

By JESSICA CRAWFORD • Daily Leader

One of the most frequently asked questions currently around town would probably be, “When will the pool be open?” According to Public Works Director Joe Sealey, that question doesn’t have a very simple answer, although, he said it will be very soon.

Shipment issues have caused the opening of the pool to be postponed a bit, Sealey said. Currently, staff is waiting on the final slide to be delivered. Hand rails were another concern, however, it has been confirmed that they have been shipped to the site.

“We are still waiting on supplies,” Sealey said. “We are waiting on the red slide. It is supposedly going to be loaded up Wednesday morning or late Tuesday afternoon. It takes 10 or 12 hours to get here. We expect it either Wednesday or Thursday morning – but I expected it last week, too. The railings are supposed to be here Wednesday.”

On the bright side of the

situation, city staff has picked up a few extra workers due to the delay. Young adults hired as lifeguards were ready to go to work following Memorial Day, however, without a working pool, no lifeguards were needed. According to Sealey, the individuals were put to work along side the contractors and it has been working out wonderfully.

“Those kids are working hard, they have taken ownership in that thing and they are focused,” he said. “They are painting and cleaning.

There are several of those boys up there that the contractor guys have taken under their wings

and they are helping them do certain things. Some of those kids are learning some trades – it is kind of interesting to see how that is going.”

When all work appears to be finished, Sealey said, operations must be double checked to ensure everything is working as it should for safety reasons. This process involves checking plumbing all the way to the city’s trial opening.

“What we will do is fill the pool, check all the plumbing and pumps,”

he said. “We will check the chemical composition of the water to make sure it has the chlorine that it needs, and we will check for leaks.

We will test the slides, and I imagine some of the lifeguards will be the first down those slides to make sure they work.

“We will have a soft opening, which will be a trial opening,” he explained. “We will probably try to keep it under 200 people. I think the plan is by invitation only. The next day, it will be open – assuming everything works. Then there will be a planned grand opening, but that hasn’t been determined, yet.”

Although things are a bit behind schedule, Sealey asks for the public to continue to be patient. He is certain the finished product will be well worth the wait. No, he said, the aquatic center will not be open this week – but the opening is right around the corner.

“Everyone is working diligently to get all the little things done so when those slides come in, that is all we have to focus on,” he said.

“It will be absolutely as fast as we can humanly possibly work. It has to be right when we are done, it can’t be half way – it has to be right. As quick as it is right, we will open it.

“We appreciate the public’s patience and we ask for a little more of it,” he concluded. “We will get there, sooner than later.”