



COMMUNITY SERVICES – Recreation and Culture
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December 29, 2014

**COMMUNITY SERVICES – RECREATION & CULTURE
INFORMATION REPORT # 2014-32**

TO: Members of Council

COPY: Bob Shelton, CAO
Anita Moore, Commissioner of Corporate Services
Peter Noehammer, Commissioner of Development and Infrastructure Services
Ian McDougall, Commissioner of Community Services
Members of OLT

SUBJECT: Outdoor Skating Rinks – Pilot Programs Follow Up

ORIGIN: Community Services - Recreation and Culture

COMMENTS

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the two pilot programs recently approved by Council that will create more opportunity for outdoor skating in Newmarket. In accordance with the Procedure Bylaw, any member of Council may request an Information Report to be placed on a future Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

The Town of Newmarket currently operates 1 outdoor skating surface at Riverwalk Commons. This skating feature was open daily from 9 am to 10:30 pm. The ice surface and surrounding space was designed to facilitate leisure skating. This ice surface was designed to operate as an unsupervised space, with staff regularly flooding the ice to maintain good ice quality. Over the last two weeks the ice surface has been regularly staffed during the evening time periods to ensure appropriate use of the facility.

At the December 15th Council Meeting, formal approval was given to try two pilot programs:

- 1) End of Night Pick Up Hockey at Riverwalk Commons
- 2) Community Run Outdoor Rink

Council further approved that up to two applications would be considered for the 2015 winter season to operate Community Run Outdoor Rinks.

End of Night Pick Up Hockey at Riverwalk Commons

In response to a growing trend where participants were playing hockey each evening, sometimes as early as 8:30 pm, it was recommended that the ice surface at Riverwalk Commons be designated for pick up hockey from 10 pm to Midnight, daily. This has been happening daily since December 16th, 2014. There have been staff on site prior to 10 pm to inform the public that hockey would be permitted from 10 pm until midnight. The area has been heavily signed as well. Overall, these actions have dramatically improved the tensions that were happening prior to the launch of this pilot program. There have been some reported cases of vandalism in the area. Staff have met with participants and are continuing to monitor this. Should

the vandalism continue, the pilot program may be cancelled. However, since meeting with participants, there has been improvement.

Community Run Outdoor Rink

An expression of interest was sent out to the community for a community group or group of individuals to operate a community run rink at a site where the town can provide land and water. An application package outlining process and requirements was developed and is available through the Recreation & Culture Department.

The criteria for selecting a rink were established and included the following:

Primary

1. The site must have access to ongoing, winterized water.
2. A volunteer community member must step forward as the Rink Coordinator and at least 15 volunteer community members must be included as Rink Helpers.
3. There must be access to off street parking.

Secondary

1. Impact on spring usage of the space would be considered.
2. Presence of lights would allow for greater programming opportunity.
3. Presence of other winter facilities in close proximity would also be a factor.

There were three applications submitted:

1. Tennis Courts at Lions Park – Church Street
2. Field at Whipper Billy Watson Park – Bathurst St and Clearmeadow Blvd
3. Field at Ken Sturgeon Park – Lockwood Circle

Of the three applications submitted, only Lions Park met all three of the primary criteria. As such, the application for Lions Park is approved and the Rink Coordinator will be notified. Given that the original report Council resolution stipulated that up to 2 sites be considered, with no additional budgetary impact, only Lions Park will be approved for the 2015 season.

With respect to the other two applications, both applications do not meet the requirement of ongoing, winterized water. They do meet the other two primary requirements and do meet the secondary requirements. Both sites would be positive as they represent different quadrants of the Town. Additionally, both applications have engaged residents who have eagerly stepped forward to run this Community Rink. The cost to convert the water source to a winterized source would be approximately \$2,500. It would involve providing heat to the building.

A comprehensive evaluation of the program will be done at the end of the season. At that time all costs, time commitments and overall success will be evaluated and winterizing of additional sites can be considered.

BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES

Living Well

- Emphasis on active lifestyles and recreational opportunities

Well Balanced

- Recreational facilities and services

- Youth and seniors' facilities and programs
- Well-equipped & Managed
- Fiscal responsibility
- Well Respected
- Being tradition-based and forward thinking

BUDGET IMPACT

There is no direct budget impact at this time.

CONTACT

For more information on this report, please contact Colin Service, Director of Recreation & Culture at cservice@newmarket.ca or at extension 2601.



Colin Service, Director of Recreation & Culture