

# Council saves seven pools slated for closure

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The city's budget committee has found the money to prevent the closure of seven outdoor pools and to avert any major cuts to library services.

The committee agreed Wednesday to use savings from a drop in the Ontario Works caseload to fund the \$455,000 cost to keep the pools open this summer.

A further \$900,000 will be allocated to the Toronto Public Library, which had proposed a reduction in Sunday service as a means of meeting the committee's budget target.

"If we were going to expect the library board to hold to three per cent; \$960,000 in total is what the cut to their operating budget would have been," Ward 43 Councillor Paul Ainslie (Scarborough East) said. "They provided a list of options...and one of the options would have meant closing libraries on Sundays.

"A lot of libraries are in high needs areas...and we don't want to see them closed on Sundays," he said.

The outcome of Wednesday's meeting also means Maryvale pool in Scarborough; Irving W. Chapley, York Mills and Pleasantview pools in North York; and Fairhaven, Westgrove and Amos Waites pools in Etobicoke will remain open this summer.

"These are the ones that would have been recommended for actual closure," budget chief Shelley Carroll said (Ward 33, Don Valley East), noting the committee is still recommending the city stop providing programs in seven indoor schools pools.

"With little funds to deal with those that would be closed to the community with no other option had to be our priority," Carroll said.

The proposed pool closures drew criticism from councillors across the city earlier this week.

"We heard from the councillors loud and clear at their Q and A session on Monday," Carroll said of the decision to keep the pools open.

The future of the pools, many of which are in need of capital upgrades, will be the subject of a service planning review later this year.