

POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

YMCA Task Force statement

The official statement of the Pottstown Branch Transition Committee (YMCA Task Force) is so superb we are publishing it here in its entirety.

Dear Philadelphia Freedom Valley YMCA Corporate Board Members,

In December 2017 the Philadelphia Freedom Valley YMCA created the Pottstown Branch Transition Committee with the mandate to provide the staff and Board of Directors with proposed alternative programs and services following the announced closure of the YMCA facility at 724 N. Adams St. in Pottstown, slated for June 29, 2018.

Committee deliberations were expected to continue until April 2018. To date, six Committee meetings have been held. In addition, the Committee created two subgroups to specifically (1) evaluate the future of aquatics in the Pottstown region and (2) discuss the value of YMCA-related partnerships.

We recognize that our charter, as defined by Philadelphia Freedom Valley YMCA, was not to debate the closure of the current facility. Further, as dictated by Philadelphia Freedom Valley YMCA, the closure of the facility was to be a final decision and "off the table for discussion."

However, after considerable research, discussion and feedback from the community, we conclude that the YMCA in Pottstown is rooted in a physical location and that a decision to close the facility, without local input or representation, is unacceptable. In addition, we determine that Philadelphia Freedom Valley YMCA leadership neglected to fulfill its commitment to the community of Pottstown by not providing adequate resources to sustain the current facility.

Prior to further action, the Philadelphia Freedom Valley YMCA must restore no less than two seats for Pottstown area representatives to sit on the Association Board of Directors and commit to providing adequate resources (financial and other) to sustain the Pottstown Area YMCA.

As representatives of the community, we formally recommend the

following to the Board :

1. To fulfill the YMCA mission, renovate and restore the existing facility in the Borough of Pottstown to its intended use.

OR

2. Build a new facility, with equivalent services, in the Borough of Pottstown.

OR

3. Return the existing YMCA facility to the community along with funding equivalent to the Net Asset Value at the time of the initial merger with Phoenixville YMCA. The intended outcome will be to operate as a Community Center for the benefit of the region, centered

on Pottstown. In the 10 years since the first merger, it is clear that the Pottstown YMCA has been an afterthought. If we are going to start over as a community, there needs to be significant compensation.

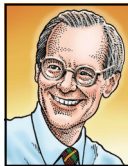
4. Create a larger community effort to reimagine the YMCA for Pottstown. Given the Philadelphia Freedom Valley budgets on a calendar year, and as indicated to the task force that June 29, 2018 was arbitrary, keep the Pottstown YMCA facility functional until December 31, 2018.

In that interval, the task force, along with community and county/state/federal consultation will develop a strategy to overcome the facility issue.

The Committee welcomes an opportunity to speak to the Association Board of Directors at your April meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Commentary by
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