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PARISH COUNCIL CALLS FOR SPECIAL MEETING

Members to Propose Funding Solution for Recreation Centers

The Lafayette Parish Council is calling for a special meeting to address funding for four recreation centers set to close when the fiscal year ends on October 31, 2020. When announcing the closures in July, Mayor-President Josh Guillory made it clear that his goal was always to find a way to keep all recreation centers open through innovative and creative solutions.

Guillory thanked the Parish Council for working diligently with his administration to find a solution. "The recreation centers should not and will not close. We will not turn our backs on the valuable services these facilities offer and the residents they serve," Guillory said.

District 2 Parish Councilman and Parish Council Chairman Kevin Naquin said the Parish Council plans to appropriate \$200,000 from funds that were rededicated from the library surplus last year after residents voted to give \$8 million to drainage and \$2 million to Parks and Recreation. "Using these funds will keep the four recreation centers open for one year and would allow some funding to staff appropriately. The Parish Council's goal was certainly to find a way to keep them open, but we needed time to figure out where funding would come from," Naquin said. Keeping the recreation centers open for one year will allow time for the Lafayette City Council and Mayor-President to work out a long-term solution.

In addition, Naquin said the Parish Council's goal is to have Parish parks become self-sufficient, so they don't have to rely on City dollars. The Council is currently working on intergovernmental agreements with sports leagues that use Parish parks. Naquin said, "I understand the meaning behind the City Council's proposed ordinance calling for separating City and Parish Parks and Recreation funds; however I would like to have more time to get these intergovernmental agreements in place. This way, we can have a joint meeting and both councils can vote."

The special Parish Council Meeting is scheduled for August 10, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.

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