

City of McPherson

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PRESS RELEASE

July 19, 2022

Water park to cancel private parties for 2022

McPHERSON — Due to the ongoing issue with staff shortages, the McPherson Water Park is cancelling all private parties for the remainder of the pool season.

At Tuesday morning's McPherson City Commission meeting, commissioners voted 3-0 to adopt the staff's recommendation and refund those who booked private parties for the summer.

The water park is closed on Mondays for the remainder of the season — announced July 5. Staff also is taking a short break each hour to cool off.

The American Lifeguard Association estimates staff shortages impacts one-third of U.S. pools. Bernard J. Fisher II, director of health and safety at the association, expects that to grow to half of all pools by August when many teenage lifeguards return to school. McPherson is not alone. According to staff and KRPA aquatic directors, there also have been reports of lifeguard shortages and pool schedule changes across the state in communities such as Moundridge, Salina, Derby, Hays and Hutchinson.

Director of Public Lands & Facilities Wayne Burns made the request.

"Right now, the most important thing is to ensure that the greatest priority remains on safety," Burns said. "Not just that of our residents, but also the safety of our employees."

The commission also adopted a request that season-pass holders could have the option of getting credit toward next season's pass for time missed this year. That amount will be decided when the 2022 season ends.

Questions or concerns can be directed to Burns at 620-245-2535 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email wayneb@mcpcity.com.

Mayor

Thomas A. Brown

Commissioner of Public Facilities

Gary L. Mehl

Commissioner of Streets & Utilities

Larry E. Wiens