



## **MINUTES**

### **SPECIAL DISTRICT 68 SPORTS FIELD AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

Wednesday, November 6, 2024, 1:06 p.m.  
Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre  
411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC

- Members: Councillor Thorpe, Chair  
Councillor Hemmens  
V. Craig, Director, Electoral Area B, Regional District of Nanaimo (arrived 1:07 p.m.)  
L. Melanson, Director, Electoral Area C, Regional District of Nanaimo  
J. Stanley, Director, Electoral Area A, Regional District of Nanaimo \*  
M. Swain, Mayor, District of Lantzville, Regional District of Nanaimo
- Other: T. Osborne, General Manager, Recreation and Parks, Regional District of Nanaimo
- Staff: R. Harding, General Manager, Community Services/Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
L. Mercer, General Manager, Corporate Services  
C. Davis, A/Director, Facility and Parks Operations  
D. Bailey, A/Manager, Accounting Services  
K. Robertson, Deputy Corporate Officer  
N. Sponaule, Communications Advisor  
J. Vanderhoef, Recording Secretary

#### **1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:**

The Special District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Committee Meeting was called to order at 1:06 p.m.

\* Denotes electronic meeting participation as authorized by "Council Procedure Bylaw 2018 No. 7272"

## **2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

It was moved and seconded that the Agenda be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

Director Craig entered the Boardroom at 1:07 p.m.

## **3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:**

It was moved and seconded that the following Minutes be adopted as circulated:

- Minutes of the Special District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Committee held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on 2021-DEC-15 at 5:00 p.m.
- Minutes of the Special District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Committee held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on 2024-FEB-16, at 1:00 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

## **4. PRESENTATIONS:**

### **a. Update of Terms for Renewal and Timing of District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Services Agreement**

Introduced by Richard Harding, General Manager, Community Services/Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, and Tom Osborne, General Manager, Recreation and Parks Services, Regional District of Nanaimo.

- The current service agreement for the District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Services Agreement (the agreement) will be expiring at the end of 2025
- There have been some changes related to sports fields; however, the primary focus of the agreement review will be on facilities
- Surveys have been conducted to determine the number of facility users who are residents of the City of Nanaimo, the District of Lantzville, or the surrounding Electoral Areas
- Survey data will assess if facilities, or sport fields, meet the threshold of regional users necessary to be added to the agreement
- Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) staff and City staff will meet to update the terms of the agreement and will provide the resulting draft agreement to Council and the Board

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Sports field usage is included in the agreement and there is an assumption that regional residents are using these fields; however, City staff can provide further details based on user group registration
- Third party organizations are required to provide team registration details; however, commercial operators are not required to provide the same user details, and they tend to be one off rental events
- The Extension Sports Field (EA 'C') is currently included in the agreement

b. Verbal Update re: Status of Contributing Agreement Survey

Introduced by Tom Osborne, General Manager, Recreation and Parks Services, Regional District of Nanaimo.

- Thanked City staff for the extensive work done in 2023 to survey and collect user group data
- Results are being applied to the upcoming budget and can be provided to the Committee if needed
- Noted there have been some shifts in usage for the electoral areas but no substantial changes
- The intent of this committee is for members to be aware of what operational costs are being shared

c. Verbal Update re: New and Future Recreation Facilities and Sports Fields

Introduced by Richard Harding, General Manager, Community Services/Deputy Chief Administrative Officer.

Presentation:

1. Richard Harding, General Manager, Community Services/Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:

- Reviewed recent improvements and capital projects completed in the Stadium District

Committee discussion took place regarding the potential to invite the BC Lions to host their training camps in Nanaimo. Staff indicated that they have invited the BC Lions to Nanaimo and hope to have them come visit the facility; however, the BC Lions have recently signed an agreement with Kamloops.

Richard Harding, General Manager, Community Services/Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Two new artificial turf fields have been added at Harewood Centennial Park in the spring of 2023 which brings the total to five artificial turf fields within the service area
- The smaller of the two artificial turf fields has a joint use agreement with the School Board
- The City continues to make improvements to the natural turf fields as well such as adding lights to extend hours of use

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Increasing the parking at Harewood Centennial Park. Staff clarified that additional on street parking is planned on Seventh Street and they are negotiating with the School District to use their parking lots for after school hours
- Operational costs for the new artificial turf fields are expected to decrease compared with the previous natural turf fields
- The previous artificial turf fields at Beban Park are still heavily used (primarily for soccer)

d. South End Community Centre

Introduced by Richard Harding, General Manager, Community Services/Deputy Chief Administrative Officer.

Presentation:

1. Richard Harding, General Manager, Community Services/Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:
  - A South End Community Centre has been a priority for a number of years and has been reaffirmed through the City Plan
  - These types of facilities tend to be regional use
  - Reviewed the potential types of uses on the facility such as: purpose-built daycare, library services, performance space, and/or health care providers
  - Provided estimated draft space allocation options that will be reviewed by Council

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- As the project moves forward Staff will be working with various partners regarding primary health care and daycare
- The South End Community Centre (SECC) would be built in an Urban Node (based on City Plan) and part of that site selection criteria is to do a transit exchange near or on the site
- Staff listed the types of activities that could be supported in the proposed SECC and noted it would be comparable to the Oliver Woods facility focused primarily on indoor use/activities
- Support for additional indoor children's play space
- Staff will be reaching out to the surrounding communities during the design phase for more input on usage
- The relationship between transit development and the SECC and potential impacts on transit if the SECC does not go through
- During the feasibility study, 12 sites were identified for the SECC. Negotiations are ongoing and once finalized an announcement will be coming regarding the proposed location of the SECC
- Building the SECC larger than current needs to accommodate future growth
- Clarification regarding the timeframe for the proposed SECC to be included in the service agreement. It would only be added to the agreement once there is evidence that 10% (or more) of regional residents are using the facility. The agreement itself is reviewed every five years
- The SECC could be popular with Ladysmith residents and options related to charging visiting users
- The Port Theatre is opening space for performance space and there is need for more cultural space in the community
- Potentially amending the agreement to include the SECC as soon as it is constructed

e. Expansion of Civic Merit Awards and Culture Merit Awards Program to Electoral Areas A, B, C, and the District of Lantzville

Introduced by Tom Osborne, General Manager, Recreation and Parks Services, Regional District of Nanaimo.

- The City has an award program in place and the RDN has modeled their award program after it in northern areas
- The City is the centralized operator of recreation, sports fields and cultural areas; therefore, when requests are received from the

community to recognize those performers, or athletes, that live within the City limits they are accepted; however, those that are outside the City limits are not included

- Requested that the Committee consider requesting that Staff review this item and bring forward options for potential expansion of the program

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The merit awards are very popular in the community, and it seems unfair that members of the same team would be treated differently because they live outside the City limits
- Ensuring that an expansion of the program reflects more than the City and potentially being a separate entity
- Potentially rebranding the program and creating a more inclusive name
- Including a cost component in a report to Council

It was moved and seconded that the District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Committee recommend that Council direct City staff to work collaboratively with Regional District of Nanaimo staff to conduct a review of the Civic Merit Awards and Culture Merit Awards Program, and prepare a report, with options, and financial implications, associated with expanding the programs to include contributing members for the Committee's consideration. The motion carried unanimously.

f. Verbal Update on Electoral Area B Parks and Recreation Masterplan

Introduced by Tom Osborne, General Manager, Recreation and Parks Services, Regional District of Nanaimo.

- RDN Staff are undertaking a recreation and parks master plan review on Gabriola Island and Electoral Area B
- Only Gabriola Island residents fund the recreation function; however, part of the plan is a parks management plan which includes other areas of Electoral Area B
- There will be a reporting out on findings in December 2024
- Looking to grow and expand island facilities; however, there are additional challenges associated with these facilities
- Gabriola's sports field is getting overused, and work will soon be underway for a small practice field
- The operational costs for the practice field would be reviewed as part of the service agreement

g. Verbal Update of South Wellington School Community School Conversion

Introduced by Tom Osborne, General Manager, Recreation and Parks Services, Regional District of Nanaimo.

- The School District closed South Wellington School; however, the local community group wanted to see the space made available to the community
- Noted some of the renovations required to transform the space into a community centre and some of the challenges such as parking, and meeting the RDN's green energy net zero policies
- Renovations are being conducted in various stages with the goal to have the facility open and operating in 2025
- Direction from the Board to work with the community group to come up with an operating model for the facility
- RDN recreation coordinators and staff would be based out of this facility
- This facility would not have a gymnasium

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The RDN is in ongoing discussions with the local community group regarding the use of the facility and potential programs
- Clarification that the facility would be intended to serve all age groups; however, the specifics will be determined through the operating agreement

h. Parks Division Q3 2024 Update

Introduced by Tom Osborne, General Manager, Recreation and Parks Services, Regional District of Nanaimo.

- The report attached to the agenda came from the RDN's Park and Open Space Advisory Committees to the Board and lists priorities that relate to recreation and sports fields
- In the Cedar School area, the RDN is working with the local community group to improve the skateboard park and looking to expand the sport court to add a pickleball court. The Stevie Smith Organization has also put in a request to install a bike park in the area
- There are challenges with the Cedar school area being within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and restrictions associated with that zoning

- On Gabriola Island work is being done to upgrade an active skate park in Huxley Community Park as well as a sport court and storage facility
- Noted the Anders and Dorrit's Community Park new interpretive signage which was installed to improve accessibility
- Seeking to expand the Extension School Lands; however, there are a series of roads that were never built, but exist on paper, which are causing set back issues. Working with the School District as their land agent to remove the roads and make improvements

The Committee requested clarification regarding how facilities and sports fields are selected for renovations and improvements.

**5. OTHER BUSINESS:**

The Committee agreed to schedule the next District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Committee meeting in March 2025. The goal will be to provide some budget deliberations during the next meeting.

Committee discussion took place regarding the potential to include First Nations in the expansion of the Civic Merit Awards and Culture Merit Awards Program.

**6. ADJOURNMENT:**

It was moved and seconded at 2:30 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

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CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

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DEPUTY CORPORATE OFFICER