

TO: GENERAL COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: VOLUNTEER OUTDOOR ICE RINK PROGRAM

WARD: ALL WARDS

PREPARED BY AND
KEY CONTACT: W. FISCHER, B.L.A., O.A.L.A. *Wise*
SUPERVISOR OF PARKS PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT (Ext. 5101)

SUBMITTED BY: J. WESTON, M.A.Sc., P. Eng., PMP *J. Weston*
DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING

D. FRIARY *D. Friary*
DIRECTOR OF ROADS, PARKS & FLEET

GENERAL MANAGER
APPROVAL: B. PARKIN, P. ENG *B. Parkin*
GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT
(Acting)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE
OFFICER APPROVAL: C. LADD *C. Ladd*
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDED MOTION

1. That the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Responsibility Policy, as identified in Appendix "A" of Staff Report ENG012-14, be approved.
2. That the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink New Infrastructure Criteria, as identified in Appendix "B" of Staff Report ENG012-14, be approved.
3. That the Volunteer Ice Rink Program remains as a municipal service delivered free of charge for public enjoyment throughout the winter and without a user fee associated with its implementation.

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

4. The purpose of this report is to: 1) request Council approval of a Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Program Responsibility Policy to clarify the responsibilities of volunteers and the City; 2) establish a list of new infrastructure criteria to formalize the process for evaluating and prioritizing requests for new water services and/or morality lighting for volunteer outdoor ice rinks for consideration through the annual Business Plan process; and, 3) to update Council on the costs associated with the implementation of the current Volunteer Ice Rink Program.
5. There are 47 locations throughout the City that either have a permanent ice rink or have the potential for establishment of an ice rink based on an existing water service, including 5 indoor arenas, 5 City maintained outdoor ice rinks, 23 neighbourhood locations that had a volunteer outdoor ice rink in 2014 and 14 additional locations that have an existing water service to support a volunteer outdoor ice rink. A map of these locations showing the coverage across the City is contained in Appendix "C". Currently, approximately 35% of these volunteer ice rink locations (13 parks) have lighting associated with their use. This lighting is either indirect lighting from adjacent walkways or playground morality lighting or it is direct lighting, such as in the case of Lampman Lane.

6. The Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Program has been in place for over 30 years and is managed by the Roads, Parks and Fleet Department (RPF). The success of the program is based on the dedication of neighbourhood residents who volunteer their time to maintain outdoor ice rinks throughout the winter months. RPF supports the program by building the ice base at the start of each season, clearing snow from the ice after major snowfall events, and providing instructions to volunteers on ice maintenance techniques.
7. A number of factors influence the demand for the volunteer outdoor ice rink program on an annual basis, including variations in annual weather conditions, neighbourhood demographics and the availability of volunteers. For example, over the past four years, the number of volunteer ice rinks has varied from 12 to 27 with an average of 21 per year, as demonstrated in the following table.

Winter Season	Volunteer Ice Rinks (Natural)
2010-2011	27
2011-2012	12
2012-2013	22
2013-2014	23

8. Volunteer outdoor ice rinks are installed on either a flat park turf area or on a hard surface such as a tennis court or basketball court. Typical rink sizes range from approximately 15m x 30m (50 feet x 100 feet) to 45m x 60m (150 feet x 200 feet).
9. Volunteer outdoor ice rink locations require a water service for ice maintenance.
10. Lighting is not required infrastructure for outdoor ice rinks. In some cases, existing general park lighting may be available if it is located adjacent to the outdoor ice rink location.
11. The current process for the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Program involves volunteers submitting an application to the RPF Department on an annual basis. If there is an existing water service in the park, RPF staff review the application and if approved will include the rink in their winter maintenance schedule. RPF staff provide each volunteer contact with a list of tasks to be performed by the volunteers and the list is also posted on the City's website.
12. In 2013, the City introduced the Ping Street initiative, whereby the public can communicate support for a particular suggestion, and the City will review the suggestion once it reaches 500 "hits". In late March 2014, a suggestion for lighting at the Strabane Park Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink location reached 500 "hits". In order to properly evaluate this suggestion through the 2015 Business Plan process, criteria for evaluating requests for new infrastructure for volunteer outdoor ice rinks is required.
13. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan does not address volunteer ice rinks as part of the City future recreational programs but recommends that the City continue to foster relationships with community and neighbourhood groups for the maintenance of outdoor ice and to serve neighbourhood level needs.

ANALYSIS

Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Responsibility Policy

14. In order to clarify the responsibilities of both the volunteers and the City, staff recommend approval of the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Responsibility Policy shown in Appendix "A". If approved, the policy will be posted on the City's website and provided to the neighbourhood volunteer contacts at the start of the season.

15. The City of Barrie maintains General Liability Insurance subject to a One Hundred Thousand Dollar (\$100,000.00) deductible for injuries that may occur on public lands. This coverage will extend to volunteers who have acted within the scope of their responsibilities and have entered into an agreement with the City.

Criteria for Evaluation of Locations With Existing Infrastructure

16. Staff have estimated that current staffing levels in RPF Department base operating budget can support a program with a maximum of 30 volunteer ice rink locations per year. The higher the number of locations, the longer it will take to set all the rinks up at the beginning of the season, clear the rinks after a snow fall, and complete the regular inspection work. With more than 30 locations, it would not be possible to keep up with the snow removal and inspection work, and additional locations would require an additional staff member to carry out the additional work.
17. Therefore, the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Responsibility Policy includes a maximum of 30 locations available for implementation on an annual basis with locations determined on a first come, first served basis and based on the availability of existing infrastructure such as a water service and lighting within the park as well as proximity to adjacent ice rinks.

Criteria for Evaluation of Locations That Require New Infrastructure

18. Last winter, City staff received several mid-season requests from the public for the start-up of volunteer outdoor ice rinks in parks that did not contain any infrastructure to support a volunteer ice rink. Requests were also received for the addition of lighting in parks that had an existing volunteer outdoor ice rink.
19. The cost to add a new water service into an existing park is approximately \$13,000, which includes the cost of a metered yard hydrant to monitor and regulate the amount of water used (this is a regulatory requirement). The cost to add park lighting to an existing park for an outdoor ice rink location is estimated to vary from approximately \$22,500 to \$30,000 for a single LED light pole and fixture. These costs include approximately \$4,500 for the design (approved by PowerStream and for ESA compliance) and a range from \$18,000 to \$25,000 for construction depending on whether there is an existing power supply or not (additional cost for transformer) and the length of underground supply required to service an ice rink location.
20. It is important to note that since approximately 2007, when new parks are built in the City, park construction contracts included a yard hydrant for access to the municipal water supply. More recently, power pedestals have also been added as a standard level of service for new parks for the provision of electrical power for lighting, so there will be no new infrastructure costs for implementing volunteer outdoor ice rinks in these new parks. These requirements for new parks reduce the costs to implement potential volunteer ice rinks.
21. In order to prioritize requests for new infrastructure to establish new volunteer ice rink locations, staff recommends that the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink New Infrastructure Criteria shown in Appendix "B" be approved. The criteria will be used to rank requests for new infrastructure for consideration through the City's annual Business Plan process.
22. If a request for new infrastructure is approved through the City's annual Business Plan, then the infrastructure would be constructed the following summer such that the new rink location would be serviced for the winter following budget approval.
23. Staff recommends that a cut-off date of October 17, 2014 and July 1st for all subsequent years be established for requests for new infrastructure in order to allow sufficient time to review and prioritize the requested locations for consideration in the annual Business Plan process.

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

24. There are no environmental matters associated with this Staff Report.

ALTERNATIVES

25. There are three Alternatives available for consideration by General Committee

Alternative #1 General Committee could choose to not approve the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Responsibility Policy.

This Alternative is not recommended as there is a need to clarify the responsibilities of the volunteers and the City to ensure that the program is implemented for the greatest benefit to the community.

Alternative #2 General Committee could choose to not approve the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink New Infrastructure Criteria for use in prioritizing requests for new infrastructure to support volunteer ice rink locations.

This Alternative is not recommended as there is a need to establish criteria for prioritizing requests for new water services and/or new lighting at existing parks for consideration through the annual Business Plan process.

Alternative #3 General Committee could choose to implement a user fee for the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Program to offset the operating costs to deliver the program of an average of \$2,100 per location per season.

This Alternative is not recommended as the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Program has been delivered free of charge for over 30 years at a very low cost given the volunteer hours that maintain the rinks throughout the season. The program provides a significant value to the community in promoting a healthy, active lifestyle and an opportunity for neighbourhoods to have fun together in the winter months. The value of this program far outweighs the cost.

FINANCIAL

26. The annual operating cost for volunteer outdoor ice rinks is estimated at an average of approximately \$2,100 per location based on a 10-week season, as follows:

- a) **Labour** - Six City staff are required to support the volunteer outdoor ice rink program, including approximately 40 hours per person per week for the 1st week and approximately 15 hours per person per week for the remaining 9 weeks. Therefore, approximately 1,050 hours of staff time are allocated to the program at an approximate staff cost of \$26,250 per season. For an average winter season with 21 volunteer ice rinks, this equates to approximately \$1,250 per location per season.
- b) **Water** - Water service commissioning and water usage over a 10-week season is estimated at \$721 per location per season (based on water use data collected at Shear Park).

- c) **Maintenance Equipment** - The City purchases the equipment used by the volunteers in the program (e.g. water hoses, nozzle and tap connections) and loans it to the volunteers for the duration of the season. Based on typical use, the average replacement cost for damaged or worn equipment is approximately \$1,500 per season, or an average of approximately \$72 per location per season.
 - d) **Lighting** - Where morality lighting exists for use with an outdoor rink, the costs are minimal. For example, a typical LED light on for 6 hours per day for a four month period would cost approximately \$4.50 at today's electrical rates.
27. Based on these estimated operating costs per location, the average total cost of the Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Program for an average 21 rinks is approximately \$44,000 per season. This cost is covered in the base operating cost of the RPF Department. This cost is expected to remain relatively constant as the program continues to be implemented in subsequent years. To accommodate this, the exact level of service on individual rinks will vary from year to year depending on the total number of rinks in a given year.
28. The Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Program is currently provided as a "no fee" service to local residents by the City, and therefore there are no revenues to offset the costs.
29. Staff will evaluate requests for infrastructure upgrades to support volunteer ice rink locations on an annual basis. These requests will be prioritized and brought forward for consideration as part of each annual Business Plan process. The additional costs per site for such improvements could range between \$22,500 to \$30,000 for lighting only or \$35,500 to \$43,000 for lighting and water.

LINKAGE TO 2010 – 2014 COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

30. The recommendations included in this Staff Report supports the following goal identified in the 2010-2014 City Council Strategic Plan:
- Improve and expand Community Involvement and City interactions
31. Promoting the use of outdoor ice rinks and having the efforts completed by local residents, helps to create a sense of community and pride within neighbourhoods during a time of year when outdoor physical activity is generally lower than that of warmer months.

APPENDIX "A"

Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink Responsibility Policy

Volunteer Coordinator Responsibilities:

The Volunteer Coordinator for each Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink location is responsible for the following:

- Complete and sign an annual application form for the specific park to be maintained as soon as possible based on the following criteria:
 - Park locations will be reviewed and approved based on existing availability of water service and electrical service for general use lighting;
 - Acknowledge that submitting an application identifies their role as a City of Barrie volunteer(s) coordinator for the particular park location.
 - That all principal ice rink volunteers and assisting citizen volunteers attend a training session(s) with City staff at the start of each winter season;
 - Provide a list of at least three (3) other citizen volunteer names and telephone numbers of the volunteers who will be assisting with the ongoing maintenance of the ice rink ; and,
 - Abide by procedures developed by the City for the Volunteer Ice Rink Program;
- Allow all members of the community free and unlimited access to the rink.
- Supply their own shovels/scrapers for use in maintenance of the ice rink.
- Maintain the ice surface by scraping and flooding.
- Report maintenance concerns and safety hazards to the RPF Department as soon as possible.
- Immediately "Call 911" to report any serious accidents or medical emergencies. Report these incidents to the RPF Department as soon as possible.
- Return all equipment that was loaned for use in the creation of the ice rink to the RPF Department at the end of the season, in the same condition as received while taking into account normal wear and tear. Equipment may include hose(s) and nozzle(s).
- Maintain the ice rink base at the size established by the City (typical rink size is at 15 metres x 30 metres).

City of Barrie Staff Responsibilities:

Staff in the Roads, Parks and Fleet Department are responsible for the following:

- Build the ice base for the rink at the start of each season.
- Provide ice rink equipment, such as water hoses, nozzle and tap connections, on loan to the Volunteer Coordinator for use throughout the winter season.
- Clear snow from the ice on weekdays (Monday – Friday, except Statutory Holidays), as soon as possible after a snow fall event after other higher priority work has been completed.
- Provide instruction (and a demonstration, if requested) on ice maintenance techniques to the Volunteer Coordinator and other volunteers.
- Provide a garbage barrel and/or litter control, where possible.
- Inspect each location twice weekly.
- During each inspection staff are to complete a Winter Control Log sheet for the maintenance of each ice rink location throughout the season.
- Post a sign indicating that the rink is not maintained by the municipality and is used at one's own risk.

APPENDIX "B"

Volunteer Outdoor Ice Rink New Infrastructure Criteria

The following criteria shall be used to evaluate and prioritize requests for new infrastructure required to allow a volunteer ice rink in an existing park for consideration through the annual Business Plan process:

1. The application must be received before the cut-off date of July 1.
2. Feasibility - The proposed ice rink can be accommodated within the park, provided that:
 - a. The ice rink will not impact other park amenities or adjacent uses, and would be located with a minimum 20 meters offset from the park property line.
 - b. There is an appropriate surface for installation of an ice rink (flat area of concrete/asphalt or grass).
 - c. Ice rink would be a standard size of 15 metres x 30 metres (50 feet x 100 feet) or as otherwise approved by City staff.
 - d. There is no existing municipal water service at a nearby park that could be used for a volunteer outdoor ice rink,
 - e. The lighting request is limited to the supply of a single LED light pole and fixture (typical 15 foot walkway light standard) to provide general illumination of the rink. .
3. Coverage - Park proximity to other volunteer ice rinks is a minimum of 800 meters. The closer the park is to other existing volunteer ice rinks the lower the park ranking.
4. Capital Cost - The projected costs to establish the new ice rink. This could include costs to supply water or hydro servicing for lights. The higher the cost the lower the park ranking.

APPENDIX "C"

City Ice Rink Location Map

