



Date: April 13, 2022
To: Glenn Steckman, City Manager
CC: Bryant Hammond, City Clerk
Cheryl Thompson, Administrative Assistant
From: Chip Leeper, Director of Parks and Recreation
Re: Quarterly Report
Reporting Period: January – March 2022

Nome Recreation Center

For the first time in a long time the last quarter had a sense of normalcy to it that hasn't been felt in a long, long time. Finally it felt like we were shedding the pall of Covid-19 and the stifling restrictions put in place to stem its spread and keep our beloved community safe.

To start with we were able to offer an abbreviated Adult City League Basketball season again. Dormant since the spring of 2020 the league attracted 13 teams (4 Men's A, 5 Women and 4 Men's B). After a short regular season there was a single-elimination postseason tournament that saw Bering Air (Women), JB Rentals (Men's A) and Bering Sea Ballers (Men's B) take home top honors.

The reason for the afore-mentioned shorten season was the arrival of the Alaska National Guard to Nome to participate in the Arctic Shield exercise. While in town the units were based and housed out of our facility. They stayed from February 25th through March 7th, 2022. During their stay here only the weight room and locker rooms were open for public use.

They no sooner left and the facility cleaned before Iditarod rolled around. With it came the return of another longtime favorite- the Lonnie O'Connor Iditarod Basketball Classic. After a two-year Covid-19 imposed hiatus the event returned to much fanfare.

In what should have been its 49th edition the tournament attracted 27 teams- a far cry from the glory times of yester years but enough to keep the candle lit and the tradition alive. The hope is that by next year a lot of the uncertainty involved with the ending pandemic will subside and more teams/players decide to return.

Another event that returned from a 2-year absence was the Finisher's Banquet. Hosted by the Iditarod Trail Committee the affair serves as a combination awards banquet and opportunity for the mushers to give one last shout out to sponsors and supporters.

Those weren't the only things happening. On Saturday, February 19th the Nome Preschool held their annual auction and on Saturday, March 20th, the second annual Youth 120 & 200 Snowmachine Races were held on a makeshift track adjacent to the facility.



I would like to give special recognition to the Public Works Department and especially Chris Schuneman for all his time and hard work in constructing the course. I would also like to thank Mariah Morgan and longtime racing legend Evan Booth for organizing and setting up the event.

Despite all these amazing things by far the best occurred immediately after Iditarod ended. Department Heads were given the opportunity to decide if we wanted to require facemasks or not in our facilities.

I can't begin to tell you the joy that everyone felt at our facility when we were able to tell the public about not having to wear one anymore. Not sure what made more people happy? That or the fact that the lifting of that mandate also allowed for us to reopen our saunas.

YES! YOU HEARD THAT RIGHT! SAUNAS ARE OPEN!

Nome Swimming Pool

The biggest news was the submission of a grant to the Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation's Outside Entity Funding program. The proposal requested funding to help defray some of the costs of converting our salt disinfection system back to a more traditional chlorine-fed one.

The hope is that once installed the degradation of pool's mechanical systems-which are breaking down at an alarmingly high rate, given the corrosive nature of the saltwater used to generate chlorine begins to subside

We will know if we were successful in late April or early May. If we are then the tentative plan is to do the conversion in August when the pool is scheduled to be shut down for routine maintenance and cleaning.

On February 12th, we held another lifeguard certification class. We would like to acknowledge Mackenzie Rapp, Heidi Secor and Terra Abbott for successfully completing the class and welcome them to our staff.

Otherwise things have been going well and we have seen an increase in usage numbers as Covid-19 concerns have begun to wane and people begin to venture back out into the community.