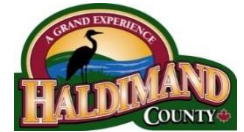

HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report PED-COM-03-2018 Early Opening of the Dunnville Memorial Arena for the 2018-2019 Hockey Season



For Consideration by Council in Committee on March 27, 2018

OBJECTIVE:

To obtain Council approval for early opening of the Dunnville Memorial Arena for the 2018-2019 hockey season.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report PED-COM-03-2018 Early Opening of the Dunnville Memorial Arena for the 2018-2019 Hockey Season be received;
2. AND THAT the Dunnville Memorial Arena be approved to open for the 2018-2019 season on August 25, 2018;
3. AND THAT staff be delegated the authority to approve future requests for an early season opening at any County arena, contingent on receiving commitments for the required minimum number of hours of ice bookings, as per policy, and operational feasibility within approved budgets.

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Reviewed by: Sheila Wilson, CPRP, Manager, Community Development and Partnerships

Respectfully submitted: Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, General Manager of Planning and Economic Development

Approved: Karen General, CPA, CGA, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Prior to 2017, the traditional opening date of the Dunnville Memorial Arena had been the Tuesday following Labour Day, with the preparation of the ice completed on the Saturday prior to Labour Day. In 2017, Council supported a request from the Dunnville Jr. Mudcats and Dunnville Minor Hockey to open this arena one week early and as a result it opened for the 2017-2018 season on Saturday, August 26, 2017. The Dunnville Jr. Mudcats and Dunnville Minor Hockey have submitted a similar request to have the Dunnville Memorial Arena open one week early for the 2018-2019 season. If supported by Council, the arena would open on Saturday, August 25, 2018.

The minimum number of reserved hours required to open early is 27. This number was determined as per Report CS-FI-24-2017 User Fees and Charges Update – 2018, Attachment 1 – User Fees and Service Charges, and represents the time required to cover the additional utility costs at an approved subsidy level of 40%.

Representatives for both organizations have indicated that they will commit to reserving 28 hours in total of ice from August 25 – August 31, 2018, and that there will be no decrease in the amount of ice reserved by these groups in September 2018 as a result of this early opening request.

Staff are seeking Council approval for opening the Dunnville Memorial Arena on August 25, 2018, which is one week earlier than the usual schedule. In addition, to streamline future requests of this nature at any of the County arenas, it is recommended that staff be delegated the authority for approval of an early season opening, contingent on receiving commitments for the required minimum number of hours of ice bookings (as per policy), and operational feasibility within approved budgets.

BACKGROUND:

In 2012, the entire Southern Ontario Junior Hockey League (former Junior “D’s”) were promoted to Junior “C”, and in 2016, all Junior “C” hockey leagues were united under the Provincial Junior Hockey League umbrella. These changes in the Provincial organization of Junior hockey have resulted in an earlier start to the game schedule for the regular season, as well as an increase in the number of games played during the regular season. As a result, for the 2016-2017 season, the Dunnville Jr. Mudcats had no choice but to utilize ice in Port Colborne to host their training camp and practices in August 2016.

For the 2017-2018 season, Council supported a request from The Dunnville Jr. Mudcats and Dunnville Minor Hockey to open the Dunnville Memorial Arena one week early, allowing these groups to use their home arena for training camp and Rep hockey tryouts. This change was viewed positively by the user groups and the community. The groups have again requested the early opening of the arena for the 2018-2019 season.

ANALYSIS:

Prior to 2017, the Dunnville Memorial Arena traditionally opened for the start of the ice season on the Tuesday following Labour Day and in 2017, with Council approval the arena opened one week early.

The Dunnville Jr. Mudcats and Dunnville Minor Hockey have submitted requests to have the Dunnville Memorial Arena open on August 25, 2018 so that:

- the Jr. Mudcats can host their training camp, select their team and be game ready for the start of the 2018-2019 season scheduled to begin on September 13th; and
- Dunnville Minor Hockey can run their Rep Hockey tryouts and possibly some skill development sessions.

The preference of both organizations is to utilize ice time in their home arena rather than travelling outside the County. Staff have investigated whether ice would be available at the Caledonia arena (which is open during this time), and there is not sufficient ice time to meet the needs of the Dunnville groups. The groups have committed to a sufficient number of hours of ice time to meet County policies for early opening. Staff will also promote the early opening to other internal and external renters in an attempt to increase use. There are currently no floor rentals booked that would be impacted by the earlier opening.

In addition, to streamline future requests of this nature at any of the County arenas, it is recommended that staff be delegated the authority for approval of an early season opening, contingent on receiving commitments for the required minimum number of hours of ice bookings (as per policy), and operational feasibility within approved budgets. Staff commit to advising Council when such authority is executed.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Per Report CS-FI-24-2017 User Fees and Charges Update - 2018, it is current policy that Minor Hockey groups and the Junior Hockey leagues receive a cost subsidy of 40% of the total operation cost. The same subsidy level is also provided when the ice use is extended to accommodate playoff runs. Based

on anticipated operating costs the required amount of ice that must be committed to totals 27 hours set out as follows:

Item	Total (for 8 days)
Estimated additional operating costs	\$4,880
Less Subsidy of 40% per County policy	(\$1,950)
Sub-total: Total Costs to be Recovered	\$2,930
Number of Hours Rentals Required (at \$109.75/hour)	27 hours

If supported by Council, the 40% subsidy estimated at approximately \$1,950 will result in a negative variance, as this initiative was not presented to Council in the 2018 Tax Supported Operating budget on March 7th, 2018. In 2017, staff were able to accommodate the additional staffing required within the existing staff compliment. Though it is anticipated that this will be the case again in 2018, if it is determined that additional staffing hours are required, the negative variance mentioned above may be impacted further. Corporately, the deficit or surplus for the tax supported operating budget is funded or contributed to the Contingency Reserve.

A comprehensive review of fees and charges is currently underway and parameters for opening an arena early or extending a season will be included in the report to address similar situations including whether there should be a subsidy provided or not. The report is anticipated in April 2018. Until this report is completed and the issue is dealt with on a comprehensive basis, Staff have applied the current policy framework.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

Staff have consulted with the Facilities and Parks Operations Division in terms of providing staff to service the arena for the additional time and have been advised that from an operations perspective this request can be accommodated within the current budget as part of the summer allocation of staff within the division.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

ATTACHMENTS:

None.