

DATE OF MEETING MARCH 17, 2021

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SUBJECT SERAUXMEN STADIUM MAINTENANCE FOR 2021

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To request Council's approval to amend the 2021 Parks Operations budget to include funding for additional facility and field maintenance of Serauxmen Stadium.

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve adding \$59,113 to the 2021 Parks Operations Budget for Parks and Facility Operations to conduct additional facility and field maintenance of Serauxmen Stadium, to be funded from General Revenue.

BACKGROUND

The Serauxmen Stadium officially opened on 1976-JUL-31. For the next four decades, the stadium was operated by the Nanaimo Minor Baseball Association (NMBA) and owned by School District #68 (SD68).

The Stadium was purchased by the City of Nanaimo from SD68 in 2017 as part of a purchase package that also included the purchase of the Rotary Bowl and the jointly funded construction of the Nanaimo District Secondary School (NDSS) Community Field. The City officially took over operations from SD68 on 2018-JAN-01.

Following the purchase of the stadium in 2017, the Serauxmen Stadium Amateur Baseball Association (SSABA) was formed to represent interests from several Nanaimo baseball groups in the operation and maintenance of the stadium. Through a Co-management Agreement with the City, the SSABA operated and maintained the facility from 2018 to 2020.

At the end of 2020, the SSABA informed the City they were no longer in a position to continue with maintenance and operations of the stadium and that it is no longer the Board's focus. This is a combination of capacity of the Board as well as an impact of pandemic restrictions. Revenues generated at the stadium that were utilized for operations by the group would continue to be severely affected through 2021, in turn, affecting their ability to manage the facility. As a result the City officially took over full operations as 2021-JAN-01.

DISCUSSION

The Serauxmen Stadium is a well used facility by many organizations including:

- Nanaimo Minor Baseball Association
- Mid-Island Pirates
- VIU Mariners
- Nanaimo Coal Miners
- Nanaimo NightOwls (West Coast League team 2021)

The 2021 Parks and Facility Operations budget does not currently allow for the additional facility and field maintenance and operation of the Stadium. The provisional 2021 budget presently includes \$38,872 for maintenance at the Stadium, this budget covers staff time to maintain items including the parking lot and the irrigation system and covers utilities and other costs including security and waste collection services.

The additional required facility and field maintenance at the stadium includes:

- Grounds maintenance: grass cutting, maintenance of infield, maintenance of irrigation system, equipment maintenance and associated repairs to these.
- Facility maintenance and repair: a considerable undertaking at this location due to age and condition factors.
- Stadium operations including bookings, custodial services and operation of systems including field lighting and irrigation.

Revenue generated from facility rentals at the stadium is estimated to be \$18,000 in 2021. This estimate factors in an anticipated reduction in bookings due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Provincial Health Orders. In 2019, the Stadium generated \$56,250 in revenues.

Parks and Facility Operations is well placed to provide the above services in 2021 and utilize unbudgeted anticipated revenue to offset some of the associated costs. The additional staff time to maintain the stadium is valued at \$88,486; this covers both grounds maintenance and custodial staff. This cost is in addition to existing fixed costs and contracted services and is offset by the anticipated revenue and the amount already budgeted in the provisional budget, to give a total additional cost of \$59,113 over plan.

Due to the addition of a new major user group in 2021, the West Coast League team Nanaimo NightOwls, Staff anticipates increased use and associated revenues (post-pandemic) even compared to pre-pandemic conditions. The City will work with the NightOwls into the future to consider opportunities to maintain the Stadium in a partnership with them post2021. |

OPTIONS

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve adding \$59,113 to the 2021 Parks Operations Budget for Parks and Facility Operations to conduct additional facility and field maintenance of Serauxmen Stadium, to be funded from General Revenue.
 - The advantages of this option: This option provides for the comprehensive maintenance and operation of the Stadium throughout 2021. This option provides

opportunity for Staff to consider future options for the ongoing maintenance and operation of the Stadium (post-2021) while still providing the required services to allow the facility to remain open and maintain the required facility and grounds standards. The intention is that Staff will present longer term options to Council later in 2021.

City operation is also beneficial during 2021 due to the potential impactful nature of planned capital improvements at the Stadium including the outfield fencing project. Maintaining control over both the Stadium and this project is advantageous to the City for logistical and operational reasons. There are further synergies in this field being maintained by the City since maintenance crews are already in the area maintaining fields including Serauxmen Sports Fields (Third Street fields), NDSS Community Field and the Rotary Bowl field.

- The disadvantages of this option: The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic mean that 2021 is an uncertain time for stadium operation. Expected revenues have been estimated for the purposes of this report and may in fact be lower than anticipated.
 - Financial Implications: \$59,113 of unbudgeted expenditure is required for Parks and Facility Operations to operate and maintain the Stadium in 2021. These costs are comprised of staff time to maintain the grounds and provide facility services including, maintenance, repair and custodial services. This cost is the net increase amount and is inclusive of; existing funds budgeted for Stadium maintenance services (those traditionally provided by the City) and estimated revenues from Stadium bookings in 2021.
2. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council do not approve adding \$59,113 in additional funds to the 2021 Parks Operations Budget and instead require that Parks and Facility Operations to conduct the required additional facility and field maintenance of Serauxmen Stadium by reallocation of existing resources.
- The advantages of this option: This option will not require the allocation of unbudgeted expenditure from general revenue.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Reallocation existing resources would create an associated service level decrease in impacted Parks and Facilities.
 - Financial Implications: \$59,113 of unbudgeted expenditure would not be required to be allocated from General Revenue for this purpose.
3. That the Finance and Audit Committee provide alternative direction.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The co-management agreement under which the Serauxmen Stadium has been maintained and operated since 2018 was dissolved effective 2021-JAN-01.
- The Serauxmen Stadium is a well-used facility and it is important for additional facility and field maintenance to continue in 2021.
- The Department of Parks and Facility Operations is well placed to conduct maintenance and operations of the Stadium in 2021. This would require a budgetary increase of \$59,113.

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