RECOMMENDATION

1. That due to recreation facility and field closures caused by COVID-19, the 2020 usage survey be postponed to 2021.

2. That the Directors for Electoral Areas A, B, C and the District of Lantzville be appointed to the City of Nanaimo / RDN Sports Fields and Recreation Services Committee.

SUMMARY

Since 2000 the Regional District of Nanaimo has shared in the annual operating cost of certain municipal recreation facilities and sports fields through agreements with the City of Nanaimo, District of Lantzville, City of Parksville and the Town of Qualicum Beach. These agreements are attached (Attachment 1, Attachment 2) and expire December 31, 2025.

As per the terms of the two usage agreements, a recreation facility and program usage survey was scheduled to be conducted in 2020. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions put in place by the Provincial Health Officer which caused recreation centres and fields to be closed, the usage survey will now need to be scheduled to be completed in 2021. The survey is meant to apportion annual operating costs of specific recreation facilities that are used by all members of the regional federation.

One of the conditions of the agreement with the City of Nanaimo is for the RDN to have representation on the City of Nanaimo Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission. In 2015, City of Nanaimo Council dissolved the Commission and formed the Parks, Recreation and Wellness Committee. Upon the official dissolution of the Parks, Recreation and Wellness Committee in April 2019, it was determined that an alternative working group or committee would need to be developed to facilitate the Regional District of Nanaimo having an ongoing voice in recreation service provision per the agreement. The City of Nanaimo Council has now created City of Nanaimo / RDN Sports Fields and Recreation Services Agreement Committee of which the Terms of Reference is on Attachment 3.

BACKGROUND

In the southern half of the Regional District, the City of Nanaimo, District of Lantzville and Electoral Areas A, B and C share in the annual operating costs of the City of Nanaimo’s four major recreation sites (Bowen Park, Beban Park Nanaimo Aquatic Centre, Nanaimo Ice Centre), twelve City of Nanaimo sports fields and two Electoral Area sports fields (Area B and
Area C). In the Oceanside area, Electoral Areas E, F, G and H share in the annual operating costs of two City of Parksville sports fields, one Town of Qualicum Beach sports field, and one in Electoral Area E.

The RDN is responsible for conducting a usage survey every five years and tabulating the results. This was last done in 2015 with another scheduled for 2020. Due to significant closures in 2020 of recreation facilities and usage curtailment due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey will not be completed in 2020. Completion of the survey will need to be rescheduled for 2021. Recreation facility and program offering restrictions related to the pandemic that may impact the validity of a 2021 survey will be monitored. Further adjustments to the timing of the survey in 2021 may be required.

The availability of recreational facilities is of benefit to all residents in the region. The current approach of funding these facilities achieves the goal of recognizing that not all areas benefit in quite the same way, particularly with respect to access. A survey captures the ebb and flow of resident usage within the region ensuring that the cost of local government facilities identified in the agreements are reasonably shared by all who use them.

One of the conditions of the agreement with the City of Nanaimo is for the RDN to have representation on the City of Nanaimo Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission. In 2015, City of Nanaimo Council dissolved the Commission, in its place the Parks, Recreation and Wellness Committee was formed. Upon the official dissolution of the Parks, Recreation and Wellness Committee in April 2019, it was determined that an alternative working group or committee would need to be developed to facilitate the Regional District of Nanaimo having an ongoing voice in recreation service provision, in accordance with Section D of the District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Services Agreement. The City of Nanaimo Council has now created this new Committee of which the Terms of Reference is on Attachment 3.

ALTERNATIVE

1. That due to recreation facility and field closures caused by COVID-19, the 2020 usage survey be postponed to 2021.

2. That the Directors for Electoral Areas A, B, C and the District of Lantzville be appointed to the City of Nanaimo / RDN Sports Fields and Recreation Services Committee.

3. That the report be received as information and alternate direction be provided.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The usage survey project is budgeted for in 2020 at a cost of $60,000 in professional services and is shared by all local government partners. The item will be carried forward to the 2021 financial plan. Funds collected in 2020 will carry forward to 2021 as appropriated surplus, and there will be no taxation impact in 2021 resulting from the delay.

In order to obtain statistically valid survey results the RDN retains and oversees professional services to assist in; the completion of onsite surveying at each of the indoor recreation facilities included in the agreements on multiple occasions throughout the year, tabulation and review of residential addresses of participants in organized sporting groups and a review of residential addresses of registered recreation programs such as swim lessons.
STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Growth Management - Provide effective regional land use planning and responsible asset management for both physical infrastructure and natural assets.

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May 26, 2020

Reviewed by:
- J. Bradburne, Director of Finance
- T. Osborne, General Manager, Recreation and Parks
- P. Carlyle, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments:
1. District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Services Agreement 2011
2. District 69 Sports Field Services Agreement 2011
3. City of Nanaimo / RDN Sports Fields and Recreation Services Agreement Committee – Terms of Reference