

March 15, 2021

Dear Members of the Stayton City Council,

I am writing in support of the pool, parks, and library levies and about what will happen if these levies do not pass.

I am a family doctor and my husband is an engineer. We live near Sublimity and have two children ages nine and eleven who attend Sublimity school.

We are just one family of many in this community whose lives have been enriched by our pool, library, and parks. We moved here in 2011. In the toddler years my kids played and made friends at parks in Stayton. You cannot put a price on this. They loved story hour at the library with Miss Castle. They admired the artwork displayed at the library, and learned about reptiles with a hands-on demonstration. They went to swim lessons at the pool, advancing from beginners to the swim team. My daughter's preschool photo was on the covered bridge. I participated in the Stayton Triathlon, my husband and I regularly lap swim, and I helped coach the Stayton Manta Rays. We tried out movie nights at the pool. Who knew you could bob around in the water while watching "Coco?" This was all free, or cheap. And all invaluable.

What will it look like if the levies do not pass? We are experiencing this now with the pool closed indefinitely. The Stayton Manta Rays swim team is disbanded, with talented athletes now on teams in Corvallis and Salem. A little piece of community pride has gone with them as they represent those communities rather than our own. High school swim teams from Stayton and Cascade will be unable to practice. Swim times for seniors and other adults are not happening. Some of us are swimming in Silverton or elsewhere.

You might ask whether this stuff matters. I am here to say that it does matter. Very much. The pool was a big reason we chose to move here. People are living here, growing up here, and becoming good and resilient people because of a community that cares about each other. The pool, parks, and library are an important part of this. They keep us strong, and they keep us healthy.

One of the most important things in life is connecting and caring for others. It is not a stretch to say that the library, parks, and pool in our community are directly tied to this.

I urge you to promote the levies in the community, and to give people good reasons for why the pool, parks, and library are important to our community. Should the levies fail, I hope you will stretch to find resources to support both short and long term planning for these community necessities.

Thank you kindly,

Amy Sutkus

So, what can we do if the levies do not pass? Here are some ideas:

1. Consider **grants** from associations such as the National Recreation and Park Association or organizations interested in improving community health or rural health.
2. **Fundraise through local businesses** such as grocery stores, gas stations, coffee shops, etc (ask for \$1 donation with each purchase, for example, with a tag line such as “Stayton Pride” or “Save Our Pool” or “Keep Stayton Livable”)
3. **Fundraise in other ways**, like direct requests to businesses or individuals, donation boxes at community events, can and bottle drive, Go Fund Me
4. Revisit collaborating with the YMCA for pool management.
5. Establish **part time pool or library hours** instead of closing
6. **Collaborate with the surrounding communities** of Aumsville and Sublimity to see if a portion of funding can come from them or if they can help with fundraising
7. Solicit help from **community volunteers** and collaborate with **Friends of the Stayton Pool** for help with fundraising and community engagement
8. Contact the **Santiam Integration Team** for insight and organizing of people, businesses, or resources to support these services.