



Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5E

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Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5E Resolution No. 2025-009

Resolution Calling on the Department of Parks and Recreation to Re-Open the Dunbar Aquatic Center and Provide Transparency Regarding the Delays in Opening the Facility for the Fall 2025 Season

WHEREAS, the Dunbar Aquatic Center is an important recreational facility in ANC 5E which serves both DCPS students as well as community members of all ages who seek affordable and accessible opportunities for aquatic fitness and recreation; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) traditionally operates the Dunbar Aquatic Center for the public throughout the school year, typically closing at the start of the summer pool season and re-opening each fall in early September; and

WHEREAS, DPR has not yet re-opened the Dunbar Aquatic Center this fall and has similarly failed to re-open the aquatic centers at Roosevelt High School in Ward 4 and Ballou High School in Ward 8; and

WHEREAS, these three pools collectively represent more than 20 percent of the indoor pools DPR operates throughout the District of Columbia; and

WHEREAS, during the Fiscal Year 2025 Performance Oversight hearing held on February 24, 2025, upon questioning from Councilmember Lewis-George, DPR Director Freeman indicated that DPR was near-fully staffed for lifeguards and did not indicate that there were any systemic staffing concerns which would result in the closure of indoor pools; and

WHEREAS, during the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Oversight Hearing held on June 5, 2025, upon questioning from Councilmember Zachary Parker regarding staffing issues at pool facilities, DPR Director Freeman firmly stated that DPR “did not have a shortage of lifeguards;” and

WHEREAS, DPR has failed to provide transparent or up-to-date information regarding the length of these closures, the reason for these closures, or about its plans for re-opening these pools.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ANC 5E calls on DPR to expeditiously work to re-open the Dunbar Aquatic Center and other aquatic centers across the District and to provide normal operating hours when it reopens the facilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 5E requests that DPR provide a detailed, written explanation regarding the cause for the closure and a specific timeline for re-opening the

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aquatic centers, including the steps which will be taken to achieve the timeline; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in addressing this request, DPR include responses to the following matters:

- How many permanent (non-summer) lifeguards were employed by DPR at the start of the fall 2025 indoor pool season, how that compared to any KPIs DPR tracks regarding its goals for permanent lifeguard staffing or attrition, and how that compared to the number of permanent lifeguards at the beginning of the calendar year 2024 fall indoor pool season;
- What caused DPR to not have an adequate number of permanent lifeguards to be able to staff Dunbar Aquatic Center and other currently closed aquatic centers in the District this fall;
- An enumeration of the critical regulatory or licensing requirements DPR typically must complete prior to opening an indoor pool for the season and which agencies are responsible for issuing those licenses;
- An explanation of when DPR initiated the pool inspection process with the DC Department of Health (DOH), when DOH finalized the inspection, and how the timeline of the DOH inspection and any other critical inspections compared to initiation and completion of those inspections in calendar year 2024;
- Whether or not there were matters outside of staffing which led to the closure of these pools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 5E requests that a representative from DPR who can speak knowledgeably about these issues speak at the November 18, 2025 ANC 5E Public Meeting to address these matters and answer questions from public; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC 5E informs DPR that many residents desire DPR to continue to operate the Dunbar Aquatic Center year-round without closing for the summer and that DPR should consider maintaining adequate staffing so that these facilities may stay open to the public year-round.

THIS RESOLUTION was introduced by Commissioner Kyle Gardiner and came before ANC 5E at a duly-noticed call meeting on October 29, 2025. ANC 5E is composed of 6 Commissioners with 1 SMD currently vacant, such that 3 Commissioners constitute a quorum. With 4 Commissioners present, ANC 5E voted 4-0-0 to adopt this resolution.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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