



Scenic Pacifica
Incorporated Nov. 22, 1957

CITY OF PACIFICA

540 Crespi Drive • Pacifica, California 94044-3422
www.cityofpacifica.org

MAYOR
Mary Bier

MAYOR PRO TEM
Tygarjas Bigstycck

COUNCIL
Mike O'Neill
Sue Vaterlaus
Sue Beckmeyer

September 6, 2022

Mr. James Conforti, Interim President and CEO
Sutter Health
2200 River Plaza Drive
Sacramento, CA 95833

Re: Mack E. Mickelson Arthritis and Rehabilitation Center Therapy Pool

Dear Mr. Conforti,

On August 22nd, the Pacifica City Council adopted a resolution in support of the reopening of the Mack E. Mickelson Arthritis and Rehabilitation Center Therapy Pool for community use. The City Councilmembers sympathize with those community members who relied upon the pool before its closing in March 2020. Lack of access has led previous users to suffer diminished physical, emotional, and mental health. Closing the Mickelson pool removed a valuable healthcare resource for San Mateo County residents.

The Mickelson Therapy Pool is the only facility of its kind in San Mateo County. Residents who suffer from health issues including permanent disabilities, debilitating injuries, autoimmune disorders, and mobility impairments, among others, used the Mickelson pool to rehabilitate those health issues and mitigate the physical decline. Sadly, there are no comparable warm water, ADA-accessible, therapy pools on the Peninsula able to adequately accommodate these residents.

The pool was entirely financed by community donations more than 25 years ago. Ongoing community support for reopening the pool is evidenced by the more than 4,800 patients, caregivers, and community members signing a petition to reopen the pool. City and County governments across the Peninsula, along with civic leaders and various organizations, also support its reopening and encourage Sutter Health to reverse its decision to permanently close this important facility.

The Pacifica City Council encourages Sutter Health to reverse its decision to close the Mickelson Therapy Pool and to engage with the Peninsula Health Care District, which has offered to pay for any necessary upgrades and operating costs to reopen the pool until a new therapy pool becomes available.

Sincerely,



KEVIN WOODHOUSE
City Manager

Enclosure

cc: Pacifica City Council
Sutter Health Board of Directors
Grace Davis, Vice President and Chief Public Affairs Officer/Chief of Staff, Sutter Health
Janet Wagner, CEO, Sutter Health Mills-Peninsula Medical Center
Melissa White, Director, Government Affairs, Sutter Health Bay Area
Rob Bonta, Esq., California Attorney General
Peninsula Health Care District Board of Directors
Joseph W. Cotchett, Esq.
Lindsay Raike, CEO, Warm Water Wellness

RESOLUTION NO. 51-2022

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PACIFICA IN SUPPORT OF
REOPENING THE MACK E. MICKELSON ARTHRITIS AND REHABILITATION CENTER
THERAPY POOL LOCATED AT THE MILLS HEALTH CENTER IN SAN MATEO,
CALIFORNIA**

WHEREAS, the Mack E. Mickelson Arthritis and Rehabilitation Center Therapy Pool ("Mickelson") is an ADA-accessible warm water therapy pool located in San Mateo, California at Mills Health Center, which is operated by Sutter Health; and

WHEREAS, Mickelson was constructed over 25 years ago using charitable contributions from residents of San Mateo County; and

WHEREAS, for over 25 years, thousands of San Mateo County residents who suffer from health issues, including permanent disabilities, debilitating injuries, autoimmune disorders, and mobility impairments have used Mickelson to rehabilitate and mitigate physical decline; and

WHEREAS, both intervention and prevention are equally critical components of an equitable and effective healthcare system; and

WHEREAS, Mickelson's ability to provide both preventative and interventionist therapies to residents of San Mateo County suffering from health issues makes it an asset to the community at large and even more so to elderly residents and residents with mobility impairments; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the COVID-19 pandemic, Sutter Health, its subsidiaries, and its employees receive significant financial benefits for providing healthcare services in San Mateo County from both public and private contracts; and

WHEREAS, in March 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Sutter Health ceased operating Mickelson; and

WHEREAS, in June 2021, Sutter Health publicly announced its intent to permanently close Mickelson; and

WHEREAS, as a direct result of Sutter Health's decision to close Mickelson, residents of San Mateo County who previously relied upon Mickelson to treat and prevent significant health issues are now suffering from acute and chronic physical pain and mental anguish, which in turn decreases the independence of those residents and impacts their ability to live with dignity; and

WHEREAS, over 4,800 patients, caregivers, and community members have signed a petition to reopen Mickelson to increase the health, independence, and dignity of those residents who rely upon it; and

WHEREAS, there are no comparable warm water therapy pools able to adequately accommodate the residents of San Mateo County who previously relied upon Mickelson; and

WHEREAS, there is currently no plan to construct an adequate and accessible replacement warm water therapy pool in San Mateo County, and any plan to do so would require significant financing as well as several years of design, planning, permitting, and construction; and

WHEREAS, estimates provided by Sutter Health suggest that reopening Mickelson with any required repairs or upgrades would cost approximately \$250,000.00; and

WHEREAS, warm water therapy pools in the region can and do operate profitably and safely under relevant COVID-19 regulations.

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Pacifica, California that considering the foregoing, the prompt reopening the Mack E. Mickelson Arthritis and Rehabilitation Center Therapy Pool for community use is the most prudent option to preserve and improve the health of residents in San Mateo County who now rely upon, or who will rely upon, warm water therapy to maintain their health, independence, and dignity. The City Council urges Sutter Health to take advantage of the Peninsula Health Care District's generous offer to fully fund any necessary repairs, remodeling, and operational costs of the Mickelson therapy pool until a new facility becomes available in the area.

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PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Pacifica, California, held on the 22nd day of August 2022, by the following vote:

AYES, Councilmembers: Beckmeyer, Bier, Bigstycck, O'Neill, Vaterlaus.

NOES, Councilmembers: n/a.

ABSENT, Councilmembers: n/a.

ABSTAIN, Councilmembers: n/a.


Mary Bier (Aug 24, 2022 11:13 PDT)

Mary Bier, Mayor

ATTEST:



Sarah Coffey, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Michelle Kenyon, City Attorney

Michelle Kenyon, City Attorney