

Staff Report

Report To: Community Services Committee
Report From: Adam Parsons, Manager of Parks and Open Space
Meeting Date: April 21, 2021
Report Code: CS-21-030
Subject: Harrison Park Pool Operating Agreement and Aquatic Rates

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-21-030 respecting the 2021 operating agreement between the City of Owen Sound and the Owen Sound Family Y.M.C.A and aquatic rates, the Community Services Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Memorandum of Understanding for the 2021 outdoor aquatic season as attached to the report;
2. Direct staff to provide notice of the City's intent to amend the Fees and Charges By-law in accordance with option 2 in table 1; and
3. Direct staff to bring forward a by-law to amend the Fees and Charges By-law to reflect the proposed 2021 aquatic rates as outlined in option 2, table 1 of the report.

Highlights:

- The City and the Family Y have partnered for the operation of the Harrison Park Pool since 2008.
- Due to COVID-19, the Harrison Park Pool did not open in 2020.
- This report details a model for opening the Harrison Park Pool in a safe manner respecting the restrictions in place due to the pandemic.
- A proposed schedule of user fees and projected 2021 revenues.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

- 3. Leverage our City's assets in order to enhance tourism opportunities
- 7. Encourage and promote participation in cultural activities and active lifestyles
- 7.2 continue to facilitate affordable recreation opportunities
- 10. Maximize revenue sources and funding opportunities
- 11. Optimize the City's operations while maintaining or improving quality of life
- 14. Maintain, improve and promote the use of our local parks and trails

Background:

Since 2008, the City has had a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Family Y regarding recreation programs including the aquatics at the Harrison Park Pool. The pool is the only outdoor public pool in the City and is an important complimentary amenity for the Harrison Park Campground. The 2016 Harrison Park Pool Study offered the following insight regarding the value of the pool in the community:

Survey responses indicated:

- 80 per cent of residents and 87 per cent of non-residents responded that recreational swimming was important;
- 81 per cent of residents and 76 per cent of non-residents responded that it was important for their household that Owen Sound has public outdoor swimming;
- 84 per cent of residents and 87 per cent of non-residents reported that an outdoor pool is a necessary feature of the Harrison Park Campground.

Report CS-19-135 Summer Recreation Programs Wrap Up detailed the year end participation and financials for the Harrison Park Pool. The cost of the pool operation in 2019 (excluding building, heat, gas, etc.) was \$13,879 compared to a budget of \$18,367.

Utilities and building maintenance in 2019 cost \$7,682.00.

Participation Numbers – 2018 and 2019

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>
School Groups	0	114
Private Rentals		630
Campground Users	1535	3108
Paid Swimming	2852	5157
Free Swimming	585	1636
Total Swimmers	4,972	10,645

The participation numbers between 2018 and 2019 saw a significant increase in use reflecting the enjoyment people found in the amenity following the refurbishment of the pool and building between the 2018 and 2019 seasons.

In 2020 due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, a decision was made by the City and the Family Y to leave the pool closed for the season. Staff are working to develop a plan under the direction of the Province and guidance from the Grey Bruce Public Health Unit to open and operate the pool in 2021.

The purpose of the report is to:

- a. Review the impact of COVID on operating costs and revenues and review options to ensure the pool can operate close to the 2021 City approved operating budget; and
- b. Review the MoU with the Family Y.

Analysis:

Review the impact of COVID on operating costs and revenues with analysis of options to ensure the pool can operate close to the 2021 City approved operating budget

The 2021 City approved operating budget relating to the cost of delivering outdoor pool programming is \$13,750.

Under the arrangement with the Family Y, the Y operates the pool and provides administrative oversight, training, and guards at a cost of \$41,633. This is offset by revenues which are retained by the City in sponsorship and admission revenue.

It is anticipated that in 2021, due to COVID, that the capacity of the pools will be reduced to address the public health measures required to safely

open. If these restrictions are not in place, the budget will be positively impacted.

Taking into consideration the realities of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and public health restrictions, staff project pool attendance will be 50% of 2019 attendance.

In addition to the challenges presented by COVID-19, operator wages, utilities, and pool chemical costs have increased.

Staff reviewed four rate models for swimming that resulted in a range of costs to deliver open public swimming. The four options are summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Rate	2019/ Option 1	Option 2 *	Option 3	Option 4
Daily Admission	\$5.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.50
Daily Family Pass (up to 5 people)	\$13	\$15	\$16.00	\$17.00
Campground Contribution	\$10,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000
Individual Season Pass	\$70	\$70	\$70	\$70
Family Season Pass	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120
Private Rental (per swimmer)	\$2.32	\$3.50	\$3.50	\$3.50

The goal of the aquatic rates review is to bring the program operating cost in line with the approved budget to operate the pool.

Option 1, status quo, would keep swimming fees the same, and result in a higher cost to deliver outdoor pool programming than the City's approved 2021 operating budget.

Option 2 aligns revenues with the City's approved 2021 operating budget and supports the strategic goal of providing affordable recreation opportunities at City facilities.

Options 3 and 4 would generate greater revenues; Option 2 is recommended by staff and an amendment to the City's Fees and Charges By-law is recommended to implement the fee increase for the 2021 season. In addition to the recommended increase in pool admissions, the increase in costs is also offset by a slight increase in the transfer from the campground to cover the cost of camper swims.

A financial breakdown of the recommended 2021 fees and projected revenue is included as attachment 2. Under this revenue model, staff project \$28,640 in revenue. The Family Y has submitted proposed operating costs of \$41,633. Projected revenue, operating cost, and projected operating cost for each of the three options is shown in table 2:

Table 2

Option	Projected Revenue	Program Operating Budget Cost	Projected Operating Cost
1	\$24,487.00	\$41,633.00	-\$17,146.00
2	\$28,634.00	\$41,633.00	-\$12,999.00
3	\$28,829.00	\$41,633.00	-\$12,804.00
4	\$29,530.00	\$41,633.00	-\$12,103.00

The net cost of the pool with option 2 is projected at a cost of \$12,999.00 which is consistent with the approved budget.

Memorandum of Understanding

A draft 2021 MoU for operating the Harrison Park Pool is included as attachment 3 and includes details with respect to the responsibilities of the City and the Family Y. Schedule A of the draft MoU details historical budget/actual costs, and proposed 2021 operating budget. The proposed 2021 pool operating schedule is included as attachment 4. The hours of swimming, including 'free' swims is equal to 2019.

City and Family Y staff is working together to draft an operating plan for the 2021 outdoor pool season that accounts for current public health restrictions. Building on the successful re-opening of City facilities like Bayshore walking, outdoor amenities like the Good Cheer Ice Rink, and the Family Y successful re-opening of indoor aquatic facilities at the Julie MacArthur Regional Recreation Centre. Pending approval from public health, a safe operating plan will include, but is not limited to:

- Structuring the pool schedule with dedicated 45-minute time blocks;
- No exit/re-entry is permitted during any time block;

- Swimmers may be admitted for a later swim at no additional charge provided their wristband is not compromised, and there is enough room during their desired time block;
- The pool and deck area capacity of 24 swimmers plus lifeguard staff will be permitted within the pool fence during any one-time block;
- COVID-19 screening at the gate using an internet connected device and the City's existing web-based screening platform will be provided and self screening before entry will be required;
- Public health has been consulted on the items listed above; and
- A safety plan for pool operation will be reviewed by public health officials for comment prior to opening the pool.

This MoU structure has served the partnership well historically and covers the responsibility of the City and the Family Y as well as insurance and indemnification.

It is recommended that Committee recommend Council authorize the City Manager to execute the MoU.

Financial Implications:

\$28,634 revenue is projected (\$5,000 in sponsorships, \$11,634 in gate admissions and a \$12,000 contribution from the Harrison Park Campground).

\$41,633 operating cost submitted by the Family Y.

Projected 2021 operating cost of \$12,999 at the Harrison Park Pool which is consistent with the 2021 City approved operating budget.

The 2021 budget for utilities and building maintenance is \$7,478.00 in addition to the costs of delivering pool programming.

Communication Strategy:

This report

Consultation:

Owen Sound Family Y

Grey Bruce Health Unit

Attachments:

1. 2021 Harrison Park Pool Aquatic Rate Options
2. 2021 Recommended Harrison Park Pool Aquatic Rates – Option 2
3. Draft 2021 Memorandum of Understanding
4. Harrison Park Pool 2021 Summer Public Swim Schedule

Recommended by:

Adam Parsons, Manager of Parks and Open Space

Reviewed by:

Kristan Shrider, Senior Manager of Property and Parks

Reviewed and supported by:

Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Adam Parsons, Manager of Parks and Open Space at aparsons@owensound.ca or 519-376-1440 ext. 1221.