



RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER

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STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: November 21, 2023 **REPORT:** 23-117
FROM: RECREATION **FILE:** 3900-20-2417
SUBJECT: PARKS AND RECREATION FEES AND CHARGES BYLAW NO. 2420, 2023 AND
UPDATES TO COUNCIL POLICY I-06: PARKS AND RECREATION FEES AND
CHARGES POLICY

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the General Manager of Community Engagement and Cultural Services be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Council consider giving first, second and third readings to “Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 2420, 2023”; and further,

That Council adopt the amended version of *Council Policy I-06: Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Policy* attached as Appendix A to Administrative Report No. 23-117.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

There are two main purposes of this report, specifically to present:

- An updated version of *Council Policy I-06: Parks and Recreation Fees Policy and Charges* (Policy I-06) for Mayor and Council’s consideration; and
- To introduce a new “Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 2420, 2023” (New Parks Fees Bylaw) for Mayor and Council’s consideration. This bylaw will repeal and replace the existing “Parks & Recreation Fees & Charges Regulation Bylaw No. 1486, 2000” (Existing Parks Fees Bylaw) and includes proposed updated fees for all recreation facilities and includes a new appendix to set fees for Whistler Olympic Plaza Ice Rink (WOPIR).

Information Report

Administrative Report (Decision or Direction)

DISCUSSION

Background

For over 30 years, the Recreation department has operated various recreation facilities and amenities

with activation dates as follows:

- 1984 Lost Lake Nordic Trails (LLNT)
- 1991 Myrtle Philip Community School – Recreation operates community centre portion of building
- 1993 Meadow Park Sports Centre (MPSC) arena
- 1994 MPSC and fitness centre
- 1996 Fitness Centre Expansion (second floor)
- 1996 Whistler Secondary Community School - Recreation operates community centre portion of building
- 1998 Spruce Grove Fieldhouse
- 1999 Spring Creek Community School - Recreation operates community centre portion of building
- 2010 Lost Lake Passivhaus
- 2013 Whistler Olympic Plaza Ice Rink (WOPIR)
- 2020 MPSC Cardio Room expansion and stretching room addition

User, admission and/or pass fees were established for all the above facilities over the years to assist with covering the operating costs and are re-assessed on a regular basis guided by the overarching Policy I-06.

Policy I-06 is intended to provide direction to staff with respect to setting fees and charges for the various programs, services, and facilities administered by the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) Recreation department and the Festival, Events, and Animation department. Through its purpose statement and guiding principles, Policy I-06 seeks to establish fees and charges that encourage community access and participation in programs and activities, while maintaining a reasonable cost recovery rate for the Recreation department. Staff's approach in updating Policy I-06 and establishing a new schedule of fees in the New Parks Fees Bylaw is as follows:

- Maintain access to programs for low-income individuals and families with the Recreation Assistance Program;
- Support community members and regular facility users with value-added pass products, community nights, family rates, and off-peak pass products;
- Formalize and add the fee structure for WOPIR to the New Parks Fees Bylaw;
- Update the day ticket fees for the 2023/24 season for the LLNT (season pass prices remain unchanged) and all fees for the 2024/2025 season;
- Provide flexibility for management to reduce fees during a specific period for marketing purposes or to encourage participation in specific programs;
- Align MPSC venue rental increases with a September 1 renewal date starting in 2024 to better align with the needs of schools and community groups for their budgeting purposes;
- Align MPSC admission and pass fees with a September 1 renewal date starting in 2025;
- Ensure the fee structure addresses inflationary and operational cost pressures for 2024 and

beyond; and

- Maintain our cost recovery approach specifically for Recreation programs and venue rentals.

Analysis

Council Policy I-06: Parks and Recreation Fees Policy and Charges

Staff propose amending Policy I-06 with the following changes to reflect current practices:

- Update the Guiding Principles to reflect the [Official Community Plan](#) (OCP) and the [Recreation and Leisure Master Plan](#) (RLMP);
- Update Section 4.5 with revised position titles;
- Clarify in Section 4.6 that Adult and Senior are the same rate classification at MPSC, WOPIR, LLNT and introduce specific age categories for LLNT;
- Revise Section 4.8 to include that every two years staff will perform a market analysis to ensure the fee structure is reasonable for RMOW level of operations, programs and services;
- Add a new Section 4.9 to provide management with the ability to reduce rates for promotional purposes;
- Add in Section 5 an admission and skate rental rate schedule for WOPIR to formalize the fee structure and better cover our costs of operation;
- Revise in Section 5.2 the MPSC 10/20/30 time and monthly pass price multipliers to provide regular users greater value added products;
- Revise in Section 5.3 the Adult Drop-in Hockey 10-time pass price multiplier to provide regular users a greater value-added product;
- Updates to Section 5.4 to revise the LLNT day ticket and season pass price multiplier to provide regular users a greater value-added product, add a non-refundable and non-transferable clause, remove the Extra Early Bird product, and introduce a Nicklaus North only pass for the LLNT;
- Add in Section 5.5 Refunds and Transfers requirements;
- Updates to Section 5.7 to include SD48, Ecole La Passerelle, Ecole La Vallée, Waldorf, Xet'ólacw and Skatin Community Schools; plus added limitations on the number of sessions per school; and added 50 per cent discounted price for LLNT to all schools during school hours;
- Added to Section 5.8 a 'No extensions clause for 10/20/30 time MPSC passes' (with one time extension);
- Added to Section 5.10 a 'Community Nights' discount for MPSC and LLNT;
- Added to Section 6.5 MPSC and Adult Drop-in Sports specific registration details;
- Deleted Section 6.6 as no longer necessary post pandemic;
- Added to Section 6.7 a Kids on the Go and summer camp cancellation clause;
- Added to Section 6.9 to restrict Swim Lesson registration to one per swim session;
- Update to Section 7.1 terminology;
- Update to Section 7.3.1 to include other offerings (i.e., public swimming and public skating) and distinguishing between Resident Youth and Resident Adult; and
- Update to Section 9 to address health emergency operational requirements.

Staff compared similar type facilities across the province and Alberta that charge admission and pass fees. A summary of the findings and the associated data is shown in Appendix B. At this time, a comparative scan of indoor and outdoor venue rental fees has not been performed.

NOVEMBER 21, 2023

Based on the research conducted, along with careful consideration to ensure that various affordable products and/or service offerings remained accessible to the public; staff recommend continuing with the following offerings:

- Recreation Assistance Program for low-income individuals or households.
- Half price access to MPSC on Tuesday and Friday evenings (6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.).
- Half price access to the LLNT on Monday and Thursday evenings (3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.).
- Early bird (before 8:30 a.m.) and Midday/Midweek (Monday to Friday, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) discounted passes at MPSC.
- MPSC Spring pass promotion: Buy three months and get one free.
- Discounted pass sales for MPSC on National Health and Fitness Day (First Saturday in June).
- Free Grade 5 and 10 annual passes to MPSC for Whistler (resident) students.
- Whistler Experience pass discounts for 6 month and annual MPSC passes. This pass is an exclusive benefit of the Whistler Experience program offered by the Whistler Chamber of Commerce.
- 50 per cent Admission on Family Day at MPSC and LLNT.
- Early Bird rate for LLNT and Dual Area Seasons passes. A dual area pass provides unlimited access to Lost Lake in Whistler, Whistler Olympic Park and Callaghan Country in the Callaghan Valley.
- Group discounts on admissions at MPSC for 25 people or more.
- 50 per cent discount for students at LLNT during school hours.

“Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 2420, 2023”

Regularly scheduled rate increases for Recreation facilities are approved by RMOW Council to ensure rates return an acceptable level of cost recovery. The fees in the Existing Parks Fees Bylaw are set through to the end of 2023. Therefore, staff have been working to prepare the New Parks Fees Bylaw to set the fees and charges for the next two years. These updates and the rationale for the increased fees are described in detail below. After considering the comparative data and seeking to align the fees and charges with the guiding principles established in Policy I-06, a revised fee structure for various activities and locations within the Recreation department are being proposed, which includes the following:

MPSC

- Fee increases for MPSC and facility rentals that come into effect on January 15, 2024 and will be in effect until August 31, 2025 (~20 months).
- Adult drop-in rate at MPSC increase from \$9.25 to \$10.00 and eliminate the underutilized drop-in rate for early bird and midday/midweek as of January 15, 2024.
- Increase the Adult 10/20/30 time passes by \$5.35, \$9.25, and \$12.50 respectively.
- Increase the Adult monthly, 3-month, 6-month, and annual passes by \$6.25, \$11.50, \$17.50, and \$27.25 respectively.
- Combine the discounted early bird and midday/midweek pass products into one pass, providing

customers with greater access at non-peak times.

Lost Lake Nordic Trails (LLNT)

Proposed changes in fees at LLNT are as follows:

- Adult day ticket rates:
 - 2023/2024: increase from \$24.00 to \$26.00
 - 2024/2025: increase to \$27.00
- Adult season passes:
 - 2023/2024: unchanged at \$336.00
 - 2024/2025: increase to \$351.00
- Books of five tickets for adults:
 - 2023/2024: increase from \$108.00 to \$117.00
 - 2024/2025: increase to \$121.50
- Books of 10 tickets for adults:
 - 2023/2024: increase from \$192.00 to \$208.00
 - 2024/2025: increase to \$216.00
- Adult Early Bird Seasons passes:
 - 2023/2024: unchanged at \$268.75
 - 2024/2025: increase to \$283.50
- Elimination of the Extra Early Bird Pass product from the 2024/25 season onwards.
- Further changes were made to fees for other categories of users at LLNT, which are included in Schedule 3 of the New Parks Fees Bylaw.

Whistler Olympic Plaza Ice Rink (WOPIR)

- Set admission rates for the 2023/2024 season as follows:
 - Infants/Toddler (under four years) Free
 - Child (four to 12 years) \$3.00
 - Youth (13 to 18 years) \$4.00
 - Adult/Senior (over 18 years) \$5.00
 - Family (parents with their dependent children or youth) \$12.50
- Set admission rates for the 2024/2025 season as follows:
 - Infants/Toddler (under four years) Free
 - Child (4-12 years) \$3.25
 - Youth (13 to 18 years) \$4.50
 - Adult/Senior (over 18 years) \$5.50
 - Family (parents with their own children or youth) \$13.75
- Set skate rental rate for the 2023/2024 season \$6.00
- Set skate rental rate for the 2024/2025 season \$6.50.

Indoor Facility Rental Rates

- Increasing facility rental rates by three per cent from January 15, 2024, to August 31, 2024. And a further three per cent from September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025
- Removed rooms from the fee schedule that are no longer rented out at Whistler Secondary

School and to match customer categories used by SD48 (from five categories to three).

Outdoor Facility Rental Rates and Non-Exclusive Use Permit (NEUP)

- Increasing facility rental rates by three per cent per year for each of the next two years. Effective January 15, 2024 (Until December 31, 2025).

New Parks & Recreation Fees & Charges Regulation Bylaw No. 2420, 2023

As per the approach mentioned above, a New Parks Fees Bylaw has been created to include updated fee schedules over the next two years (2024-2025) for the following five areas with the corresponding seasons as follows:

- 1) MPSC admission and pass fees: Effective September 1 to August 31 each year (except 2024 which is effective January 15, 2024, to August 31, 2025).
- 2) LLNT pass fees: Effective July 1 to April 30 of the following year (advance sales of passes).
- 3) WOIPR admission and skate rental rates: Effective November 1 to April 30 of the following year.
- 4) Indoor Facility rental rates: Effective September 1 to August 31 each year (except 2024 which is effective January 15, 2024, to August 31, 2024).
- 5) Outdoor Facility Rental and NEUP rates: Effective January 15 to December 31 for 2024 and January 1 to December 31 for 2025.

The New Park Fees Bylaw is being introduced to take effect January 15, 2024, and will include a new comprehensive fees schedule for the next 20 months to two years, except for specific LLNT and WOIPR fees described above which will take effect immediately upon adoption of the New Parks Fees Bylaw. The New Parks Fees Bylaw will also repeal and replace the Existing Parks Fees Bylaw.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Council Authority/Previous Decisions

As previously mentioned, Policy I-06 is the driving policy for most Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges and is included as Appendix A.

2023-2026 Strategic Plan

The 2023-2026 Strategic Plan outlines the high-level direction of the RMOW to help shape community progress during this term of Council. The Strategic Plan contains four priority areas with various associated initiatives that support them. This section identifies how this report links to the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Priorities

- Housing

Expedite the delivery of and longer-term planning for employee housing.

- Climate Action

Mobilize municipal resources toward the implementation of the Big Moves Climate Action Plan

- Community Engagement

Strive to connect locals to each other and to the RMOW.

- Smart Tourism

Preserve and protect Whistler's unique culture, natural assets and infrastructure.

Not Applicable

Aligns with core municipal work that falls outside the strategic priorities but improves, maintains, updates and/or protects existing and essential community infrastructure or programs.

Community Vision and Official Community Plan

The Official Community Plan (OCP) is the RMOW's most important guiding document that sets the community vision and long-term community direction. This section identifies how this report applies to the OCP.

Goal 9.5 of the OCP states the below goal and policies that support the need to raise recreation fees and charges in a considerate manner to be able to continue providing recreation services along with a related objective from the Recreation and Leisure Master Plan

Goal 9.5: Continue to maintain, improve, and provide a diverse variety of high quality and affordable recreation and leisure amenities and experiences.

Policies:

9.5.1.3. Public space is accessible and suitable to a range of ages, abilities, and income levels.

9.5.1.4. Active and passive spaces provide areas to congregate, socialize, recreate, be physically active, and spend time outdoors.

9.5.3.1. Provide a variety of recreation and leisure amenities for the use and enjoyment of the resort community as shown in Schedules E1, E2, E3 and F.

9.5.3.2. Maintain a variety of affordable recreation and leisure opportunities.

9.5.3.3. Continue to provide a broad range of age-appropriate recreation and leisure services.

9.5.3.4. Continue to provide recreation and leisure services and amenities catering to a broad range of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

RLMP Objective:

9.5.5. Provide and manage a system of major parks for resident and visitor use and enjoyment in support of the RLMP.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

It is estimated that the revenue will increase due to the fee increases as well as more people using RMOW facilities. Staff will be monitoring the impact of the fee increases on participation rates and the cost recovery rate given ongoing operating cost pressures and will be back with Council in early summer 2025 to make any adjustments necessary to the fee schedules and request rates for the next two year term. Our conservative estimate is that revenues will increase by the amounts shown in the tables below in each area from this year (2023) or last season (for WOPIR and LLNT). The estimated total revenue increase over a 20 month to two-year period is \$291,943.

Estimated Revenue Increase for 2023/24 & 2024/25 Seasons
 Product

	LLNT Day Tickets	LLNT Season Passes	WOPIR Admissions and Skate Rentals	Total
■ 2023/24 Season	\$11,200.00		\$38,200.00	\$49,400.00
■ 2024/2025 Season	\$6,300.00	\$18,800.00	\$25,700.00	\$50,800.00
■				\$100,200.00

■ 2023/24 Season ■ 2024/2025 Season ■

Estimated Revenue Increase for 2024 - 2025 by Product
 Product

	MPSC Day Tickets and Skate Rentals	MPSC Pass Sales	Indoor Facility Rentals	Outdoor Facility Rentals and NEUP	Total
■ January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024	\$34,500.00	\$61,000.00	\$16,182.00	\$3,450.00	\$115,132.00
■ January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025	* \$23,300.00	* \$41,300.00	* \$8,411.00	\$3,600.00	\$76,611.00
■					\$191,743.00

* For 8 months only

■ January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024 ■ January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025 ■

LÍLWAT NATION & SQUAMISH NATION CONSIDERATIONS

The RMOW is committed to working with the Líl'wat People, known in their language as *L'il'wat7úl* and the Squamish People, known in their language as the *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw* to create an enduring relationship; establish collaborative processes for Crown land planning; achieve mutual objectives; and enable participation in Whistler's resort economy.

As mentioned above, the Policy I-06 amendment includes offering free access during school hours to MPSC by adding both the Skatin Community School and the Xetólacw Community School.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Level of community engagement commitment for this project:

- Inform Consult Involve Collaborate Empower

Comment(s):

NOVEMBER 21, 2023

The Recreation Leisure Advisory Committee (RLAC) has been informed of the above recommended changes at their September and October meetings. RLAC passed the following motion at their September 14, 2023, meeting:

That Recreation Leisure Advisory Committee recommends adopting the amendments to *Council Policy I-06 and Recreation Fees and Charges Bylaw* as presented.

After receiving this resolution, further analysis was done by staff with respect to looking at increasing MPSC pass rates slightly more what was presented to RLAC on September 14, 2023. This still adds value for regular users, but better reflects cost pressures at MPSC. At this meeting, RLAC was also presented with a longer-term fee schedule (i.e., five-year schedule) whereas a shorter-term fee schedule is now being recommended (20 months to two years) so that we can monitor the impact of these changes on participation and our cost recovery rate and adjust as required in early summer 2025.

A communications plan has been developed regarding the associated changes to fees and charges. This plan will be executed over the next few weeks to communicate these changes to the community and key community partners. This will give community members at least one month's notice before the requested fee changes come into effect. The only exception to that is the fees for WOIPR and Day Tickets for LLNT will take effect upon the adoption of the New Parks Fees Bylaw.

REFERENCES

Appendix A – *Council Policy I-06: Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Policy* with changes in highlights

Appendix B – Parks and Recreation fees and charges comparative summary and data

Appendix C – Original *Council Policy I-06: Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Policy*

SUMMARY

Staff is seeking Council's approval of the updated *Council Policy I-06: Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Policy* and the first three readings of the New Park Fees Bylaw to formalize Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges, including comprehensive fee schedules for the next 20 months to two years. The New Parks Fees Bylaw further repeals and replaces the Existing Parks Fees Bylaw.

SIGN-OFFS

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and

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