Collaboration might be key to opening community pool

BY LADONNA BEEKER
THE JOURNAL

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SENECA — Seneca's mayor thinks collaborating with the area YMCA and other county organizations is a way to open a community pool.



Alexander

During Tuesday's City Council meeting, Mayor Dan Alexander took a few minutes and asked council if they would consider joining plans the YMCA has to open an indoor pool near the Bountyland community.

"In the county, we have 29 major industries with 21 of those in our system," Alexander said. "When you look at the industry, to me it seems like we would be doing good if we worked with the YMCA to build an indoor facility. Wherever they put it, it will be good for everybody."

Discussions about Seneca's pool started when the city had to close its pool because of a dire need for renovations to meet S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control standards. The pool closed two summers ago and estimates have been up to $200,000 for repairs.

"When you look at the costs, it seems to me it makes a lot of sense for everyone to contribute to those costs," Alexander said.

Councilman Joel Ward said the city could also look at how to involve Oconee Medical Center if it chooses to go in with the YMCA's plans and ultimately create a facility that will also work with a rehab center for people with health issues, such as hip and knee problems.

Alexander said he liked Ward's idea and thinks it will be a good way for Seneca officials to get involved.

"Maybe we can be a part in trying to bring all these people together," Alexander said. "... We have a job we need to do, and I think this would be great to bring people together. We can be a major player in working with the Y."

Other council members agreed and Councilman Ernest "E" Riley said involving the School District of Oconee County could create a program to teach children how to swim. This year alone, Oconee County has had six drownings.

"I would like, if council likes to do it, to ask someone from the Y to come talk to us and see what they want to do," Alexander said, adding city officials could help with raising money to fund an indoor pool.

In addition, Alexander thinks the city can compliment the swimming pool with a splash pad in city limits, mentioning Shaver Recreation Complex as a potential site. He also wants to speak with a representative from the splash pad business and get "hard numbers" in the coming weeks.

"The pool needs to serve the needs of Oconee County," Alexander said. "There are kids, adults and senior citizens that need a pool. It's too much for us to do by ourselves."

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