

## **Remember Worthington Pools | Candidate Survey**

Background: Worthington Pools complex is the only outdoor pool in Worthington and the most used facility in our area. Yet it has not been updated since 1974, suffers from continuous leaks and is not financially viable over the long term. Worthington is one of just three cities in Franklin County, together Whitehall and Obetz, that does not have a city-owned and funded outdoor pool. The State of Ohio has appropriated \$1 million for a renovation. But after four years of inaction, this funding is now at risk of lapsing for lack of local matching funds.

### **Candidate Questions**

#### **Do you agree or disagree that the pool complex needs a large-scale renovation?**

Yes. Without question, the Worthington Pool needs a large-scale renovation. It is virtually the same pool at which I spent many, many summers after my family moved to Worthington in 1976. But for the addition of the splash park and the updated slide, the pool is nearly identical. I wholeheartedly support renovating our community's pool.

How many other outdoor pools in Central Ohio haven't really changed since the mid 1970's? Our community has a big problem. The city has abandoned the pool and refuses to take ownership of it. Instead, the city expects a handful of swim parents to keep it afloat (pun intended), and that clearly isn't a solution.

Nearly four years ago, former State Representative and former City Councilman Mike Duffey secured \$1 million in state funding to help revive the Worthington Pool, but that was one quarter or less of the amount of money necessary for the project. Worthington City Council should have designed a plan to use the state funding to renovate our community's pool. After all, Worthington is the only city in Franklin County besides Whitehall and Obetz that does not have a city-funded outdoor pool.

Instead, Worthington City Council just sat on its hands and did nothing. City council has not convened a single meeting nor planning session on this issue. City council has taken no action whatsoever, and now, after years of inaction, the State of Ohio could simply pull back the funds for failure to utilize the funding as part of an overall plan. This just irresponsible. This is a complete lack of leadership. What a terrible embarrassment to the City of Worthington if the State of Ohio retracts the funds. But, what would be more embarrassing would be watching our community pool shut down. What kind of example would that be to the children in our community?

Worthington deserves better. Worthington needs to elect solutions-oriented leaders that recognize the importance of a modern, clean, safe city pool to our community fabric.

#### **As a candidate for council, do you agree or disagree it is the city's responsibility to contribute to the operations and capital construction of the pool?**

I agree that it is the city's responsibility to contribute to the operations and capital construction of the Worthington Pool.

**If you answered “agree” to question 2, to what extent should the city fund the pool renovation?**

The city council needs to stop turning its back on the pool. A city swimming pool is core to a community’s fabric. That’s why every other Central Ohio city, except Whitehall, Obetz, and Worthington, has a city-funded pool. It’s a place where communities gather together—all ages—as residents to stay healthy, relax, and enjoy one another. It’s where residents have summertime parties and kids learn how to swim. For many years, that is exactly what I enjoyed doing with my own children at the Worthington Pool until suddenly my kids started asking the go to “the pool by Grandma’s house” in Dublin with beach entry and a taller diving board or to go to “the pool where we exercise” at LifeTime Fitness with the great snack bar and bigger slide.

The city needs to structure a partnership with the school board, Swim Inc. and perhaps other community interests to ensure we do not lose the state funding secured by former state representative Mike Duffey before it is too late. How many years does it take to make headway and advance the ball. This is yet another example of city council’s complete lack of leadership. The time for change on city council is now, before we lose our community pool altogether.

**Who else, beside the city, should fund the pool?**

The city needs to structure a partnership with the school board and perhaps other community interests to ensure we do not lose the state funding secured by our former state representative Mike Duffey before it is too late. Real leaders understand that there is always more than one way to solve a problem. City council should have stepped up a long time ago and entered into dialogue with the school board and other community leaders to explore any potential avenue to save our community pool.

**What amenities would you like to see at the renovated pool? What upgrades would you suggest?**

First and foremost, the Worthington Pool should be clean and safe for all residents. To me, it’s important to think about swimming itself. Swimming ranks in the top 5 when it comes to popular activities in the U.S., and rightly so. There are hosts of benefits you may gain from swimming regularly, and the benefits are advantageous to our entire community: the young, old, injured, disabled, stressed, tired, pregnant, and more.

One of the biggest benefits of swimming is that it truly works your entire body, head to toe. While your muscles are getting a good workout, your cardiovascular system is, too. Plus, swimming is appropriate for people with injuries, arthritis, and other conditions. People with multiple sclerosis (MS) may also find swimming beneficial.

Swimming is an efficient way to burn calories and has the power to improve sleep, especially in older adults with insomnia. Swimming is accessible to a wide range of people who deal with physical issues and, like other forms of exercise, has been shown to boost mood and help manage stress. Swimming is safe during pregnancy, is great for kids and is an affordable exercise option when compared to others.

With simply a modern, clean and safe community pool, imagine the lives Worthington has the potential to positively impact. Think of the impact on our sense of belonging. Think of the impact on attracting new businesses whose employees may enjoy the opportunity to take a swim at lunch. Think about the impact on people looking to move to Worthington when they see what they can enjoy whether they are young and single, married with children, or retired and relaxing. But, given the size of the investment, we need to be sure we are looking forward and delivering what allows us to compete with “the pool at Grandma’s house” and “the pool where we exercise.” What those amenities are should, of course, be further explored with our residents.

**Do you have anything else you would like to share with voters?**

A business executive, attorney, mother, and lifelong resident, I bring valuable expertise to Worthington City Council. I have practiced law for over 20 years, both with the Ohio Attorney General’s Office and the Ohio Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Store Association. Most recently, I lead the statewide business association as its first-ever female president and CEO, and only its fifth leader in 100 years.

I know the ins and outs of small business, and I am well-versed in the workings of municipal government, from taxation and zoning, to business development and revenue, to negotiation and compromise. Most importantly, I understand for whom Council works, and that it’s time Council put residents’ interests first instead of their own or the interests of developers.

Leadership is not a difference maker. It’s *the* difference maker. Our city will advance only to the level of our leadership. We need decisive leaders—ones that avoid stagnation and vacillation. We need leaders who design solutions rather than let issues fester and create conflict.

Worthington is my hometown, and it’s the place I chose as single mother to raise my two children. Our community deserves more. Our voices deserve to be heard, and our viewpoints taken into account.

To me, the answer is clear. It’s time for a new era of leadership on Worthington City Council.