

Background

The 18 community halls in the City Greater Sudbury fall into two broad categories: halls attached to community arenas, and stand-alone facilities.

Arena Halls (7):

- Chelmsford Arena
- Dr. Edgar Leclair (Azilda)
- Garson Arena
- T.M. Davies (Walden)
- McClelland Arena (Copper Cliff)
- Centennial Arena (Hanmer)
- Capreol Arena

Stand Alone Facilities (11):

- Delki Dozzi Community Centre
- Howard Armstrong Recreational Centre
- Kinsmen Hall
- Ben Moxam Centre
- Naughton Community Centre
- Onaping Falls Community Centre
- Falconbridge Community Centre
- Fielding Memorial Park
- Whitewater Lake Park
- Minnow Lake Place
- Dowling Leisure Centre

In the past several years, the operation of community halls has been addressed in various reports and by several committees. The issues involved with efficacy of the halls are numerous and vary depending on the type of hall and its primary usage. The halls offer community space for several purposes including: meeting space for non-profit groups, recreational programming, private functions and events, long term leases for community groups and community-centric locations for clinics and information sharing sessions.

Currently, Park Services staff are responsible for the operations of the halls and the facilities are booked via the standard facility booking method, with 3-1-1 being the central function to receive bookings. Rental fees are included in the Miscellaneous User Fee By-law.

Chronology

In **November 2004**, the Community Halls Usage Solutions Team submitted a report to City Council that provided an analysis of usage, costs and some of the issues regarding the Community Halls facilities in the City of Greater Sudbury.

The Community Halls Solutions Team made several **recommendations** and on November 9, 2004, Recommendation 2004-78 was carried, directing staff to complete the following, along with progress to date:

1. Enhanced service improvements – consolidate and harmonize rental fees, market hall facilities through various mediums of media, phone book advertising, pamphlets, trade shows, bill boards.
 - Fees have been harmonized and halls “tiered” based on available services
 - Some extra marketing has occurred, with the department recently embarking on a broad marketing and advertising strategy
 - Upcoming marketing will include exhibitor booth at trade shows
2. Create a new City staff contract position to co-ordinate bookings, liaise with clients and staff, control costs for hall rentals, collect money for rentals.
 - Position in Parks Services was created but also has responsibilities as a Park Superintendent and has never been utilized as a full time halls position , this report recommends creation of full time Special Events Coordinator
3. Develop an RFP inviting qualified caterers to tender for the rights to host functions and provide food services in the facilities.
 - This report recommends RFP for catering services
4. A review of performance of new rates.
 - Since the 2004 report, there has been an increase in usage of community halls
5. Complete review of CGS current no risk policy should be undertaken so as to ultimately improve all rental opportunities for facilities.
 - Alcohol risk management policy was last reviewed in 2003-2004, with amendments in 2011

6. Review of current rate schedule for existing outdoor educational facilities such as Camp Sudaca, Camp Wassakwa and several large playground field houses that could be rented out for specific events.
 - User fees for all playground and summer programs are currently being reviewed, usage as a community can be included (i.e. Delki Dozzi is a model for this initiative)

Some specifics of these recommendations have been addressed, including: \$15K for marketing added to the operating budget in 2005 and \$51K added to 2006 budget in salaries and benefits (position transferred from Arenas to Community Halls). However, some of the recommendations were not implemented due to the complexities associated with the halls, most of which were operated in the former area municipalities (pre-amalgamation).

The ***Constellation Report***, released in ***January 2007***, included a recommendation regarding “*Community Facility Rates and Liability Costs*”. The actions associated with the recommendation were:

- Review existing facility rate and liability policies based on the principles of fairness and the goal of increasing community activities and community pride
- Rates should be set to maximize use of the facilities and their value to the community
- A fair rates policy should consider the services available at each facility and the availability of alternative facilities in the community
- As recommended in the Community Halls Solution Team Report, a staff position to coordinate sales and use of halls should be considered

A report was presented to Community Services Committee in ***February 2012*** which outlined the results of a staff review of the utilization of community halls and made a recommendation on the user fees and setting a fair rate policy for the category of user described as “*community groups, minor sports and not-for-profit organizations*”, specifically for non licensed events.

Community Consultations

At the February 2012 meeting a motion to defer the matter pending consultation with the user groups was approved. In response to this direction, the community was engaged using the following methodology:

1. User groups were consulted via community meetings
2. Individual users of halls were provided with a survey
3. A survey was marketed to the community at large to provide additional insight

The results from the community consultations are summarized below and will provide an important perspective on the usage and trends for community halls. In total, 138 surveys were received from the community and four feedback sessions were held for user groups (Dr. Edgar Leclair Community Centre in Azilda; Centennial Arena in Hanmer, Garson Arena and T. M. Davies Community Centre in Lively).

Survey and User Group Feedback Session Results

Survey Results

Results for the surveys are illustrated below. The profile of users suggests that most attended private functions at a hall with community meetings/gatherings as the second most frequent response when respondents were asked what type of event they attended. The majority of respondents also indicated that they would consider using a City owned community hall for an event in the future, and would recommend the rental of a City owned community hall.

Figure 1: # of events attended by respondents by specific halls (Total of Q1 & Q6)

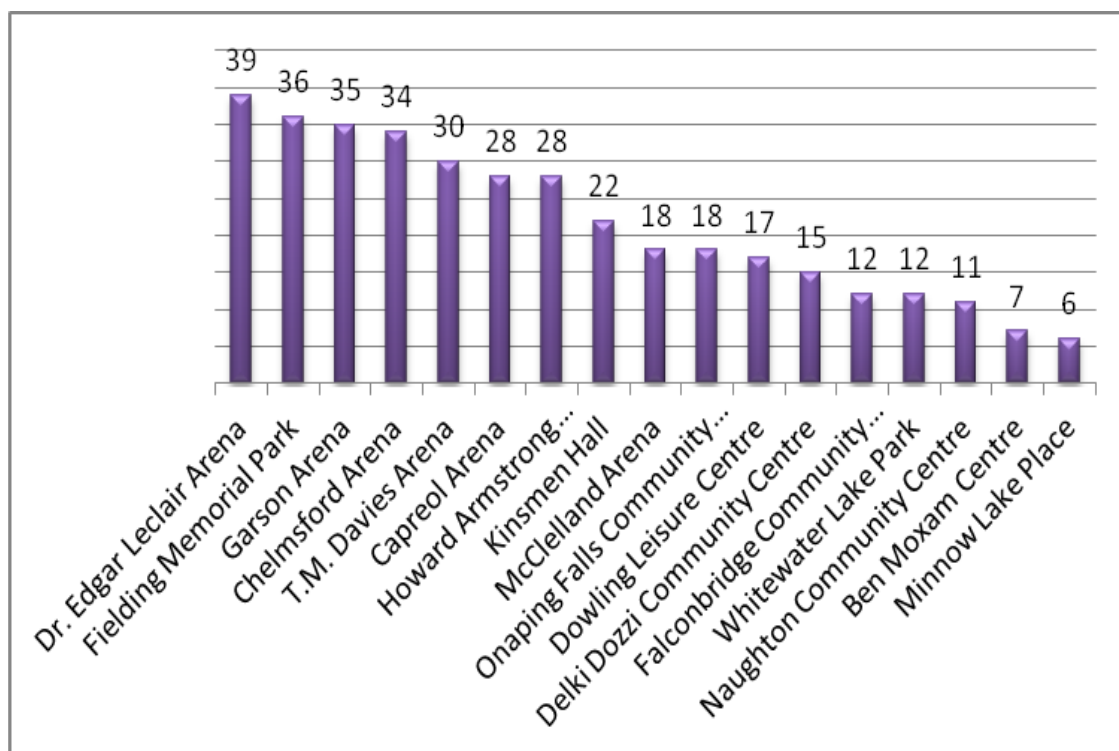


Figure 2: Type of Event (respondents that organized events)

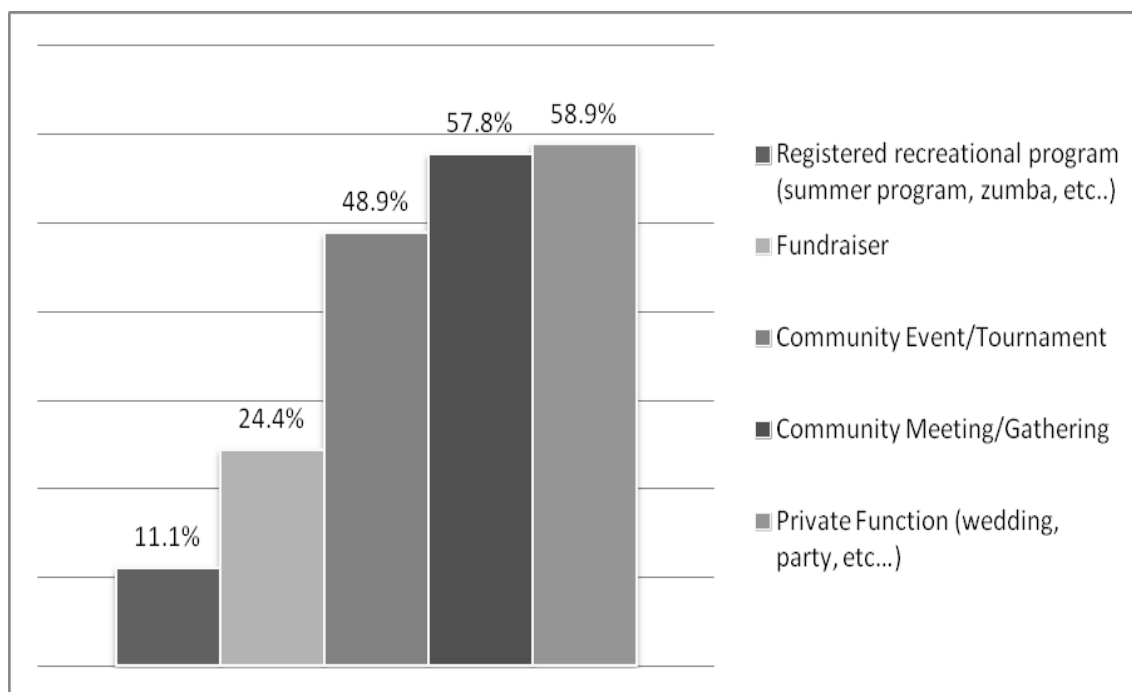
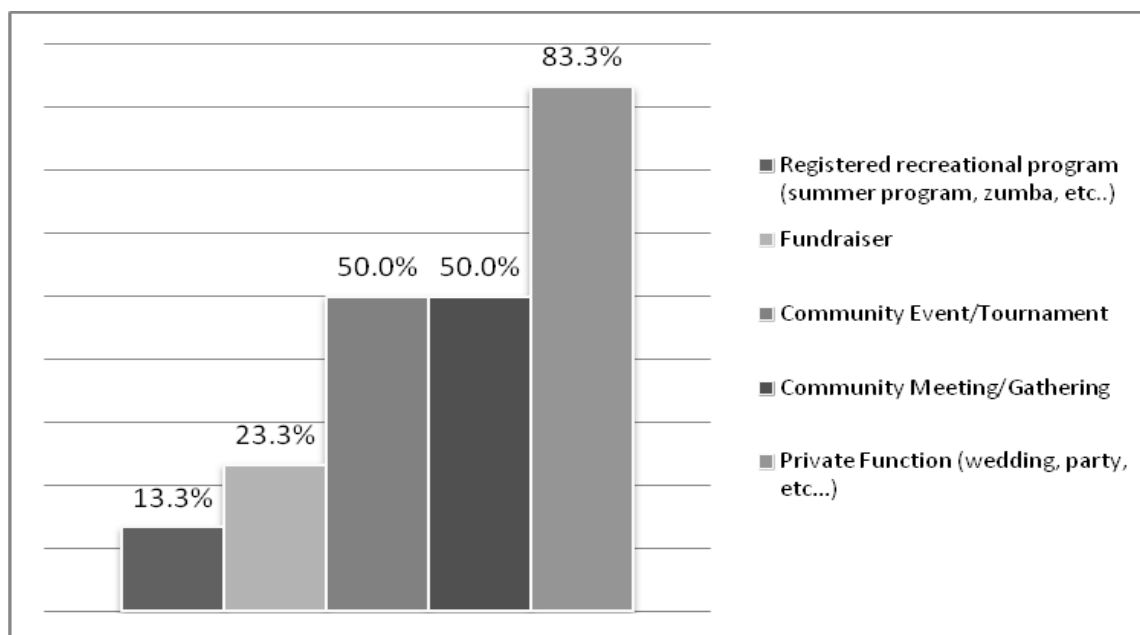


Figure 3: Type of Event (respondents that attended events)



The responses suggest that users that have organized events are, overall, satisfied with the community halls, with the highest satisfaction rating occurring with user's perception that the customer service related to renting halls, and the lowest satisfaction with the catering. The respondents that had attended events rated the cleanliness of the hall at the time of the event as the highest, and the amenities available in the hall as the lowest. Figures 4 and 5 illustrate the results, with a rating scale of 1 to 5, 1 being very satisfied, 5 being very dissatisfied (a low rating = greater satisfaction).

Figure 4: Satisfaction Rating - Respondents that had organized events

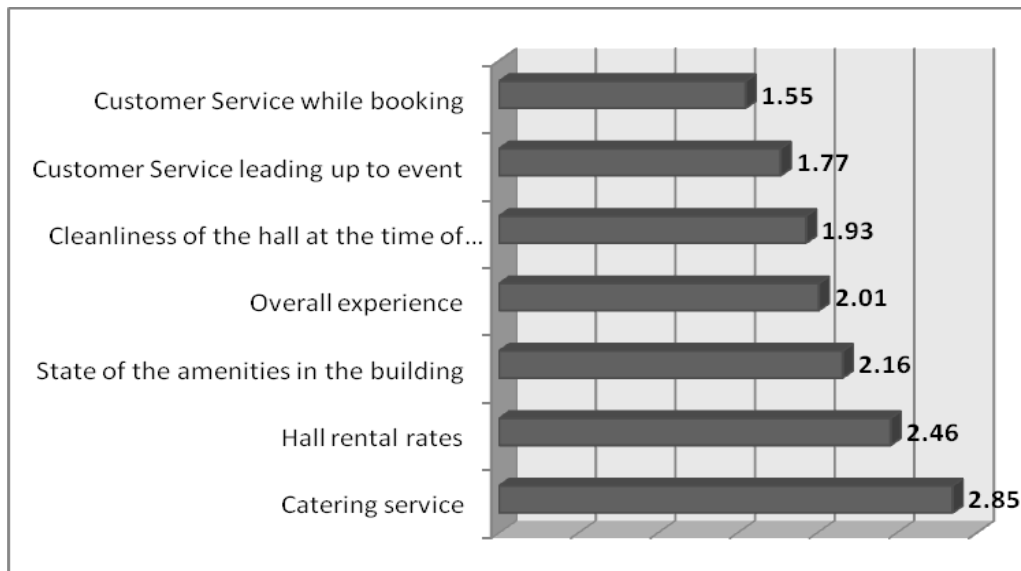
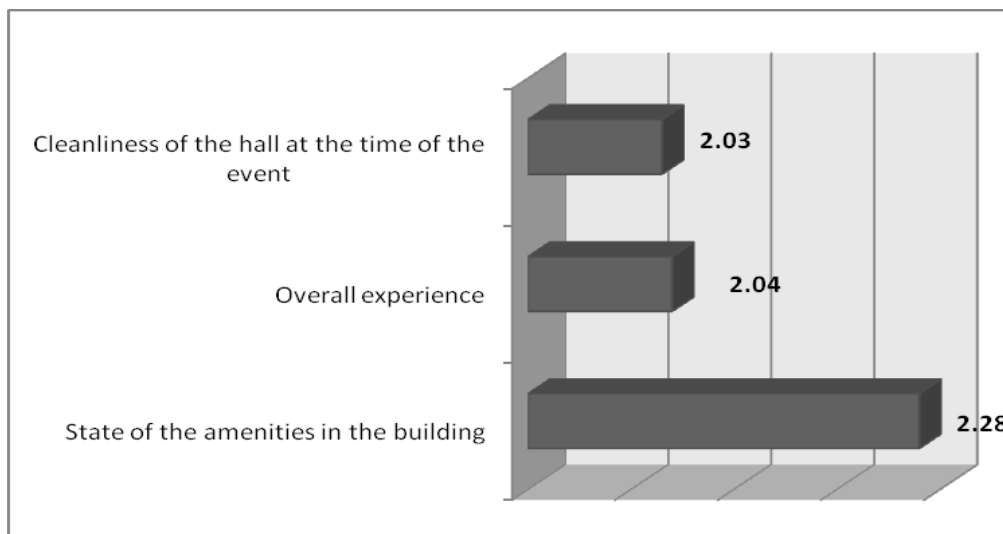


Figure 5: Satisfaction Rating - Respondents that attended events



User Group Consultations and Survey Comments

The comments associated with the surveys and the user group focus groups contained several shared themes. The themes that were most represented in the anecdotal comments from survey respondents and in discussions with user groups were:

- Need for improved marketing and advertising of city owned community halls
- The maintenance and upkeep of the halls, particularly the washrooms
- Lower fees, or no fee, for non-profit user groups
- Staff availability to assist during events
- From the focus groups with associations, it was suggested that an events coordinator that could thoroughly provide and explain details of renting, as well as help with the process, might make users more likely to utilize city owned halls
- Catering and bar options for special events
- New tables and chairs for halls

Usage

The February 2012 report presented a review of the usage of community halls and also some high level analysis of the expenses/revenues associated with the operation of the community halls. That report also provided statistics on the types of uses of the halls, and suggested that the halls are used predominately by non-profit groups (approximately 86% of total hall usage). It was also noted that approximately 80% of the hall usage was without charge.

A detailed illustration of usage is provided in Table 1 below. The data provides the number of usages per year for each hall (2010 – 2012), as well as an average per year. The table has been presented from largest to smallest, in terms of average uses/year. Usage patterns over the past 3 years appear to be consistent across the halls, though there is a large variance in terms of usage across individual facilities.

Note: All usage data is derived from the CLASS facility booking system

Table 1: Community Hall Usage 2010 – 2012

	2010	2011	2012	Avg # of uses/year
Valley East Centre (HARC)	640	814	1032	829
Kinsmen Centre	393	428	487	436
Minnow Lake Place	518	401	179	366
Dr. Edgar Leclair Community Centre	217	166	183	189
TM Davies Community Centre	155	249	137	180
Dowling Leisure Centre	198	120	203	174
Chelmsford Community Centre	163	165	151	160
Delki Dozzi Community Centre	130	157	158	148
Garson Community Centre	102	139	150	130
Naughton Community Centre	130	131	119	127
McClelland Community Centre	165	120	81	122
Fielding Memorial Park	120	101	104	108
Whitewater Lake Park	86	62	24	57
Centennial Community Centre	58	58	54	57
Ben Moxam Centre	48	45	51	48
Capreol Community Centre	33	20	21	25
Onaping Community Centre	22	12	5	13
Falconbridge Community Centre	4	7	5	5
Total Usages	3182	3195	3144	3174

Note: usage includes uses by community groups, leisure/recreation programming

Recommendations

- Marketing – enhanced advertising and marketing plan for community halls to be included in the recent initiative to market City facilities and programs
- Capital investment in community halls - the 2014 capital budget has some funds dedicated to community halls and community centres re: tables and chairs (\$50,000), additional capital funding (future years) for capital renewal (washrooms, flooring etc...)
- As per the report in February 2012, as approximately 80% of hall usage is at no fee to non-profit groups, it is recommended that the user fee bylaw is amended to reflect current practices. In the February 2012 report it was recommended that the by-law be amended for this category of user as follows:
 1. If the user is generating a revenue source during hall use (i.e. admission charge, ticket sales, 50/50 draw etc.) then the established rates in the by-law would be charged. One day rental fees (no alcohol) for non-profit and

community groups range (as per the 2013 Miscellaneous User Fee By-law) from \$69 - \$103 during weekdays and \$69 - \$137 for weekends.

2. If the user is not generating a revenue source during hall use then the charge would be \$0.00 and use of the City facility would be authorized as a grant to each such user
- Develop a community participation policy to allow user groups to assist with set up/clean up, as part of user contract for meetings and small gatherings (i.e. introduce security deposit policy as part of the existing key deposit process)
 - Ensure that arena staff assists in routine arena hall maintenance and clean up, especially during large events, where there is capacity. Parks Services will continue to be responsible for the hall preparation, maintenance and cleaning, along with managing capital improvements
 - As a pilot project, a Request for Proposals (RFP) for individuals or organizations that might be interested in operating the halls on a contract basis, selecting three halls as pilot sites (Capreol, Falconbridge, Onaping Falls)
 - Issue an RFP to establish a list of qualified caterers that would be contracted for catering services at city owned community halls. There are currently exclusive use agreements that have been "grand fathered". The agreement applies to: Centennial Arena Hall, Dr. Edgar Leclair Arena Hall, Chelmsford Arena Hall and the Dowling Leisure Centre
 - The Community Halls Solutions team had identified the need to secure the position of special events / community halls coordinator which will be responsible to manage and assist community groups in the planning , implementation and evaluation of community special events. In addition, the position will be the lead in the marketing , promotion and administration of the community halls. The section will re-organize the leisure administration to create this important position. The re-organization will be accomplished within the existing staff compliment.