

January 2020 – Town of Mammoth Swimming Pool Information

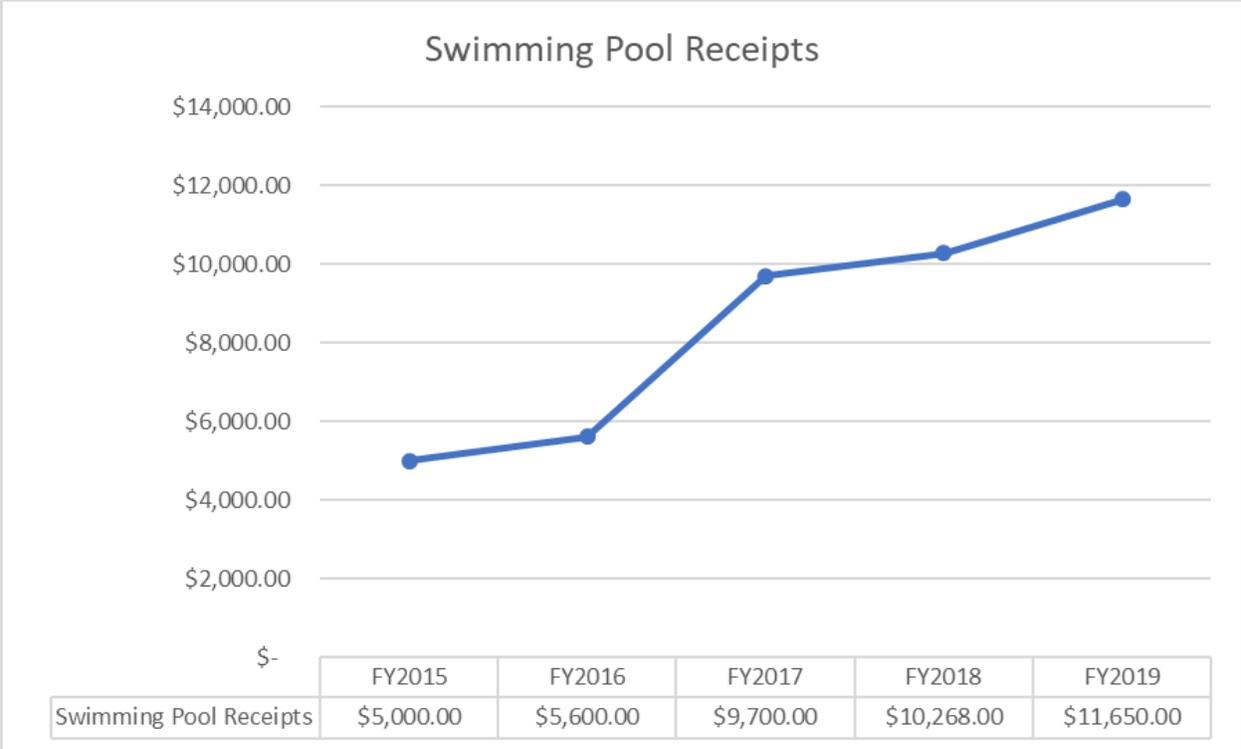
This letter is to inform you about all the positive things that are happening at the Mammoth Pool. The existing partnership between the Town of Mammoth and the Sea Lions Swim Team, which began in April 2016, is a win-win situation for both parties and benefits the entire Tri-Community.

To begin, we understand that the swimming pool never makes money for the Town of Mammoth, and in fact, costs the Town thousands of dollars each year to keep it open. The revenue from public swim admission fees and pool parties does not cover the cost of lifeguards, chemicals, utilities, supplies, etc. For now, the Town has decided to keep the pool open for the community despite losing money. We realize that this decision can be changed at any time, but that for now the current Town leadership understands the benefit of having the swimming pool open for the community and trusts the Sea Lions Swim Team to operate and maintain the pool for the Town.

The Sea Lions have been partners with the Town of Mammoth for four great seasons. There is a great relationship between the Town and the Swim Team, with both parties realizing significant benefits from the arrangement. In exchange for allowing the Swim Team to use the pool, the Town is able to safely operate and maintain the pool for the lowest possible cost. The financial impact of the partnership between the Town of Mammoth and the Sea Lions Swim Team is worth thousands of dollars to the Town of Mammoth every year, and though this money does not make up the full amount the Town loses by keeping the pool open, it certainly helps. The thousands of dollars from the Swim Team and the long list of other benefits from having the Sea Lions manage the pool make it an easier decision for the Town to keep the pool open for the community every summer. And with the San Manuel Swimming Pool closed permanently, the Mammoth Pool is the only one serving our community.

Benefits to the Town of Mammoth because of their partnership with the Sea Lions Swim Team:

1. Increased Pool Revenue:
 - a. Since the Sea Lions Swim Team took over in 2016, Swimming Pool Receipts have increased every year. Part of this is due to the increase in admission fee from \$2 to \$3 by the Town Council in 2017, however, receipts increased in both 2018 and 2019 while the admission fee stayed at \$3. (Please see the attached graph on the next page. The data is from the Official Budget Reports posted on the website.)
 - b. In 2015, before the Sea Lions Swim Team started managing the pool, attendance records at the pool show that approximately 1500 patrons visited the pool during the season. This number has increased significantly every year since then and in 2019, nearly 4000 people paid to swim at the Mammoth Pool during the season. This number does not include the number of people who used the pool during private parties, school parties, sports team parties, and the free Town events on Memorial Day and the Fourth of July.



2. Additional money to the Town of Mammoth:

- a. The Sea Lions applied for and received a grant to get the Town of Mammoth \$2500 in 2019 to pay for free swim lessons. In both 2016 and 2017 the swim team donated \$1000 to the Town of Mammoth for free swim lessons. In 2018 the Town received a \$2000 grant for swim lessons that was obtained by the Sea Lions Swim Team.
- b. The Swim Team pays the Town \$20 per registered swimmer – this is normally about \$1000/yr, assuming there are 50 kids registered for the swim team.
- c. In 2019 the San Manuel High School paid the Town of Mammoth \$1000 to use the pool for the High School Swim Team. Since the San Manuel Pool has been closed. the High School Swim Team has paid the Town to use the Mammoth Pool.

3. Savings for the Town of Mammoth:

- a. The Pool Manager works for free at no cost to the Town of Mammoth.
- b. The Pool Manager is also a Certified Pool Operator (CPO) required by Pinal County. The Town does not need to pay for the cost to train and/or hire a CPO.
- c. The pool is vacuumed and cleaned at least weekly at no cost to the Town. This is work that does not need to be done by Town employees.
- d. The Swim Team and private donors purchase supplies for the pool:
 - i. Toilet paper, paper towels, trash bags, cleaning supplies, soap, First Aid Supplies, pool testing kits, etc. at a cost of approximately \$600/yr.

- ii. Pool chemicals, including clarifier and pool liquid bleach at a cost of approximately \$900/yr (Please note that the Town purchases \$3000/yr worth of chemicals as well.).
 - e. The Swim Team orders, picks up, and delivers the pool chemicals from Tucson to the pool.
 - f. The Swim Team conducts lifeguard training classes at the pool. Sea Lions parent/adult lifeguards volunteer their time throughout the year.
 - g. The Swim Team performs minor maintenance and repairs at the pool.
 - h. The work performed by Swim Team volunteers frees up the Town's Public Works employees to work on other Town projects. The swim team spends at least 10 manhours per week from March through November doing volunteer work at the pool. This is over 280 manhours every year.
- 4. The pool is always kept in the best condition:
 - a. The pool always passes the annual Pinal County Health/ Environmental Inspection.
 - b. The Swim Team pool covers keep the water warmer at the beginning of the season and help to extend the season into the Fall, increasing the number of weeks the pool is available to the public.
 - c. The Swim Team keeps the pool clean (weekly vacuuming, checking chemicals, adding chemicals, adjusting water level, etc.). There have been no pool closures due to chemical issues since the Sea Lions have operated the pool.
 - d. The Town of Mammoth is one of the cleanest pools in the State! The Sea Lions Swim Team takes pride in the Mammoth Pool because it is their community pool.
- 5. The pool is operated with high safety standards to help insure the safety of all pool patrons.
 - a. The pool has an Emergency Action Plan which was developed in 2016 and is updated every year. All lifeguards are trained on what to do at the Mammoth Pool in case of an emergency.
 - b. Pool Rules are posted and enforced.
- 6. The Swim Team provides well-trained lifeguards
 - a. The Sea Lions Swim Team has 3 Red Cross Certified Lifeguard Instructors to train lifeguards. Training is conducted every year in the Spring for anyone (kids or adults) who meets the criteria established by the Red Cross (not just swim team members).
 - b. The Sea Lion instructors are certified in the latest Red Cross methods and requirements. They receive training themselves every year. The Sea Lions Swim Team pays for this training.
 - c. The instructors have many years of experience actually working as lifeguards and as swim team coaches.

- d. The instructors are from our community, are at the pool nearly every day, and are invested in making sure the pool has well-trained lifeguards. We love swimming, and teaching everyone how to have fun and be safe in the water.
 - e. Lifeguards who are members of the Swim Team, they are strong swimmers and patrons can be confident about both the swimming ability and the life-saving skills of the lifeguards. Lifeguards who are not on the swim team are required to swim regularly to keep up their skills and endurance.
 - f. Lifeguards attend regular in-service to practice and maintain skills throughout the season.
 - g. Without certified lifeguards, the pool cannot be open to the public. Lifeguard Certification is good for two years.
 - h. Working as a lifeguard is a fantastic, well-paying summer job for kids who know how to swim.
7. The Swim Team provides swim lessons:
- a. The swim lessons are conducted by people who know how to swim and love to teach kids how to swim.
 - b. The swim lessons are free to the community and everyone is welcome to attend. The money to pay the lifeguards who work during swim lessons is donated to the Town. The Sea Lions Swim Team applies for the funding/donations for the Town of Mammoth.
 - c. The Sea Lions have certified Red Cross Water Safety Instructors, Red Cross Lifeguard Instructors, Red Cross Lifeguards, and USA Swimming Coaches teaching swim lessons.
 - d. The Sea Lions have many swimmers who also help with the lessons, insuring that that all participants get lots of individual help and attention.
8. The Sea Lions Swim Team helps sponsor the Town's Memorial Day and Fourth of July celebrations at the Pool
- a. In 2017 through 2019 the Sea Lions provided free Eegees on Memorial Day at the pool.
 - b. The swim team sponsored and organized the 2018 and 2019 Fourth of July Celebration at the pool.
 - c. In 2019, we received enough donations from the community that we did not use the \$300 approved by the Town Council for the Fourth of July celebration.
 - d. In addition to the paid lifeguards, additional Sea Lions lifeguards volunteer their time on Memorial Day and Fourth of July due to the large crowd.
9. Hundreds of visitors come from out of town to attend Sea Lions Swim Meets.
- a. The Sea Lions Swim Team normally hosts 3 Swim Meets every summer at the Mammoth Pool.
 - b. Hundreds of swimmers and their families attend these 3 Meets. These visitors spend money at local Mammoth businesses buying drinks, food, gas, etc.

The Sea Lions Swim Team is working hard to do everything possible to keep the Mammoth Pool open and available for the community. Our team philosophy is to give back to the community and make it better through hard work and dedication to teach kids the very essential, life-long skill of being able to swim.

Facts about the Sea Lions Swim Team:

1. The Sea Lions Swim Team has been a part of the Tri-Community since 2004. We have taught hundreds of kids how to swim.
2. The Team is a non-profit organization, with a Board of Directors made up of Swim Team parents and coaches.
3. Everyone associated with the Sea Lions Swim Team is a volunteer.
4. Registration fees cover the cost of t-shirts and supplies for the Team (kick boards, fins, snorkels, pull buoys, lane lines, pool covers, etc.). Most of the money the team makes comes from fund raising.
5. The Swim Team has members from Mammoth, San Manuel, Oracle, Tucson, and Hayden.
6. The Swim Team has kids from 3 years old up to 18 years old.
7. The Sea Lions Swim Team won the Central Arizona League Championship for 12 consecutive years, beating teams from much bigger towns like Coolidge, Florence, Globe, and Eloy.
8. The Sea Lions Swim Team is widely recognized as one of the best small swim teams in the State of Arizona, both in terms of the quality of the swimmers and coaches, and for the Swim Team's hard work and volunteer efforts in support of USA Swimming.

Most Often Heard Complaints

There are three major complaints about what is happening at the Mammoth Pool:

1. Admission is \$3.00

In 2016, the Mammoth Pool admission was \$2.00. In 2017 the Mammoth Town Council voted to increase admission to \$3.00, primarily due to the increased costs to the Town from the voter-approved increase in the minimum wage from \$8.05/hr to \$10/hr (\$10.50/hr in 2018, \$11/hr in 2019, \$12/hr in 2020). Lifeguards must be paid the minimum wage, so while this provides a great summer job for the kids who know how to swim, it significantly increases the cost to keep the pool open.

It is financially irresponsible for the Town to continue to spend more money (which they don't have) on the pool, without also trying to increase revenue. If no one comes to the pool because of higher admission costs, then the Town will likely have to close the pool permanently (which would actually save the Town money!). However, we have had good attendance since the Sea Lions started managing the pool. Our morning lap swim is very well attended, and night swim is very popular. And even though Pool Party prices have also increased, there have been no complaints about the higher prices for the private pool parties.

Please remember that the pool sells punch cards for a much lower admission rate. A 12-punch cards costs \$25, which is \$2.08/visit. A Family Pack of 5 punch cards (60 punches) is \$100, which is \$1.67/visit.

And despite all the grumbling about the admission price, since 2017, more people are visiting the Mammoth Pool every year and pool receipts have increased accordingly.

2. Increased Safety

Safety is the number one priority at the Mammoth Pool – safety of the patrons/swimmers and safety of the lifeguards. Since 2016 when the Sea Lions started managing the pool, there have been zero major safety incidents.

In 2016, the rules for the diving board were changed – no flips or crazy jumps are allowed off the diving board or the side of the pool. It is understood that this rule is very unpopular, especially since flips had always been allowed in the past. However, this rule change significantly increases the safety of the pool patrons by decreasing the risk of a head/back injury. It is very likely that if a serious injury occurs at the Mammoth Pool, especially an injury that could have been prevented, that the Town will have no choice but to close the pool permanently.

The pool is always operated with the proper number of lifeguards to insure the safety of all patrons. We are never going to compromise the safety of the swimmers. Having the proper number of lifeguards on duty costs more money and limits the amount of hours the pool can be open, but it is the right thing to do.

Another common complaint is the rule change that prohibits all alcohol at the pool (the pool is on Town property). Again, this new rule increases the safety of the patrons, and furthermore, helps protect the lifeguards, most of whom are teenagers. A teenage lifeguard should not have to be responsible for guarding/rescuing people who have been drinking and who might be under the influence of alcohol.

And finally, not only do we care about the patrons, but we also care about the lifeguards. Due to the Arizona heat, the average age and experience level of the (mostly) teenage lifeguard crew, and the small number of lifeguards employed by the Town of Mammoth, the maximum time the pool is open for a single session is 4 hours. This applies to both Public Swim and for Pool Parties.

3. Pool Hours

I have also heard that there are some people who would like to see the pool open more often and open during the day. We tried in 2016 through 2018 to have Day Swim, but only got about 3 – 6 kids per session. The Town cannot justify paying lifeguards minimum wage of \$12/hr when there are only 3- 6 people at the pool.

Juggling the pool hours with the cost for lifeguards is not easy. We want to make sure the pool is open enough hours and at the right time for the community to come out and enjoy the water, get some exercise, and stay cool in the pool. But at the same time, we need to

balance the costs to the Town. Based on the increasing revenue and pool attendance, I think we are doing a good job, but we will always look for ways to improve.

Thank you for taking the time to read/listen to all the good things that are happening at the Mammoth Pool. Please allow the Sea Lions Swim Team to continue to manage the pool in order to keep it open for the community. Thank you.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Thanks again.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wendy Gort". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy Gort