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Media Statement from Mayor Martin S. Horwitz Regarding Beachwood Family Aquatic Center

BEACHWOOD, Ohio –May 18, 2020– The Beachwood Family Aquatic Center is the focus of summer fun for Beachwood residents. No matter what age, we look forward to the children’s play house, the lazy river, lap swimming, the Vortex, water slides and just spending time in the sun with our friends and neighbors. We enjoy the weekly concerts and special events. But now, for reasons that are neither your fault nor ours, that cannot happen this year because the Family Aquatic Center will not open for Summer 2020.

This was a difficult decision and one that was not made lightly. We have consulted with our own staff, health professionals, and carefully reviewed the Governor’s guidelines regarding the opening of pools. We discussed a number of scenarios to open the Family Aquatic Center on a limited basis, but no matter the plan, we always reached the same conclusion: to keep the pool closed.

The health and well-being of our community and staff is at the heart of our decision-making. While we understand that the virus may not be transmitted through the chlorine in the water, there is far more to our analysis than that. Under Governor DeWine’s guidelines, we would have to severely limit the number of visitors at any one time. To achieve the proper level of social distancing, movement in the water and around the pool deck would be dramatically curtailed and require additional monitoring. Increased sanitization rules would require staff to wipe down every chair and surface and also the bathrooms almost hourly. Cloth face coverings are recommended but not required, which would make many masked visitors uncomfortable. And ultimately, our lifeguards, many of whom are Beachwood teenagers, could not perform rescues without potential exposure to COVID-19.

This is a painful decision to make. We recognize that the Family Aquatic Center is one of the many reasons that Beachwood is a great place to live, work and raise a family. We know it helps build a strong sense of community. Unfortunately, the risks associated with opening the pool are not acceptable during the pandemic. While we all will miss a summer of poolside fun, the health and safety of our community matters more. Thank you for understanding.

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