

Project is too big for town, both construction cost and building

Rec centers are often put last in priorities

Cost effective? Sell it as a priority

Cost, will town be cutting other facilities?

Hurricanes

Boosters are found in Real Estate

Bill Smith Park has been well-received by the community

Services that are needed are provided here

Perception of only a fraction of population being served

Question of timing given recent town projects and tax revaluation

Staffing - staff has become jack-of-all-trades  
Can't operate bigger facility with same size staff

Rec Center not all about kids and seniors

Facility will draw from other beach towns

There has been a lack of support in the past, YMCA for example

May 3, 2007, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**Group 2 - Council Members, Chamber of Commerce, Realtors**

**Attendees:**

Oak Island Town Council: Dara Royal  
Mary Snead  
Reece Simmons  
Mayor Johnie Vereen

Caswell Beach  
Town Council Member: George Kassler

Chamber of Commerce: Karen Sphar, Southport – Oak Island Chamber of Commerce  
Brad Fisher

Real estate rep.: Seth Robbins

Steering Committee: Jerry Walters, Town Manager  
Kellie Beeson, Parks and Recreation Director  
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Amanda Hall, Recreation Advisory Board

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Roger Spears, Szostak Design, Inc.  
Rhonda Zack, Szostak Design, Inc.

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**Facts:**

10,000 permanent residents up to 30,000 in summer, doubled in 10 years  
More growth in permanent residents  
Demographics: mostly seniors  
70% of voters over 55  
1,200 rental properties

Limited land available, location

Larger communities have bigger rec centers

Would be a draw for more tourists  
Tourists bring income

Change in age, families moving into area with new port 2015

Impact of annexation and 2nd bridge

**Feelings:**

OI has small business atmosphere, few franchises

Family oriented

People are good-hearted and not affluent

People care about each other

Outdoors, nature, park

Community, not a resort

with year-round residents

Different from other beach communities

Businesses can't sustain in the off-season

"Seasonal homeowners"

Median age 43

Seasonal residents become permanent

Climate allows for year-round outdoor activities

Larger picture of wellness and health

**Worries and Concerns:**

Cost of living will increase and the community will change

Property value will increase, residents will be priced out of market

Key members of town staff are retiring

Businesses will bear the brunt of costs

Small businesses don't have the resources

Largest capital expenditures have been in past few years, sewer, town hall, bridge, police dept., etc.

Expansion and building - want to keep open spaces during growth

Don't frighten people with the cost

Grants for amenities

Cost of staffing and operational expense

**Positive Outcome:**

More involvement with bored youth, bored adults

Affordability of facility

Overall well-being of community

Health awareness

"Git' r' done", recreation is not a luxury

May 3, 2007, 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

**Group 3 - Swimming, Scouts, Fitness, Parents, Area Rec**

**Attendees:**

Lucia Kincer, Marlins Swim team coach/HS swim coach  
Bruce Hartsock, Scouts  
Gail Wall, Fitness Instructor  
Nancy Kreider, Senior Fitness  
Susan Mylod, parent  
Jody Britton, parent  
Ben and Troye Hinson, Weight & Fitness – retired

Area Recreation

Department's:

Mary Green, Boiling Spring Lakes  
Heather Hemphill, Southport  
Jim Herstine, Recreation Adv. Board, Leland

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Design Team:

Craig Beckwith, Szostak Design, Inc.  
Roger Spears, Szostak Design, Inc.  
Phillip Szostak, Szostak Design, Inc.  
Rhonda Zack, Szostak Design, Inc.

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**Facts:**

Mature aerobics: ages 50-80, female, 30 to 35 people for an hour  
Have limited space, concrete floor causes injuries

There are 2 active scout troops  
15 boys per troop + 4 leaders  
local facility would be big boost and bring more scouts

Large retirement community with need for warm water therapy

Little to do for children

Need for basketball

Need for daycare at facility

Teen center great for 10 to 18 year olds

Need for dance space

Need for physical activity for teens

Taxpayers demanding more services

Needs Assessment determined: #1 in Brunswick Co. is public pool

Summer program - 150 swimmers, 5 - 18 years old.

Moved from golf club to Baptist Assembly

35 high school swimmers use YWCA in Wilmington

25 meter x 25 yard pool would be ideal

There is one covered pool on island at Arboretum

5 to 10 women going to Wilmington for warm water therapy

50 women with unmet need

Needs are countywide, not just in town

Revenue source, people would pay a premium for facilities

Partnering between municipalities

Need for aquatics facility in Brunswick Co

Larger than 25 x 25

Multi-purpose indoor space is non-existent

Small beach community

Aging population and kids with no organized activities

### **Feelings:**

Place for seniors and kids, but what about Mary?

What about the 18 to 50 year olds?

Need for multi-purpose space

Need for aerobics studio

"Oak Island rec staff is the best in the state."

Keeping elected officials interested

Not go too big too soon

Be smart with phasing

New rec facility is long overdue

Want to see continued support

Would like for interested parties to tour other similar facilities

Excited about track  
Thankful for this discussion

Facility should have no bells & whistles, just meet basic needs

Swimming lessons as revenue source

Need for activities for all child ages

Recruiting to island, important to have attractive amenities

Current rec building is busting at the seams

Curious, how serious is this?

Excited, encouraged, enthusiastic

Optimistic

Excited to see expansion

Cost is a concern

Oak Island is 1st Fit community as listed by BCBS

**Worries and concerns:**

Money is the main concern, people on fixed incomes

Safety for children

Timing  
Taxes going up, timing of county tax revaluation

Operating costs, staffing

Afraid this won't happen

Ditto

Meet with business to rally support  
Money from real estate groups?  
Progress Energy, Sunny Point, ADM, Banks BB&T, leading employers

County has appointed fitness coordinator

Hospital-based wellness program for funding

Need for banquet hall, could be revenue source

Hours of facility should expand

Add some uses in Bill Smith Park

Bill Smith Park is a re-use, can't add impervious surfaces, no building can go there

Need for indoor and outdoor pool

Need for fitness center

May 3, 2007, 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**Group 4 - Hospital, Physical Therapy, Psychology, Lion's Club, Baptist Church**

**Attendees:**

Edgar Haywood, III, Administrator/CEO Doshier Hospital  
Mary Frances Stoker, Physical Therapist  
Carolina Candelaria, Physical Therapist  
Marilyn E. Ain, Ph.D., Psychologist  
Milton Reece, Lion's Club  
Charlie Carter, First Baptist Church of Oak Island

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**Facts:**

8,000 - 30,000 residents  
14th fastest growing co in nation  
Adding 24 families a week or a person a day  
Age of population going up  
More retirees, fewer blue-collar  
More families, youth

Traffic is bad, need for 2nd bridge

Seasonal homeowners, part-time residents

Amenities being paid for by tourists  
Facility needed for year-round residents

Young people are walking the streets with nothing to do  
Looking for something to do

One mini golf course on island  
Teen center and skate park good for younger teens, not older teens  
Climbing wall would be good for older teens

Property taxes going up  
Limited physical space on island

Conflict of culture  
People moving in from more cosmopolitan areas demanding services  
Rising expectations

Traffic problems detrimental to project

1 year construction time for bridge

**Feelings:**

Thrilled, can't be soon enough  
Good for whole community

Outreach to community for communication

Tolerance is important

Excited about getting community involved in health and wellness

Needs for people with arthritis, MS, for public facility

Center is there for everyone  
Should have a market there

Need for a meeting place

Need to feel safe and secure for seniors  
Parking, egress, well-lit

"Hometown feeling doesn't mean it can't be state of the art."

**Worries:**

Brunswick Community College has plans for a competition pool to open 2008

Warm water pool here with h/c access needed

Money money money

Cost of living here becoming prohibitive to seniors

Taxes are more evil than fees going up  
Fees are a user tax

Library got built despite concerns due to Friends of the Library  
Need a Parks & Rec Guild  
Dynamic leadership required

Polarized community

Need both groups to buy-in  
Unity of community

Development and cutting down trees

**Great Ideas:**

Daycare Center on-site: Senior and child

Classes in pool

3 on 3 basketball tournaments  
wheelchair basketball tournaments  
national events

Will Brunswick Community College pool be enough to serve this community?

"Sports and Rec is the community's front porch" Dean Smith

Need extended hours, 24 hr

May 3, 2007, 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

## Open Forum Public Meeting

**Attendees:** See Public Meeting Sign-In Sheet Attached

Steering Committee: Jerry Walters, Town Manager  
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Amanda Hall, Recreation Advisory Board

Design Team: Craig Beckwith, Szostak Design, Inc.  
Roger Spears, Szostak Design, Inc.  
Philip Szostak, Szostak Design, Inc.  
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### Meeting Notes:

1. Introduction of design team and explanation of why we are here, the process, and the plan for future meetings by Roger Spears
2. Slide Show presentation of recreation facility design elements by Rhonda Zack
3. Q&A, group discussion led by Roger Spears. Following are comments by various attendees from the town:

Air conditioning is important (note, a/c in building on the fritz during meeting)

Pool needed for lap swimming and aerobics  
Swimming is the best thing for the whole body

Physical therapy pool needed

Keeping kids occupied is important

There are 150 swimmers in Marlins Swim Team (heavily represented at this meeting)  
Plus the high school swim team  
They are currently traveling to Wilmington for training and meets  
Facilities on island inadequate for their needs

Need activities for kids

"All right, that would be great" (as quoted by area child when asked about having an indoor swimming pool always available)

Swimming works every muscle in your body  
An activity available for mothers/kids, h/c, athletes, everyone

A public enterprise  
Must pay for certified life guards  
Pools are expensive, won't pay for themselves

So little for children to do

This building can be a legacy, values instilled in children  
What do we leave behind?

Need activities for middle age population

Children active in swimming stay out of trouble

Bottom line, there are 5,000 seniors in need of a range of motion pool (warm water)

Safety factor, on island surrounded by water, kids need swimming lessons  
Keep kids off drugs

Raleigh pool prices are too low

Need step stool to get in and out of Baptist Assembly pool, which is cold

Oak Island is a Fitness community with good fitness and aerobics facility,  
but we need a bigger one

14 miles of beach and walks, no need for walking track

Timing of this questioned, considering property tax revaluation, people will be taxed  
out of their homes

Churches have activities for kids

All areas around Leesburg, VA went together for a pool with partnership and fees,  
very successful project for them

Rock climbing wall desirable, one in Wilmington, bouldering wall at modest  
expense draws teens

Everything starts with a conversation: funding, staffing, fee structure

Participants (users of facility) from county without helping to fund, tax for hospital  
paid by town residents

Seniors want a safe place for exercise, a warm water pool and a track

If I pay taxes anyway, should go to something I'll enjoy

Concerned about the impact on traffic

Sister with cerebral palsy taught her to swim. People with handicaps feel free in the  
water if no where else  
Swimming increased son's confidence

Don't want extra stuff beyond pool to bring people in from other places

Lap swimming and warm water pool desired

Want what's feasible for all needs, not just some

Need for pool, warm water, H/C, water aerobics, lessons, meets

Paid for with daycare fees and fitness membership

Facility will not just be for kids and elderly  
Need something for 13 to 18 year olds to do  
Multi-purpose building for all ages and abilities, more to it than just a pool.

Importance of need for gym for assembly and recreation space  
Flag football league has grown  
Gym for basketball leagues as rental

Climbing walls are very popular, ropes course desired

Nothing for kids, pool appeals to all ages  
Pulled together as a community, provide jobs, make money off tourists

Concern about trees being destroyed due to building (design team promises to pay close attention to this issue in the future of this project)  
Treehuggers, love swimming, climbing gets his attention (as quoted by youth)

Facility for county or island? Prefer for island only

Concern about use of glass in hurricane prone area

Is the YMCA interested?

Came from Raleigh to beach for something to do

Local kids tired of beach everyday, would like a pool

Feeding of the elderly, kitchen is needed  
    Serve 30 to 40 people 5 days a week  
    Have big pots, small sinks  
    They manage, but would be easier with commercial kitchen  
    Could serve all who show up with larger kitchen

Multipurpose space with appropriate finishes

Has a community survey been done? Lots of concerned citizens

Husband in state government supports facility, is looking for funding

Is existing rec center going to be kept? Can new building be pool and existing building kept for other purposes?