

Respondent Names
Arik Dahlen, Executive Director Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center
Complainant Name
Cindy Kamp
Complaint Description
Cindy Kamp reported via the portal 16 days ago (Wed, 20 Aug 2025 at 9:04 PM) Re: Complaint Alleging Violation of RCW 42.17A.555 by Fidalgo Parks and Recreation District – Use of Public Resources to Promote a Ballot Measure Dear Public Disclosure Commission Staff: I am filing this formal complaint pursuant to RCW 42.17A.555, alleging that the Fidalgo Parks and Recreation District (the "District"), a public agency in the City of Anacortes, Washington, is unlawfully using public facilities—including its taxpayer-funded website and patron email communications—to support Joint Proposition No. 1, a ballot measure to create a Metropolitan Park District (MPD) on the Skagit County November 2025 ballot. This constitutes prohibited electioneering with public resources. The District operates the Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center and maintains a public website at fidalgopool.com, funded by taxpayer dollars through property taxes and user fees. The ballot measure in question—approved via resolutions by the Skagit County Board of Commissioners (Resolution R20250168 on August 4, 2025) and the City of Anacortes City Council (Resolution No. 3184, on July 28, 2025)—seeks to replace the current District with an MPD, expanding boundaries, providing permanent funding without six-year levy votes, and authorizing a maximum property tax rate of \$0.12 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for 2027. The measure will appear on the November 2025 general election ballot. A nearly identical proposition was presented to voters in August of 2024 and narrowly failed, as certified by Skagit County. Recently added to the District's website on it's main page, in bannered section titled "Metropolitan District Information" (accessible at https://fidalgopool.com/), the following promotional content is posted: "We continue working to change our Parks and Recreation District to a Metropolitan District. The City of Anacortes approved a resolution placing the creation of a Metropolitan Park District on the November 2025 ballot. The county has also approved the resolution. When voters approve the proposal, the new Metropolitan Park District will replace the current Park and Recreation District that operates the Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center. A Metropolitan Park District is not required to go to the voters every six years for a levy to fund the Operations and Maintenance budget, but it is still restricted to the 1% increase limit each year unless voters approve a greater increase. The creation of the Metropolitan Park District will not fund a new facility. What it will do is provide a stable and predictable financial position for the District moving forward. A new district can position us to secure financing to repair our aging facility while minimizing any taxpayer impact. Any funding required for construction of a new facility would need to go to the voters as a separate issue. The management of the District would remain the same with an elected five-commissioner board that is separate from the city." This content is not neutral or factual and it actively promotes the ballot measure by: - Assuming passage with phrases like "When voters approve the proposal," which presupposes voter support. - Highlighting purported benefits, such as "provide a stable and predictable financial position," "position us to secure financing to repair our aging facility while minimizing any taxpayer impact," and eliminating the need

for periodic levy votes while downplaying potential tax increases (restricted to 1% annually unless voters approve more). - Framing the MPD as an improvement without mentioning drawbacks, such as the loss of direct voter approval for funding, expansion of taxing boundaries to include unwilling areas (e.g., Guemes Island), or the commissioners' additional powers under RCW 35.61 (e.g., eminent domain, self-paid salaries, and non-voter-approved bonds). - Failing to disclose that a similar proposition was proposed in August 2024 and narrowly failed omitted critical historical context that could inform voters and balance the promotional tone. Additionally, the website includes a linked Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section that further promotes the measure, claiming it is "not a new tax for most people" (misleading for annexed residents who would face a new tax) and that "The expanded district boundaries would spread the annual levy amount across more properties in our community, effectively reducing each household's overall responsibility." This latter statement is not necessarily true and is particularly misleading. While expansion could theoretically lower rates for existing households if revenue remains constant, the resolution's \$0.12 per \$1,000 maximum rate (a 30% increase over the current \$0.092 per \$1,000) enables higher total revenue and taxes. For the newly annexed households, who currently pay zero, it imposes a new tax with no reduction in responsibility—directly contradicting the claim of reduced responsibility for "each household." Such biased and potentially false assertions serve as persuasive arguments for passage, not objective information. (Screenshots from website attached). Furthermore, on July 29, 2025—the day after the Anacortes City Council passed Resolution No. 3184—the District's Executive Director sent a letter via email to all pool patrons, using the District's patron contact list (a public resource). The email, titled "Ballot proposition committee request," encouraged patrons to "participate in an important aspect of our democratic process" by volunteering for "For" and "Against" committees for the MPD ballot measure. (Email is attached) While soliciting committee members may be necessary for the voters' pamphlet, the email mislead patrons by stating: "This November, there will be a ballot measure regarding the proposed transition from a Parks and Recreation District to a Metropolitan Parks and Recreation District." At the time of sending (July 29, 2025), Skagit County had not yet adopted its resolution—that occurred on August 4, 2025. This premature and false claim implies broader official support than existed, potentially misleading recipients and promoting the measure's inevitability. The proposed annexed citizens are Skagit County residents, not residents of the city of Anacortes. This premature announcement could have dissuaded citizens to publicly comment to the Skagit County Board of Commissioners regarding annexation concerns believing it was a done deal. Using public email lists and resources for communications containing inaccurate information that favors the measure constitutes an additional violation of RCW 42.17A.555. RCW 42.17A.555 prohibits the use of public office or agency facilities to assist a campaign for or against a ballot proposition, except for actions expressly authorized (e.g., neutral resolutions at open meetings or one-time factual presentations). PDC guidelines emphasize that public websites and communications cannot be used for advocacy, such as emphasizing benefits, assuming approval, or disseminating misleading information. This content and email exceed permissible "normal and regular conduct" and constitute electioneering. Requested Action I respectfully request that the PDC: 1. Investigate this complaint promptly. 2. Order the District to remove all promotional content related to the MPD ballot measure from its website and cease similar communications. 3. Impose appropriate penalties, including fines, to deter future violations. 4. Notify me of the case status and resolution. Thank you for your attention

to this matter. I am available to provide additional information or discuss this matter further.
Sincerely, Cindy Kamp

What impact does the alleged violation(s) have on the public?

This alleged violation harms citizens by misusing taxpayer-funded resources to promote a ballot measure that could permanently alter local governance and taxation without providing balanced, neutral information. Residents, including those in annexed areas like Guemes Island who face a new property tax, are deprived of objective facts needed for informed voting—potentially leading to higher taxes (up to a 30% increase for existing taxpayers) and loss of direct levy approval rights. By omitting any negative impacts, such as expanded commissioner powers including eminent domain, ability to issue non voter approved bonds, and the 2024 measure's narrow failure, the District's actions erode public trust, undermine electoral fairness and gives supporters of the Fidalgo Metropolitan Park District an unfair advantage, ultimately distorting the democratic process and burdening citizens with unaccountable spending of their own money on biased advocacy.

List of attached evidence or contact information where evidence may be found

Fidalgo Pool Website: <https://fidalgopool.com/>
Screenshots of website attached
Letter from Executive Director Arik Dahlen Attached

List of potential witnesses with contact information to reach them

Arik Dahlen, Executive Director Fidalgo Pool Office
Cindy Kamp

Certification (Complainant)

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that information provided with this complaint is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

From: Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center
<noreply@civicplus.com>
Date: July 29, 2025 at 10:33:36 PDT
To: redacted
Subject: Ballot proposition committee request
Reply-To: info@fidalgopool.com

Fidalgo Pool & Fitness Center



1603 22nd St
Anacortes, WA 98221

360-293-0673
info@fidalgopool.com
www.fidalgopool.com

Dear Community Members,

I hope this message finds you well. We are reaching out to invite members of our community to participate in an important aspect of our democratic process. This November, there will be a ballot measure regarding the proposed transition from a Parks and Recreation District to a Metropolitan Parks and Recreation District. We are seeking dedicated volunteers to join the "For" and "Against" committees to represent both sides of this measure.

Participating in these committees provides an excellent opportunity to express your views, engage with fellow residents, and contribute to the decision-making process that affects our community's future. If you are interested in volunteering or have any questions regarding the ballot measure, please feel free to contact Arik Dahlen at adahlen@fidalgopool.com or call (360) 293-0673, ext. 107.

The deadline to express your interest in volunteering is August 4, 2025. We encourage you to reach out soon and become an active part of shaping our community.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to serve and represent our community.

Warm regards,

Arik Dahlen

Executive Director

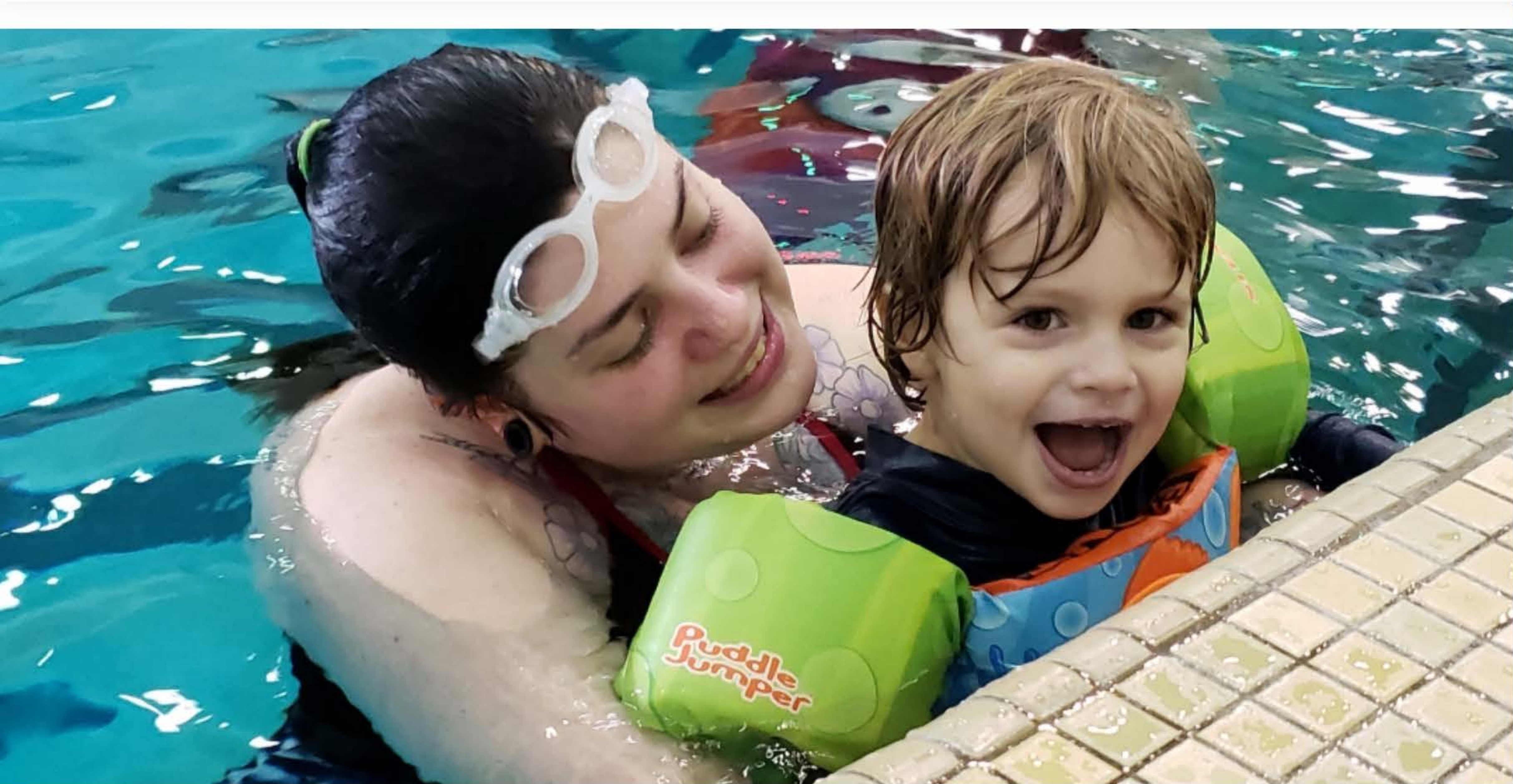
O: [.\(360\)293-0673](tel:(360)293-0673) x107

C: [.\(206\)406-2144](tel:(206)406-2144)

[Unsubscribe](#)



Friends of the Pool



Login for Scheduling

Schedules

Swim Lessons

Fitness Programs

Aquatic Programs

Red Cross Classes

Cancellation & No-show Policy

Scheduling System Help Guides

FAQ's: Under Construction

Fitness Benefit Form

Welcome to Fidalgo Pool & Fitness Center

Fidalgo Pool & Fitness Center is a community pool and fitness center serving the people of Fidalgo Island and beyond. Our comprehensive programming includes, but is not limited to, swim lessons, group fitness classes, and more. For more information, please visit our website or call us at (360) 293-0673.

Fidalgo Pool & Fitness Center will have its annual maintenance shutdown from Monday, August 4 through Sunday, August 17, 2025. The pool will be closed. There will be a modified group fitness class schedule, and the gym will be open Monday through Friday from 7 AM - 6 PM.



Menu

Metropolitan District Information

We continue working to change our Parks and Recreation District to a Metropolitan District. The City of Anacortes approved a resolution placing the creation of a Metropolitan Park District on the November 2025 ballot. The county has also approved the resolution. When voters approve the proposal, the new Metropolitan Park District will replace the current Park and Recreation District that operates the Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center. A Metropolitan Park District is not required to go to the voters every six years for a levy to fund the Operations and Maintenance budget, but it is still restricted to the 1% increase limit each year unless voters approve a greater increase.

The creation of the Metropolitan Park District will not fund a new facility. What it will do is provide a

Fidalgo Pool & Fitness Center will have its annual maintenance shutdown from Monday, August 4 through Sunday, August 17, 2025. The pool will be closed. There will be a modified group fitness class schedule, and the gym will be open Monday through Friday from 7 AM - 6 PM.



Center. A Metropolitan Park District is not required to go to the voters every six years for a levy to fund the Operations and Maintenance budget, but it is still restricted to the 1% increase limit each year unless voters approve a greater increase.

The creation of the Metropolitan Park District will not fund a new facility. What it will do is provide a stable and predictable financial position for the District moving forward. A new district can position us to secure financing to repair our aging facility while minimizing any taxpayer impact. Any funding required for construction of a new facility would need to go to the voters as a separate issue. The management of the District would remain the same with an elected five-commissioner board that is separate from the city.

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Fidalgo Pool & Fitness Center will have its annual maintenance shutdown from Monday, August 4 through Sunday, August 17, 2025. The pool will be closed.
There will be a modified group fitness class schedule, and the gym will be open Monday through Friday from 7 AM - 6 PM.

×



Friends of the Pool

Metropolitan District Information

Friends of the Pool

Who We Are

Metropolitan District Information

Donations & Endowments

Events

Meetings

Pool Together Campaign

We continue working to change our Parks and Recreation District to a Metropolitan District. The City of Anacortes approved a resolution placing the creation of a Metropolitan Park District on the November 2025 ballot. The county has also approved the resolution. When voters approve the proposal, the new Metropolitan Park District will replace the current Park and Recreation District that operates the Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center. A Metropolitan Park District is not required to go to the voters every six years for a levy to fund the Operations and Maintenance budget, but it is still restricted to the 1% increase limit each year unless voters approve a greater increase.

The creation of the Metropolitan Park District will not fund a new facility. What it will do is provide a stable and predictable financial position for the District moving forward. A new district can position us to secure financing to repair our aging facility while minimizing any taxpayer impact. Any funding required for construction of a new facility would need to go to the voters as a separate issue. The management of the District would remain the same with an elected five-commissioner board that is separate from the city.

Frequently Asked Questions

Fidalgo Pool & Fitness Center will have its annual maintenance shutdown from Monday, August 4 through Sunday, August 17, 2025. The pool will be closed.

There will be a modified group fitness class schedule, and the gym will be open Monday through Friday from 7 AM - 6 PM.

×



Friends of the Pool

Metropolitan District FAQ

Home / Friends of the Pool / Metropolitan District Information / Metropolitan District FAQ

Friends of the Pool

Who We Are

Metropolitan District Information

Donations & Endowments

Events

Meetings

Pool Together Campaign

District Frequently Asked Questions

How is the facility currently run?

The facility is operated by the Fidalgo Parks and Recreation District, separate from the city or county. It is governed by five elected commissioners.

How much does it cost to run the facility?

Approximately \$1.5 Million. We pay salaries, water bills, electricity bills, repair and maintenance costs to name a few. It all adds up!

How is the facility funded?

FPFC is a stand-alone Parks & Recreation District with no affiliation or tax revenue from the City, County, or Schools. Half of our operating budget comes from the levy and the other half comes from user fees.

When will the change go into effect?

If approved by voters the newly established Fidalgo Metropolitan Park District will take effect in 2027.

Is this a new tax, and how will my taxes be effected?

The Fidalgo Metropolitan Recreation District would not add a new tax for most people; it would replace the current Operations and Maintenance levy that Fidalgo Island residents already see on your taxes under Fidalgo Park &

Fidalgo Pool & Fitness Center will have its annual maintenance shutdown from Monday, August 4 through Sunday, August 17, 2025. The pool will be closed. There will be a modified group fitness class schedule, and the gym will be open Monday through Friday from 7 AM - 6 PM.

×

Who We Are

Metropolitan District Information

Donations & Endowments

Events

Meetings

Pool Together Campaign

If approved by voters the newly established Fidalgo Metropolitan Park District will take effect in 2027.

Is this a new tax, and how will my taxes be effected?

The Fidalgo Metropolitan Recreation District would not add a new tax for most people; it would replace the current Operations and Maintenance levy that Fidalgo Island residents already see on your taxes under Fidalgo Park & Recreation District.

The ballot resolution has a set levy rate cap not to exceed 12 cents per \$1,000.00 assessed house value. Any future tax increase above the annual 1% cap requires a vote.

The expanded district boundaries would spread the annual levy amount across more properties in our community, effectively reducing each household’s overall responsibility.

How many people use the facility?

The facility is averaging more than 6,500 individual visits each month. This doesn’t include visits by the two club swim teams consisting of 80 youth swimmers and 42 adult swimmers that use the facility almost daily.

Will the Metropolitan District pay for a new facility?

No. The Metropolitan Park District will not fund a new facility. The levy pays only for maintenance and operations. Any future building would need to go to the voters as a separate issue.

How will a Metropolitan District help with stability?

A metropolitan district would ensure we have predictable funds on an ongoing basis. In case of an emergency repair, we may not have the funds needed, and outside financing options are limited as financial institutions must accept a risk under our current limitation of having to no more than six years of funding at a time.

Will voters lose their ability to have input to the facility budget.

No. The budget is approved through open, public commissioner meetings. Residents have a right to address their concerns at these monthly meetings held on the third Thursday of the month at 5:30 p.m. They may contact the commissioners at any time by emailing commissioners@fidalgopool.com.

