

Dear Borough Manager & Assembly Members

I write you to ask some pressing questions that the Viking Swim Club have on the recent closure of the Parks and Rec facility. As you know the facility was abruptly closed on November 3rd, along with all other Borough buildings. As covid cases have ebbed and flowed in our community over the years, VSC has aligned mitigation plans with stakeholders of the aquatic center to provide a safe place for the sport of swimming and the youth in our community. I would like to point out to the assembly if not aware that swimming pools have not been deemed high risk places for spreading covid.

There have been pool closures. As well as many plans made just to change for reasons outside of our control. This obviously goes for the borough as well. VSC in past few weeks has been preparing for our local annual swim meet November Rain (Nov 12-14th). At this time, we are unsure if we have a pool to compete in. We ask these questions to better understand and prepare for the next chapter of the pandemic.

These questions are poised with the obvious assumption that decisions were made in the interest of the health of our community. With that being said,

1. How was the decision reached to close borough buildings, including P&R? Were discussions made? Were informed decisions made? Were key stakeholders involved in the decision making process?
2. What are the criteria for reopening?
3. If the schools remain open (they are as of this moment?), why cannot other activities continue? The same kids interacting at school and at the gym are the same kids in the pool, on basketball teams, etc. This closure seems wildly inconsistent in its application.
4. Related to #1, what are the primary concerns to warrant widespread closures other than the obvious increase in cases? If cases are isolated, shouldn't that impact decisions to close facilities? What measures can the borough (P&R, VSC?) take to mitigate spread and alleviate concerns. It is difficult to move forward with no transparency, especially for public institutions.

Thank you for your time

Sincerely

Ben Hinde
VSC President
Approved by Viking Swim Club BOD

Debra Thompson

From: Stephen Giesbrecht
Sent: Friday, November 5, 2021 6:46 AM
To: ben hinde; Assembly
Cc: Stephanie Payne
Subject: RE: VSC Questions

Thanks for your communication Ben.

As you may know, the nature of the current COVID outbreak is disturbing. The number of cases each day, along with the widespread community infections, tell us that there is not necessarily a single source of the outbreak. This makes it harder to approach the problem without across the board remedies. I closed the facility to help give the Borough and the community an opportunity to take a breath and put steps in place to help avoid further issues. The staff at Parks & Rec. will be going through a significant sanitizing process over the next week or so, and I will reevaluate the situation at the end of next week. Hopefully we can reopen the facility the week of November 15th.

While I do not feel there is risks associated with the pool, your participants also use the lobby, bathrooms and locker rooms. These provide opportunities for additional community spread and this is what we are trying to stop. The school has been adversely effected by this large outbreak, and we need to take whatever precautions we can to get them stabilized.

Steve

From: ben hinde <benhinde200@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 4, 2021 11:07 PM
To: Assembly <assembly@petersburgak.gov>; Stephen Giesbrecht <sgiesbrecht@petersburgak.gov>
Cc: ben hinde <benhinde200@gmail.com>; Stephanie Payne <spayne@petersburgak.gov>
Subject: VSC Questions

Good Evening,
Attached is a letter from the Viking Swim Club board.

ben hinde
benhinde200@gmail.com