

DATE OF MEETING July 27, 2020
AUTHORED BY LYNN WARK, DIRECTOR OF RECREATION AND CULTURE
SUBJECT RE-OPENING PLAN FOR AQUATICS

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To obtain Council approval for the re-opening plan for Aquatics.

Recommendation

That Council approve the Aquatics re-opening plan that aligns with the City's "COVID-19 Recovery Plan" and complies with the components of the "Planning Framework for Municipal Operations".

BACKGROUND

The City of Nanaimo, Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture closed most of its facilities for programs, rentals and drop-in activities on Monday, March 16 after the Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, cancelled gatherings of more than 50 people as a way to slow down the transmission of COVID-19.

Since that time, most outdoor amenities have reopened, some outdoor programs have resumed, rentals have been accepted for essential services (ie: Blood Donor Clinics), and bookings have resumed for smaller activity centres and outdoor amenities.

In order to reopen the remaining indoor facilities, City staff have been working through very complex and detailed re-opening strategies for each facility that will keep everyone safe and healthy when buildings do open.

DISCUSSION

The re-opening plan for Arenas was presented to Council on July 13, 2020. The re-opening plan for Aquatics was developed with all of the same guiding principles, following the same process, and with the same general assumptions that include the following:

- Community members want, and need, to get back to activities that support their social, physical and mental health and well-being

- In the event of a second wave of COVID 19, a phased approach to re-opening is the most practical so that it is easy to scale back on services offered if required
- Schedule B – Fees and Rental Policy of the Parks, Recreation and Culture Regulation Bylaw No. 7073.06 – will remain in effect

AQUATICS REOPENING PLAN

The reopening plan recommends opening the Nanaimo Aquatic Centre (NAC) for Sept 10. NAC has been recommended over Beban pool as:

- The facility, including all bodies of water, change rooms, weight room, and lobby are all larger and more well-designed to allow for physical distancing
- The facility can accommodate a higher capacity per hour
- The facility, in general, provides greater accessibility for people with mobility issues
- The much larger weight room allows for physical distancing without eliminating as much equipment
- The facility can offer a wider range of programming and, in particular, more activities at the same time
- The facility caters to a more diverse range of facility renters/users and is therefore able to meet more needs in the community
- There is a higher potential for rental revenue and public use at the same time

The reopening plan for Aquatics offers a phased approach as follows:

Phase	Pool	Target Date
1	Open NAC	Ready for September 10
2	Beban	To be determined dependent on demand and/or cost/benefit

The operating schedule for the pool has been modified to ensure physical distancing and maximum group size (less than 50) can be accommodated in all areas (ie: pool/change rooms/weight room/lobby). This means that facility usage will be affected as follows:

NAC	Typical Operation Hours/Week	Modified Operation Hours/Week
Leisure/Therapy	109	30
Length Swimming	102	53
Lessons	64.5	48
Family Swims	109	11.5
Aqua fitness	20	5
Weight Room	109	70
Rentals	As Available	26.25

Saunas, steam rooms, and hot tubs will remain closed.

The reduction in hours available and bather loads/session has substantial financial implications. For the purpose of forecasting the impacts the revised operating schedule assumes that:

- There will be 250 scheduled “drop-in” visits/day; therefore, facility admission revenue is based on 25% of 2019 admissions (typically 1,000 drop-ins/day)
- Other visits (ie: swim lessons, weight room and rentals) are estimated to generate approximately another 200 visits per day, which is about half of the typical visitation
- Program revenue is based on 40% of 2019 actuals
- Rental revenues are based on 50% of 2019 actuals
- Many of the regular rental user groups are requesting equivalent, or more, rental space to accommodate their programs due to reduced participant numbers per session

As per Attachment 1 – Aquatic Operations – Impact of Reopening Plan:

- The modified operating schedule for NAC will be an additional \$490,000 than typical operations for the same time period (Sept. 10 to Dec. 31)
- By keeping Beban Pool closed there will be a \$340,900 savings in operational costs
- This results in a net additional operating cost of \$149,300 to provide aquatic services to the community
- The closure of aquatics facilities and programs is projected to result in an overall savings of \$1,004,900 for 2020

OPTIONS

1. **That Council approves the Re-opening Plan for Aquatics.**

AQUATICS

Advantages of Reopening Aquatics

Disadvantages of Reopening Aquatics

A phased approach can act as a pilot to ensure all protocols, facility retrofits, and operating schedule revisions in place, are successful

Demand for pool time might exceed availability due to less hours available than in a typical situation

Facility is available for multiple user groups that have continued to express interest in using the pool including: multiple swim teams Riptides, (Masters) Ebbtides, Nanaimo Diamonds, Ravensong Water Dancers, and Masters Artistic Synchro Clubs, White Rapids, Special Olympics, VIU Mariners Swim Club, Ravensong Swim Club, and Ladysmith Chemainus Swim Club, rehabilitation clients from CBI, VIHA and other physio providers, Pacific Sport Athletes, the MS Society, Triathlon Club,

Rental revenue may be impacted due to lower capacity of pool which will require renters to pay the same fees for less people in the water

<p>Nanaimo Dive Outfitters, Sink or Swim Scuba, Safer Oceans, and Pro Aviation</p> <p>Pool can provide swim lessons, aquafit classes, length swimming, and family swims</p> <p>Weight room can reopen to the public</p> <p>Beban pool reopening can be planned based on demand</p> <p>Most staff that have been redeployed will be finished in their alternate positions by early September and available to return to Aquatics</p>	<p>Drop in revenue will not be realized as drop in swims will be unavailable and replaced with scheduled visits instead</p>
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2. That Council does not approve the re-opening plan for Aquatics and chooses instead to leave the facilities closed until a later date.

- The advantages of this option include minimizing the risk of having to close again in the event of a second wave of COVID 19 and realizing some cost savings.
- The disadvantages of this option include less provision of recreation services to the public and the potential for public outcry as community members have definitely expressed the desire to resume regular activities in whatever modified way is necessary, as evidenced by the volume of phone calls and emails the Recreation and Culture Department is dealing with on a daily basis.
- Financial implications include cost savings which could help to offset the overall impact of COVID 19 to the City.

3. That Council provide alternate direction to staff,

- The advantages of this option include the ability for staff to go back and explore other ideas as suggested by Council.
- The disadvantages of this option are that there will be a delay in choosing re-opening dates for Aquatics. The public is already frustrated with the lack of any information around re-opening plans as evidenced by the volume of phone calls and emails the Recreation and Department is dealing with on a daily basis.
- Financial implications include continued cost savings as re-opening dates will be delayed.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Re-opening plans are complete for Aquatics.
- The re-opening plans offer revised operating schedules, and modified recreation programming, which will allow the community to get back to some of their regular activities as quickly and as safely as possible.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Financial Implications of re-opening Aquatics
2. Nanaimo Aquatics Centre Site Safety Plan
3. Beban Pool Site Safety Plan

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Concurrence by:

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