

Background

The report entitled Community Halls Review (Appendix A - attached) was deferred at the January 16, 2017 Community Services Committee meeting. Additional information was requested regarding fixed and variable costs associated with community hall bookings and cost recovery for non-profit as well as private bookings.

Community Halls Bookings Report

The Community Halls Bookings Report (Appendix B - attached) provides booking information for the following community halls which were part of the Community Halls working group review in 2014:

- Capreol Community Centre
- Centennial Community Centre
- Chelmsford Community Centre
- Delki Dozzi Community Centre
- Dowling Leisure Centre
- Dr. Edgar Leclair Community Centre
- Falconbridge Community Centre
- Fielding Memorial Park
- Garson Community Centre
- Howard Armstrong Recreation Centre
- Kinsmen Hall
- McClelland Community Centre
- Minnow Lake Place
- Naughton Community Centre
- Onaping Community Centre
- TM Davies Community Centre
- Whitewater Lake Park

Historic booking information has been provided for the period 2013 through 2016. Details regarding the number of internal, non-profit, private and total bookings as well as associated revenue is included.

Community Halls Fixed and Variable Costs

The Community Halls Fixed and Variable Costs document (Appendix C - attached) provides variable costs for community halls located in arena facilities for the period 2013 through 2016. The total variable cost per use is also provided for each of the seven (7) locations. Variable costs for these facilities do not include utilities, as halls are not metered separately.

Providing variable costs for the remaining community hall facilities is more challenging. Costs associated with these facilities forms part of larger cost centres in the City's financial system. For example, Fielding Memorial Park costs include maintenance costs and wages for maintaining the entire park including the community hall.

Furthermore, halls in non-arena facilities have evolved into multi-purpose spaces, used for recreation and leisure programming (Dowling Leisure Centre, Falconbridge Community Centre, Howard Armstrong Recreation Centre, Onaping Community Centre) or by other facility tenants and users (Minnow Lake Place, Kinsmen Hall). Hall rentals at these locations are a bonus, in the sense that associated costs for cleaning and maintaining the halls are accounted for in overall facility budgets.

Parks, Open Space and Leisure Master Plan Action Items

The Parks, Open Space and Leisure Master Plan Review (2014) included the following action items related to community halls:

- seek opportunities to streamline hall operations
- seek ways to improve the flexibility and multi-use nature of existing community halls to facilitate a wider range of activities and age groups
- maintain and/or upgrade halls to the degree possible, with priority placed on high-use facilities
- explore alternate options for under-performing halls, in consultation with the affected community

Recommendations

As part of the January 28, 2014 Community Services Report entitled Community Halls Report Recommendations were provided in the following five (5) areas:

- Marketing of Community Halls
- Capital Investment in Community Halls
- Amended User Fees
- Enhanced Hall Maintenance
- Catering for Municipally Owned Halls

Based on the action items noted in the Parks, Open Space and Leisure Master Plan as well as booking information and variable cost information provided, the following recommendations are provided:

Marketing of Community Halls

It is recommended that the Special Events Officer position in the Leisure Services Division be tasked with the development of cost effective marketing strategies, making use of existing City marketing tools (website, Bell Park Digital Board, etc.).

Capital Investment in Community Halls

The 2014 Community Halls Report noted that there were capital dollars dedicated to community halls. These funds were primarily spent on the replacement of dated tables and chairs. Building Condition Assessments completed call for additional capital improvements in community hall washrooms, flooring improvements, updating lighting fixtures, accessibility improvements and HVAC systems.

It is recommended that a business case be brought forward as part of the 2018 budget process outlining a plan for capital enhancements in community halls over a five (5) year period, based on estimates obtained through Building Condition Assessments. As per the Parks, Open Space and Leisure Master Plan Review (2014) priority will be placed on high-use facilities.

Amended User Fees

As Appendix B – Hall Booking Report 2013-2016 indicates, primary usage of community halls is for internal or non-profit use. In 2016 there were a total of 2749 community hall bookings of which 85% were either categorized as internal or non-profit use. The original January 16, 2017 Community Services Committee report recommended ceasing the existing policy of allowing non-for-profit groups one free usage of a community hall annually due to increased costs associated with cleaning after free uses.

Given the minimal revenue generated by non-profit hall bookings (\$6,148.65 in 2016 and \$7,595.52 in 2015), and recognizing community halls are primarily used for non-profit or internal purposes, it is now recommended that a cleaning deposit fee of \$50 per booking be implemented to ensure facilities are cleaned to a sufficient standard after free usage. Leisure Services will develop a checklist outlining basic cleaning expectations for free usage groups (floors swept, tables and chairs stored, garbage collected). In instances where cleaning has been sufficiently completed following a free usage as per the checklist, the deposit will be returned to the user group. When the user group in question has not completed checklist items and City resources are required to complete necessary cleaning, the deposit will be kept.

Enhanced Hall Maintenance

As per the January 16, 2017 Community Services Committee report it is recommended that arena employees be responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of the seven (7) community hall locations located within arena facilities. Wages and benefits represent approximately 50% of expenditures in arena community halls (48% in 2016, 52% in 2015). Savings can be realized with the use of existing arena section employees to further assist with hall maintenance at these seven sites. Any savings realized will help address the over expenditure that the Community Halls have historically incurred.

This change will also provide an opportunity for arena section employees to assist with annual maintenance items (painting, stripping and waxing of floors, etc.).

Catering for Municipally Owned Halls

It is recommended that a pre-qualification process for catering services at community halls be issued as outlined in the January 16, 2017 Community Services Committee report. This process will ensure that caterers have appropriate insurance and standards when utilizing community halls. As such, a prequalified list of vendors would be available and attained through public process.

Consideration for Alternate Uses of Community Halls

The Parks, Open Space and Leisure Master Plan Review states that alternative options may need to be explored for underperforming halls, in consultation with the affected community. It is recommended that under-utilized facilities be considered as potential

locations for future community hub locations. Based on the historical booking information and other uses of the site, the following halls may be considered for future community hubs:

- Capreol Community Centre
- Chelmsford Community Centre
- Naughton Community Centre

The Capreol Community Centre community hall averaged only 34 bookings per year from 2013-2016. Revenues generated from this community hall have declined since 2013.

While the booking report shows that the Chelmsford Community Centre community hall has had over 120 non-profit bookings in 2016, these bookings are primarily related to a local stitchery club who could continue use under a community hub model. Revenues at the Chelmsford Community Centre community hall have averaged approximately \$1,100 annually since 2013.

The Naughton Community Centre hall is used heavily by community organizations and groups with dedicated space in other areas of the facility, uses which could potentially continue under a community hub model. There has been minimal revenue generated from this hall (less than \$300 annually) since 2013.

Next Steps

If recommendations are approved, the user fee by-law will be amended to include the new deposit fee. Other recommendations will be implemented summer, 2017. A business case will be prepared for the 2018 budget.

References

Parks, Open Space and Leisure Master Plan Review (2014)

[https://www.greatersudbury.ca/sudburyen/assets/File/Leisure%20Master%20Plan%20Review%202014\(1\).pdf](https://www.greatersudbury.ca/sudburyen/assets/File/Leisure%20Master%20Plan%20Review%202014(1).pdf)

Community Halls Report - Recommendation (Community Services Committee, January 28,

2014) <http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&id=714&itemid=8039&lang=en>