

Questions & Answers Regarding the Bonding Referendum on November 5, 2024

Q: What is the local referendum question that will appear on the November 5, 2024 ballot?

A: The following question will appear on the November 5, 2024 general election ballot in Newington:

“Shall the Town of Newington appropriate \$11,637,890 for certain recreational improvements at Mill Pond Park and Churchill Park and authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds and notes in the same amount to finance said appropriation?”

Q: What are “certain recreational improvements” listed in the referendum question?

A: If a majority of voters approve the referendum, the Town would issue \$11,637,890 in bonds to:

- 1) Build a new community pool in Mill Pond Park, closer to Garfield Street than the existing pool, along with a new splash pad area and a bathhouse facility. The new pool would include a zero-depth entry, eight swim lanes, a diving board, waterslide and an aquatics climbing wall.
- 2) Construct a splash pad at Churchill Park, with shade structures and basic amenities.
- 3) Remove the existing 90-foot baseball field in Mill Pond Park.
- 4) Make grading improvements, seed, and fertilize the existing open grass areas.
- 5) Add a soft play area at Mill Pond Park in the location of the existing preschool playground.

It is anticipated that both splash pads would operate from April through October, while the new pool at Mill Pond Park would operate on the same schedule that the current pool does.

Q: Are there any conceptual renderings of what the pool and splash pads might look like?

A: There are a number of conceptual renderings of the pool and splash pad design that can be found on the [Town Pools Project Building Committee webpage](#).

The map below shows the proposed location of the new pool and the removed existing pool in Mill Pond Park.



It is anticipated that the proposed Churchill Park splashpad would be located within viewing distance of the three pavilions.

Q: Would the proposed new pool be the same size as the existing pool?

A: The current water surface is 9,325 square feet. The proposed Mill Pond Pool would be 11,105 square feet.

Q: What would happen to the existing pools?

A: If a majority of voters approves the referendum, the existing Mill Pond Pool and Bathhouse will be demolished and returned to greenspace. No changes are proposed for the Churchill Park Pool, which would continue to be open to the public on the same schedule as it is every summer.

Q: Where did the \$11,637,890 figure come from?

A: The \$11,637,890 figure is based on a licensed architect's estimate of probable costs and adjusted for the expected cost of materials and labor in 2026. The table below provides more itemized details about those estimated costs:

A.	Baseball Field Removal:	\$ 34,203
B.	Field Sports Rework:	251,859
C.	Aquatics:	7,504,254
C1.	Splash Pad at Churchill Park:	1,074,289
D.	Soft Play Area:	291,038
E1:	Demo Old Pool:	209,883
N:	Soft Costs:	1,214,363
Design and Construction Sub-Total:		\$ 10,579,890
Owner's Contingency (approx 10%)		1,058,000
Anticipated Total Cost:		\$ 11,637,890

Q: If the referendum passes and the Town bids out the project, what would happen if the lowest responsible bid for the project would cause the project to go over budget?

A: While there is a \$1,058,000 contingency included in the \$11,637,890 for cost overruns and change orders, the Town would be obligated to reduce the scope of the project to bring it within budget.

Q: If the referendum is successful, might there be any grant money available for this project?

A: If the November 5, 2024 referendum is approved, the Town's grant writer, Parks and Recreation Department professional staff, Parks and Recreation Board, and Town Pools Project Building Committee will pursue supplemental funding from federal, state, and private sources. Any successful acquisition of additional funds will result in a reduction of the \$11,637,890 bond issuance.

Q: When is Mill Pond Pool open?

A: Mill Pond Pool opens on the third Saturday in June and closes on the second Sunday in August, providing a total of 8 weeks of operation. In-water lifeguard training begins on June 1st. As part of the proposed project, the Town Pools Project Building Committee is considering the installation of solar panels on the roof or investing in a heat exchanger which could extend the pool's season, allowing for an earlier opening and a later closing.

Q: If the referendum is successful, would there be handicap accessible parking planned for the new pool?

A: Several handicap accessible parking spaces have been installed at the Mortensen Community Center, directly across the street from the planned new pool.

Q: How many visits were there in 8 weeks at Mill Pond Pool in the 2024 season?

A: There was a total of 20,035 visits to Mill Pond Pool during the 2024 swim season and 24,592 visits in 2023.

Q: How many people from outside of Newington use the Mill Pond Pool currently?

A: Only Newington residents, with proper identification, are eligible to purchase a pool pass at the Parks and Recreation office. Non-residents are limited to paying the daily admission fee. Our staff estimates that less than 1% of pool patrons are from out of town.

Q: How many swim lessons were given at Mill Pond Pool during the 2024 season?

A: There were a total of 2,530 participants, including summer camp lessons, group lessons, semi-private lessons, and private lessons.