



Town of Newmarket
395 Mulock Drive P.O. Box 328,
Newmarket, Ontario, L3Y 4X7

Email: info@newmarket.ca | Website: newmarket.ca | Phone: 905-895-5193

Outdoor Skating Rinks Update Information Report

Report Number: 2018-14

Department(s): Public Works Services

Author(s): Chris Kalimootoo

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In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any member of Council may make a request to the Town Clerk that this Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

Purpose

The purpose of this Report is to update Council on the 2016/2017 pilot project of Community Run Outdoor Rinks and Riverwalk Commons outdoor skating surface. This is an update to Report 2016-32 with respect to costs incurred, logistics, recommended improvements and accomplishments of the pilot projects.

Background

The Town of Newmarket operates one (1) outdoor rink, Riverwalk Commons. The community currently runs three (3) outdoor rinks as pilot projects: Ken Sturgeon Park; Lions Park; and Whipper Watson Parks.

Discussion

Town Run Outdoor Rink

Riverwalk Commons

The Town of Newmarket currently operates one outdoor skating surface at Riverwalk Commons during the winter months. This skating feature was open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. for leisure skating only. The ice surface is designed to operate as an unsupervised space, with staff regularly flooding the ice to maintain good ice quality. It is a widely accessed facility and community feedback indicated that residents of

Newmarket value and appreciate the opportunity to enjoy this space over a wide range of times.

Council approved staff's recommendation that hockey be allowed from 10:00 p.m. to Midnight daily on this ice surface. Appropriate signage was created and displayed that outlined the following key principles:

- Shiny is permitted only during the time periods of 10:00 p.m. to Midnight
- Only sponge pucks or tennis balls are permitted (i.e., no hard pucks)
- Ice is not maintained after 10:00 p.m. and is not supervised, so participants play at their own risk
- Appropriate equipment is encouraged
- Recreation and Culture provides skating cruisers daily between 6pm and 10pm to monitor the users for various infractions as noted on the signage.
- Recreation & Culture has provided recommendations for new signage regarding rules for the 2017/2018 season

Although there were still minor confrontations, staff experienced general compliance with the rules. The Skating Cruiser enforcing the rules right at the beginning of the ice skating season worked very well. The numbers of complaints were fairly low in the season with respect to shiny players starting before the 10:00 p.m. timeframe.

There were incidents of hard pucks hitting the glass doors of the Community Centre, cars and Winter Wonderland displays; however, this was an infrequent occurrence.

Parks staff performed limited cleaning up of left over bottles/cans from the late night users. The cost at this site for additional clean-up was \$750 including staff and equipment.

Community Run Outdoor Rinks

Three (3) rinks (Ken Sturgeon Park, Lions Park, and Whipper Watson Park) ran for the 2016/2017 season. Like the previous season, the weather did not co-operate very well this season and the volunteers and staff saw a significant increase in maintenance to try to save the ice at outdoor rinks due to the warmer winter that occurred. All sites had minimal damage from users jumping fences or ignoring closures due to weather issues.

The volunteer groups again supplied most of the materials, built the rinks, maintained the ice surface, ordered portable washrooms, cleaned up the garbage around the area and took the rinks down.

Staff provided regular garbage pickup/spring clean-up, fall drop-off of materials at Lions Parks and Ken Sturgeon Park, installed signage, provided space for summer storage of material at the temporary Central York Fire Training Centre, provided operating material storage at adjacent washroom buildings, set the outdoor lighting and plowed snow in the parking lots where applicable.

Whipper Billy Watson Park

This site changed the layout of the rink slightly from the previous seasons, which caused minimal turf damage (snow mould). Overall, this site worked very well this past season. However, users who jumped the fence and skated on the ice caused damage to the tarp when the rink was closed. The rink was deconstructed in time for opening of baseball season and there were very little issues with the grass; however, this will need to be assessed every year after field review when the turf is starting. There were minimal costs this year of \$382.50 which included staff to install and remove signs, collect garbage and the electrician to set up the timer for the outdoor lights and to turn the lights on and off for the season.

Ken Sturgeon Park

This project location worked out well with existing ground conditions and the rink was well used. Sod damage (snow mould) is a slight concern in this area as the rink is constructed over the grass; however, it is mainly utilized as a dry pond and general non-programmed use. The installation of a basketball court will reduce the delivery/pickup of materials and ground condition issues from 2017/2018 and on. This site cost \$1,435 for the season which included pick up, delivery, removal and re-delivery of wood and equipment to the site and storage area, garbage pick-up, reimbursement of food for set up/tear down, and partial payment of portable toilet. The Community Group also decommissioned the rink properly and packaged the material for easy disposal and storage.

Lions Park

This site continues to be a popular site due to its location, lighting and size. During the 2016/2017 season the weather did not co-operate and additional flooding of the surface was required. This site did have some challenges due to the size of the tarps, amount of lumber and providing support drop off/pick up. There continues to be further support from Public Works Services Facilities Division due to the attached building and demands such as infrastructure/utilities issues which caused additional facility maintenance costs for staff to attend to. The decommissioning of this rink was also difficult and required staff time because of the way the Community Group left the material. The cost for this site was \$4,160.

Conclusion

The Parks & Property Services Division took the initiative at the start of the season on meeting with the community leaders and filling out the required paperwork to help get the rinks set up smoothly. The budget for the Community Run Rinks was \$6,500, and the staff costs and maintenance costs of the combined program came in at \$6,000. This does not include the tarps purchased (which each rink was given \$500 to assist with the purchase of the tarps, for an additional \$1,500).

For the 2016/2017, no new additional requests were received for other community rinks in Newmarket.

Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages

Well-balanced

- Striving for cultural harmony and ethnic diversity
- Events that help shape identity and contribute to community spirit

Well-equipped & managed

- Small town feel with city amenities
- Clear vision of the future and aligned corporate/business plans

Well-respected

- Being well thought of and valued for our judgment and insight
- Discovering innovative and creative solutions for future well-being
- Being a champion for co-operation and collaboration
- Being tradition-based and forward-looking

Consultation

N/A

Human Resource Considerations

N/A

Budget Impact

The 2017 budget of \$6,500 will be overspent by approximately \$1,000 in staff time, equipment and materials. Please note the costs do not include the water and electricity utilities costs to maintain the service level associated with these rinks. If additional rinks became considered, then an additional \$2,500 per rink would be required for the appropriate budget.

Attachments

None.

Contact

For more information on this report contact Christopher Kalimootoo, ckalimootoo@newmarket.ca or extension 2551.

Approval



Christopher Kalimootoo, Director,
Public Works Services,



Peter Noehammer, Commissioner,
Development & Infrastructure Services