

Introduced by: Councilmember Stewart

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION 2015-18

**SUPPORTING KEEPING THE PINEY BRANCH POOL OPEN AND URGING
MONTGOMERY COUNTY TO MAKE NECESSARY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

WHEREAS, Montgomery County owns and is responsible for operating the indoor swimming pool inside the Piney Branch Elementary School building; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County has not adequately maintained the pool or promoted its use; and

WHEREAS, the County Executive's Proposed FY 2016 Budget cuts operating funds for the pool and recommends that the pool be closed until a renovation plan is devised and funded; and

WHEREAS, the pool serves the southeastern portion of the county, particularly south of the Beltway in the Greater Silver Spring/Takoma Park area; and

WHEREAS, the Piney Branch pool is the only Montgomery County indoor public pool facility inside the Beltway; and

WHEREAS, over a third of the students (35.6%) at Piney Branch Elementary School qualify for free and reduced lunches and over a third of the students are Black (36.9%) and 16% Latino; and

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control, Black children between the ages 5 and 14 are three times more likely to drown than white children, with the CDC attributing the lack of access to swimming pools as one of the factors for this disparity; and

WHEREAS, the USA Swimming Foundation reports that 70% of Black children and 60% of Latino children cannot swim; and

WHEREAS, residents of Takoma Park and southern Silver Spring have little access to other indoor public swimming pools; and

WHEREAS, the pool provides young people in the community, especially those who may not have easy access to water safety or swim lessons, a place to learn water safety and how to swim; and

WHEREAS, students at Piney Branch Elementary School, area residents, swim clubs, the Blair High School swim team, the Masters swim team, and area afterschool and summer camp programs all use the pool; and

WHEREAS, capital improvements are needed at the pool to renovate the facilities to current standards and to separate the facility from the school building so that the pool may be used by the general public while school is in session; and

WHEREAS, until plans and funding are available for the capital improvements, the pool should continue to be operated by Montgomery County so that the time the community has without access to an indoor public pool is minimized.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND that Montgomery County is strongly urged to keep the County pool at the Piney Branch Elementary School open to the public until renovation activities begin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Montgomery County is strongly urged to fund the necessary capital improvements for renovations as soon as possible so that Takoma Park and Silver Spring residents inside the Beltway can continue to enjoy the health benefits the pool provides.

Adopted this 13th day of April, 2015.

ATTEST:

Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk