



The Corporation of the Town of Parry Sound

## **Council Report and Recommendation**

### **Open Agenda**

#### **Council Meeting Date:**

Tuesday May 19, 2020

#### **Subject:**

Parks & Recreation Facilities, Program & Events: Looking Forward

#### **TOMRMS File Number:**

R00 - Recreation & Culture General

#### **Spokesperson(s) Name and Title:**

April McNamara, Manager of Parks & Recreation

#### **Department:**

Public Works

#### **Purpose of Report:**

To approve the identified course of action for reopening Town parks, recreation facilities, events and programs.

## **Determination for Council:**

### **Resolution 2020 -**

That Council of the Corporation of the Town of Parry Sound align opening dates of parks, events, programs and recreation facilities based on provincial orders and established guidelines and available resources such as Personal Protective Equipment; and

That in the public interest the Bobby Orr Community Centre will not be available to rent for concerts and performances until and including September 7, 2020.

### **Identify Relationship to Strategic Priorities:**

Core Service - yes

Key Stretch Goal or Core Service Improvement Goal - no

New Service, Project or Program - no

Does This Item Relate to Council's Strategic Priorities? Quality of Life

### **Background:**

#### ***Preamble***

The Town of Parry Sound is a longstanding, participating/voting member of Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) and the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association (ORFA). The Manager of Parks and Recreation is currently sitting in on weekly meetings with PRO and ORFA; both organizations are industry experts, developing industry standards and best practices for implementation in municipal Parks and Recreation. Both organizations work with various levels of government on parks, sport and recreation advocacy issues. Both groups, are meeting weekly with the province and are working on new operational standards or a new way of conducting business in municipal Parks & Recreation to ensure our residents feel safe and secure returning to our facilities.

PRO recently surveyed 155 senior municipal recreation contacts on impact and operations related to COVID-19. Respondents were asked to report on current continuity planning related to summer programs, permits and programming. The following highlights were circulated to PRO members on May 1, 2020.

- 87% of respondents intend to operate summer programs depending on lifting of provincial restrictions.

Many respondents indicated that they are awaiting guidance from the government on reopening before finalizing decisions on programs. They will open once the province advises they are able.

## **Current Situation**

Staff have been working on ensuring physical distancing and safety procedures are followed including limiting staff to 1 person per vehicle. Staff continue to review processes and procedures to provide cost containment as overall Municipal revenues are expected to be negatively impacted.

## ***Parks***

### *Parks Maintenance/Management Plan*

There are a total of twenty parks, encompassing 82 acres of diversified parkland including sports and active parks, waterfront parks and parkettes, passive parks, playgrounds, trails, naturalized parks, gardens and flowers. The Parks Management & Maintenance plan was created and implemented as a standard for parks operation.

It is essential to maintain the Town's parkland assets at an operational service level, to ensure the municipality is ready to serve our resident/taxpayer in a safe manner with park/greenspace and associated amenities once the Province allows. Residents will expect to be able to use parks and beaches once the Province allows. To mitigate risk, it is vital to ensure that the Town is prepared to use these spaces as permitted and support the residents post pandemic by allowing for exercise to improve physical and mental wellbeing.

The Parks Maintenance Plan is currently being re-evaluated to reduce costs and to reflect the staffing/human resources available to perform the work in the parks. A high level of the type of changes to reflect the new "minimum standard" may include but will not be limited to the following type of tasks:

- Park & trail garbage pick up 2/week instead of daily in July & August
- A reduction in frequency of turf maintenance
- No seeding, fertilizing & aerating any turf areas
- No washroom service at Kinsmen, no portable privies at Centennial Beach, Yvonne Williams Park or William Street Park. The anticipated new standards for sanitization would strain available resources. In the absence of organized events it is felt that this is a viable alternative.
- No lining Kinsmen Park ball or soccer fields. Staff do not anticipate organized sport to be played this summer at Kinsmen Park.
- Beach(s) dragged every other day
- Playgrounds and park amenities availability will need to be re-evaluated as the Province eases restrictions and allows for the re-opening. There may be a new standard related to disinfection of these amenities.

The value of cost containment is unknown at this time; it is hard to estimate in advance of a new work standard being established.

Kinsmen Park revenue loss: \$9,105

#### *Summer Parks & Recreation Student Labour Complement*

Typically, in a normal year the parks staffing complement would increase May 1st, with the addition of eight (8) summer students. All student hiring is currently on hold.

In order to maintain the parks and other amenities at a minimum standard, to ensure the Town's assets are protected and maintained and to be prepared open parks once the provincial restrictions are lifted, staff are recommending that a minimum of four (4) summer students are hired immediately.

Four (4) Students from May 25 - Labour Day: Approximate \$38,000.

Included in 2020 Budget: \$105,000

Savings: \$67,000

### *Horticultural & Tower Hill Volunteers*

For the past several years, under the guidance and supervision of Master Gardener Anne Bossart, volunteer gardeners have maintained Tower Hill Heritage Gardens. Other Town Park/Community Gardens such as the "Carwash Gazebo" entrance sign and the Stockey Centre grounds (amongst others) are maintained by a separate group of volunteers, the Parry Sound District Horticultural Society - Beautification Committee, under the guidance and direction of Andrea West. Staff are recommending that the volunteer gardeners be permitted to work in town park gardens, provided that they practice physical distancing, limit it to no more than five (5) volunteers working in the park at a time, can provide their own PPE (personal protective equipment) and ensure garden tools are sanitized before they are put away or that the volunteers are responsible for bringing their own garden tools.

### *3rd Party Events in Town Parks*

- Parry Sound Arts & Crafts who is responsible for the Tuesday Summer Market as well as Art in the Park has cancelled their 2020 season.
- Staff have been approached by Anderson's Produce, who are the market managers for the summer markets in Gravenhurst and Bracebridge. The summer markets in Gravenhurst and Bracebridge are operating this summer. Anderson's Produce wish to manage and open the Tuesday Market for food only, following current established provincial guidelines for Farmers Markets. Staff are currently working with the North Bay-Parry Sound District Health Unit and Anderson's Produce to ensure requirements can be met for a modified market this summer. Parry Sound Arts & Crafts are supportive of this endeavour.
- The Saturday Waterfront Market is currently "on-hold". Pending the lifting of restrictions, they would be ready to implement a modified version, based on the North Bay-Parry Sound District Health Unit requirements.

- Rotary RACH cancelled annual 3-Pitch at Kinsmen Park
- All remaining events that have yet to cancel would be evaluated and permitted or not, based on forthcoming Provincial criteria

Park revenue loss: \$900 approximate

### *Bobby Orr Community Centre*

Maintenance standards for the Bobby Orr Community Centre will be amended to reflect the required standard for the facility to open, which may include: disinfection multiple times daily of main touch points; disinfection of rental rooms and equipment between users, disinfection of bathrooms multiple times, handrails, etc.

Meeting Rooms/Hall; permit rentals based on Provincial requirements for gatherings, although the hall will not be available to rent for concerts and performances until and including September 7, 2020. There were seventeen (17) rentals that were cancelled from March - end of June, twelve (12) of which have been re-booking as permitted.

Revenue loss: \$1,255

- Programming: current focus is Mental Health. Staff have been updating the Town's website and social media feeds weekly, with free on-line resources for children, youth, adults, and families to assist in staying positive, active, creative, and healthy at home and in your own back yard. It is recommended that the Town continue with all regular programming once people gathering restrictions are lifted. If there is a gradual ease, staff can work within established parameters to ensure programming is in place whether it is virtual or in person.

All in person, fee-based programming was cancelled from March - end of June.

Revenue loss: \$2,825

- Ice Surface: Premature to decide. Ice surface activities can be revisited in June/July to allow time for the Province & Provincial Sport Organizations (Hockey Canada/Ontario Minor Hockey Association, Skate Canada) to work together to create the new operating standard for on ice activity. The Ontario Minor Hockey Association recently announced no tournaments for 2020/2021 season.

Ice was cancelled with all user groups on March 16.

Revenue loss: \$6,727

There will be potential savings as the ice plants were turned off two (2) weeks early.

Cost savings are unknown at this time.

### *Virtual Canada Day*

As directed by Council, staff have started researching various ideas to implement a virtual Town of Parry Sound Canada Day. This will include the following types of activities, hosted on the Town's website:

- Pre-recorded O'Canada, as played/sung by a group such as, PSHS, Whispering River, PS Singers, GB Winds, Girl Guides, Scouts or Air Cadets.
- Pre-recorded performance by local groups such as, Bounce into Fitness, Georgian Jumper/SOAR, Saltos Gymnastics, Sound Karate Club
- Stockey Centre livestream of performers
- Video presentation of 2019 Town of Parry Sound Canada Day Fireworks display

A resident window decorating contest will also be part of the festivities, with residents and businesses being asked to decorate their home/business windows to celebrate Canada Day.

Proposed budget impact: \$2,500 approximate

Included in 2020 Budget: \$23,305

Projected Savings: \$20,805 approximate

### *Swim Program & Canteen*

The Town of Parry Sound is a registered member of the Lifesaving Society and the Canadian Red Cross, both providing guidelines and best practices for the management of Waubuno Beach and the provision of "Learn to Swim" programming.

Historically, ten (10) qualified Lifeguards/Swim Instructors would have been hired by May to create/implement a summer swim program and lifeguard at Waubuno Beach by

preventing accidents, responding to emergencies, performing various maintenance tasks and acting as Park Ambassadors for the Town of Parry Sound.

Staff recommend that the Town start preparations for opening Waubuno Beach and to provide lifeguard services only (no lessons) at Waubuno Beach following the standards that the Lifesaving Society, Red Cross and Public Health are currently creating.

The public, residents and visitors will have an expectation for guards once restrictions are lifted. Providing lifeguards will ensure residents and visitors are safe and secure, while supporting an outdoor aquatic facility to help facilitate an active, healthy lifestyle.

The canteen at Waubuno Beach is operated and staffed by the Waubuno Beach lifeguards. Staff are recommending if Waubuno Beach is staffed, the Canteen is opened as well.

#### Swim Program

Proposed budget impact: \$40,800 based on 9 weeks/6 staff, 1 week of staff training

Included in 2020 Budget: \$68,580

Projected Savings: \$27,780

#### Canteen

Proposed budget impact: \$2,730 revenue (2019 actual)

Expenses: \$590

Projected Revenues: \$2,140

*Capital Projects & New Initiatives - On Hold*

*Revenue Source*



<b>Mission Park Playground Equipment</b>	<b>\$80,000</b>	<b>Tax/Reserves</b>
<b>Tower Hill Rock Path Restoration</b>	<b>\$10 000</b>	<b>Reserves</b>
<b>BOCC Tables/Chairs</b>	<b>\$33,500</b>	<b>Tax/Reserves</b>
<b>Resurface Kinsmen Park Infields</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>Tax</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$163,500</b>	

**Staff Recommendation:**

That Council of the Corporation of the Town of Parry Sound align opening dates of parks, events, programs and recreation facilities based on provincial orders and established guidelines and available resources such as Personal Protective Equipment.

**Advantages and/or Disadvantages of Staff Recommendation:**

Aligns with other municipal recreation departments across the province.

Ensures the Town is prepared to provide some level of service once provincial restrictions are lifted.

Recreation programs, facilities, events, etc., are needed in times of uncertainty, as recreation promotes and provides for opportunities to increase mental health capacities.

Parks and facilities are assets and need to be maintained at a minimum standard to ensure best risk management practices.

Provides opportunity for valuable Town volunteers to get back to work in some capacity.

Provide a level of safety for users at Waubuno Beach.

## Alternatives:

Do not hire lifeguards for Waubuno Beach. Leave beach unsupervised if restrictions lift.

Do not hire parks student labourers.

Do not permit volunteer gardeners to start working at Tower Hill, Stockey Centre or in other Town Parks.

## Cost/Financial Impact:

Projected revenue loss:

<b>Kinsmen Park Field Fees</b>	<b>\$9,105</b>
<b>3rd Party Events in Parks</b>	<b>\$900</b>
<b>BOCC Room Rentals</b>	<b>\$1,255</b>
<b>Recreation Program Fees</b>	<b>\$2,825</b>
<b>Ice Rentals</b>	<b>\$6,727</b>
<b>Total Projected Loss</b>	<b>\$20,812</b>

Capital Projects On-Hold

<b>Mission Park Playground Equipment</b>	<b>\$80,000</b>
<b>Tower Hill Rock Path Restoration</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>BOCC Tables/Chairs</b>	<b>\$33,500</b>
<b>Resurface Kinsmen Park Infields</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>
<b>Total On-Hold</b>	<b>\$163,500</b>

Project Cost Containment:

<b>Summer Student reduction</b>	<b>\$67,000</b>
<b>Canada Day - new format</b>	<b>\$20, 805</b>
<b>Waubuno Beach - guards only</b>	<b>\$27,780</b>
<b>Total Proposed Savings</b>	<b>\$115,585</b>

Unchanged revenue:

<b>Waubuno Beach Canteen</b>	<b>\$2,140</b>
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**On/hold & cost containment:   \$279,085**

**Projected revenue loss:           \$20,812**

**Included in Current Budget:**

Yes

**Attachments:**

*(Accessible format available upon request)*

**CAO's Comments**

**Recommends Council Approval:**

Yes

**Recommends Council consider staff recommendation with the following comments:**