
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report CDP-16-2019 March Break and Family Day Children's Programming Adjustments



For Consideration by Council in Committee on December 10, 2019

OBJECTIVE:

To receive Council approval to make adjustments to March Break and Family Day programming, based upon community input, including providing full-day March Break Camps for children.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CDP-16-2019 March Break and Family Day Children's Programming Adjustments be received;
2. AND THAT the changes to March Break and Family Day children's programming, including providing full-day March Break Camps, be approved;
3. AND THAT the budget, as outlined in CDP-16-2019, be brought forward in the 2020 Tax Supported Operating Budget as a Council Approved Initiative;
4. AND THAT the proposed User Fees and Service Charges included in this report be approved, to be effective immediately, and staff be directed to draft the required amendments to Schedule J of the User Fees and Charges By-law;
5. AND THAT an additional 528 hours and 0.25 FTEs required to implement the full-day March Break children's programming be approved.

Prepared by: Andrea Moodie, Community Recreation Programmer

Reviewed by: Katrina Schmitz, Manager, Community Development and Partnerships

Respectfully submitted: Mike Evers, MCIP, RPP, BES, General Manager of Community & Development Services

Approved: Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Since 2012, Haldimand County's Community Development & Partnerships Division (CDP) has provided free half-day (morning) camp programming during March Break as well as free, drop-in Activity Centres at Arenas during Family Day Public Skates.

In response to feedback provided by parents and caregivers of participants in March Break morning programs and Summer Camps, who have expressed a willingness to pay for full-day programming, CDP staff propose offering full-day March Break Camp options from Monday to Friday that week. The full-day March Break Camp would replace the current free March Break A.M.azing Morning program that is offered from 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. daily and would be based upon the successful Summer Camp HaldiFUN model, currently implemented across the County.

As well, on Family Day, staff propose discontinuing the free drop-in Activity Centres at Arenas during Public Skates given low participation rates. (Free Family Day Public Skates will continue).

BACKGROUND:

Haldimand County has long provided children's programming to meet the recreation and leisure needs of residents and families, including:

- 2001-2009 – Leisure Services Division offered full-day March Break Camp programs for the same fee charged in the summer in Caledonia, Cayuga, Dunnville and Hagersville;
- 2009 – Council decided to discontinue March Break Camps given other organizations in the community appeared to be filling that programming need;
- 2012 – Based on community feedback, the Community Development and Partnerships Division (CDP) initiated free March Break Morning Programs for children ages 4-10 years and added free Public Skates for all ages throughout the year; and
- 2012 – For Family Day, CDP introduced free Activity Centres (crafts, games) at Arenas to complement free Public Skates.

March Break:

Free March Break A.M.azing Mornings have been well attended; however, there has been increased interest from the public to return to the full-day camp model (operating from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.), including paying for this service. Feedback collected through online and hardcopy surveys at the end of every camp program offered by Haldimand County has shown parents and caregivers would prefer full-day programming that aligns with a typical workday.

This input was reinforced during recent public consultations associated with the Parks and Recreation Service Plan, which is currently in final draft form. Specifically, the recommendations in the Plan include that Haldimand County should consider extending March Break programming to full days to accommodate the standard workday schedule.

Further, there are no other agencies or organizations in Haldimand County currently offering full-day recreational March Break Camp Programs, requiring families to access services in neighbouring municipalities. Staff believe this is an opportunity to meet a service gap for residents and families.

The proposed move to full-day March Break Camp programming will not impact free Public Skates that week, which will continue to be scheduled.

Family Day:

Since 2012, Haldimand County has offered free Public Skates at its Arenas during Family Day, including drop-in Activity Centres for children. Participation in the Activity Centres has been consistently low and dwindling, although interest in public skating has increased. Given the limited interest in the Activity Centres—and the other programming opportunities elsewhere in the County, e.g. Heritage Day in Selkirk and activities in Dunnville—staff propose discontinuing only the Activity Centre programming (free public skates will continue). Savings related to the costs of staffing the Family Day Activity Centres are recommended to be redirected to support full-day March Break Camp programs. The full details relating to budget implications are included in the 'Financial/Legal Implications' section below.

ANALYSIS:

March Break:

Since 2001, Haldimand County has provided March Break programming options with the goal of providing a fun, safe and active experience for children. For many years this included full-day camps,

although it was decided in 2009 that Haldimand County should discontinue March Break Camp programming to allow other organizations in the community to fill this need.

In 2012, based upon community feedback and a lack of alternative providers, the County re-introduced a free half-day (morning) March Break Camp program at four Arena locations. Initially, registration filled quickly for the half-day program; however, in the past two years, there has been an increase in the number of 'withdrawals' as parents find full-day options for their children in other locations. Although participation for half-day programs remains near 100% capacity, there is increased pressure from parents and caregivers to change to the full-day model used during the summer.

Currently in Haldimand County, there are no consistent providers offering a full-day, recreational March Break Camp Program, resulting in parents and caregivers having to look to neighbouring municipalities for this service, including Norfolk County, Brant County, Brantford, Hamilton and the Town of Pelham. Staff believe an opportunity exists to meet this service need for the benefit of residents and families.

Utilizing the Summer Camp HaldiFUN model, parents registering children for March Break would be provided with daily or weekly options; as well, staff propose offering the 2020 full-day March Break camps in the same six communities where Summer Camps are operated, including Caledonia north and south, Cayuga, Dunnville, Hagersville and Jarvis. (This would be an increase in locations from the current half-day model, which was only offered in the four Arenas). Based on the services provided, the fee for the March Break Camps would be consistent with the fees charged for Summer Camp HaldiFUN.

The table below shows the participation rates for each Summer Camp HaldiFUN location; it is anticipated March Break Full-Day Camp Programs will be consistent with these numbers.

Camp HaldiFUN Locations	Average Weekly Participation Capacity 2019	Average Weekly Participation Capacity 2018
Caledonia – Main Location	100%	94%
Caledonia – Second Location	93%	72%
Cayuga	94%	89%
Dunnville	95%	91%
Hagersville	89%	100%
Jarvis (1 week pilot in 2019)	63%	N/A

Based on the weekly participation numbers above, the staff complement for March Break Full-Day Camp per location is:

Location	Caledonia Location 1	Caledonia Location 2	Cayuga	Dunnville	Hagersville	Jarvis
# of Potential Campers	32	24	16	32	32	16
# of Staff	4	3	3	4	4	2

This is consistent with the counsellor-to-camper ratio maintained during the summer, which is in compliance with the "Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014" and the "Day Nurseries Act R.R.O. 1990 Regulation 262" as well as with the staffing models of neighbouring communities with a similar camp profile.

Family Day:

Since 2012, Haldimand County has offered free drop-in Activity Centre programming (crafts, games) for families at the Arenas during Family Day Public Skates. Participation in the Activity Centres has consistently been low. Due to this low participation and other opportunities provided throughout the County, this programming is recommended to be discontinued. The cost for staffing Family Day drop-in Activity Centre programming as well as the operating budget could be redirected to help support the March Break Full-Day Camp Programs.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

The requested changes will have implications for the County's 2020 Tax Supported Operating Budget as follows:

	2019 Budget	Change	Proposed 2020 Budget
March Break Expenditures:			
Wages	\$3,240	\$9,420	\$12,660
Supplies & Materials	\$1,000	\$400	\$1,400
Advertising	\$480	\$0	\$480
Facility Rental	\$0	\$900	\$900
<i>Sub-Total March Break:</i>	\$4,720	\$10,720	\$15,440
Family Day Expenditures:			
Wages	\$430	(\$430)	\$0
Supplies & Materials	\$400	(\$400)	\$0
Advertising	\$470	(\$470)	\$0
<i>Sub-Total Family Day:</i>	\$1,300	(\$1,300)	\$0
Total Expenditures:	\$6,020	\$9,420	\$15,440
March Break Revenue:			
2019 Registrations (half-day program)	\$0	\$0	\$0
2020 Registrations (projected 90% attendance, based on 2019 Summer Camp HaldiFUN)	\$0	\$15,440	\$15,440
<i>Sub-Total March Break:</i>	\$0	\$15,440	\$15,440
Family Day Revenue:	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue:	\$0	\$15,440	\$15,440

From 2012 to 2019, the County provided March Break activities free of charge to the community; in 2019, this resulted in an approximate \$6,020 impact to the Tax Supported Operating Budget. Haldimand County 2020 User Fees and Service Charges By-law identifies the Day Camp (per week) fee to be \$110.75 effective until May 1, 2020. The proposal from CDP staff to move to full-day March Break Camps—in alignment with Summer Camp fees—should result in a break-even position. If approved, these changes will require an amendment to Schedule J of the User Fees and Schedule By-law and will be brought forward as a Council Approved Initiative in the 2020 Tax Supported Operating Budget, including an additional 528 hours and 0.25 FTEs related to executing the revised programming.

It should also be noted that in 2018, Council approved specific guiding principles related to recreation fees. Staff feel this change is in line with those principles, where applicable, including:

- Fostering active healthy living through physical activity and increased participation;
- Increasing inclusion and access to recreation for all residents; and
- Providing opportunities for choice of activity that encourage participation in recreation and build strong, caring communities.

Although this proposal increases service levels, it is expected to have no levy impact on the 2020 Tax Supported Operating Budget. Normally service level changes are ranked and evaluated during the appropriate budget process; however, due to the timing of this initiative, this would delay any changes to programs until March Break 2021.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

This report was reviewed by staff from the Finance Division.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: Yes

Budget Amendment: Yes

Policy: No

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft User Fees and Charges Schedule J – Amendment.