

STAFF REPORT

Department: Community and Recreation

Date: June 4, 2024

Item: Recommendation regarding Field and Pavilion Donation for Annual Mixed Slo-pitch Tournament

Recommendation: Be It Resolved That: The Corporate Services Committee recommend that Council approve the request to donate the pavilion and baseball fields for the annual mixed slo-pitch tournament.

Background: Last year, the local Jays Men's Slo-Pitch team approached the administration regarding the donation of the fields and pavilion for the mixed slo-pitch tournament which takes place annually in August and typically attracts a large number of teams. At that time, it was too close to the date of the tournament to have Council deliberate on this potential donation. Pursuant to donations policies, the CAO/Treasurer approved the donation of the pavilion and advised the team to come see us earlier in the year next year to discuss. The request from the team has been attached to this report and includes a breakdown of the event budget and what any proceeds are used for.

Analysis: This annual event is a major recreational event that has taken place in Espanola for many decades. It is the largest community event during July and August which attracts many from out of Town, but also many residents from Espanola. The preparation and maintenance of the fields, the cost of the porta potties and other miscellaneous items is approximately \$2,000-\$2,500. The field fees including for both the pavilion and the fields would be \$1,365.30. The request is that this fee of \$1,365.30 be waived. In consulting the management team, the positive support to waive the fees was:

1. A donation of this nature is aligned with Goal 4(3) of our Strategic Plan which states that we prioritize finding ways to support volunteer groups and local organizations development local recreation facilities.
2. The donation amount is similar to other donations for facilities we have made, but spans over a three-day period. This donation will round out our external Community and Recreation event support quite well in terms of the demographics we support including a donation of the facility fees at the complex for the annual Pride celebration, the same for the Knight Cruisers



Car and Craft Show, 8 week of facility donation and \$3,000 for the YMCA children and youth Day Camps, and the donation of the arena floor for the Pickle Ball Association Tournament.

3. Last year the bar for the tournament raised over \$8,000 for the Curling Club. In addition, the proceeds from food sales at the Pavilion were also entirely donated to a charitable cause. It is expected that the same is planned for this year.
4. We are planning to host our Makers Market in August at the same time as the tournament in the area so as to maximize the traffic at the event for local vendors.
5. The tournament brings in a lot of traffic for local businesses (restaurants, hotels, grocery stores...etc.).
6. The Team makes a donation to the Minor Baseball Association from the proceeds as outlined in the budget, each year.
7. There is an incredible amount of work that goes into this tournament as outlined in the request and it is all done on a volunteer basis.

Concerns with this donation in discussions amongst management included:

1. There is a small profit on the tournament projected at \$1,337 as outlined in the budget document provided which is utilized to help cover the cost of the team's trip to the Annual Provincial Championships. With the fee waiver, the profit would be \$2,485 according to the budget figures provided.
2. Field fees are already quite low, due to the amount of use, we must staff the weekend which comes at the approximate cost mentioned.

Final Recommendation:

Despite the concerns above, staff recommends the waiver of fees as proceeds of the event helping to assist a local team in attending Provincial Championships is a fair reward for the months of planning and dedication required to pull this event off. Further, there are significant charitable and community event benefits to this event each year that many can enjoy both from Town and from out of Town. Ultimately, the many benefits outweigh the concerns and a waiver aligns best with the strategic direction of the Corporation.

Existing Policy: Charitable Donations Policy, F25-01280

Strategic Goal: Quality of Life



Financial Commitment: \$1,365.30

Budgeted: Yes No

Implementation: Upon Council Recommendation

Prepared By: Joseph Burke

Department Manager: Bailey Bouwmeester

CAO/Clerk: Joseph Burke

Approval of Recommendation: Yes No

Comments: This report was prepared by the CAO/Clerk in the absence of the Manager of Community and Recreation.