



REGIONAL
DISTRICT
OF NANAIMO

2010 AND 2015 RECREATION FACILITIES USAGE SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATION

That the 2010 and 2015 Recreation Facilities Usage Summary Staff Report be received for information.

BACKGROUND

At the April 18, 2023, RDN Special Board Meeting, discussion took place regarding amending the *Regional District of Nanaimo District 69 Swimming Pool Service Bylaw 899*.

The following two changes to the Bylaw under consideration at the Special Board Meeting were:

1. To add Electoral Area E to the District 69 Swimming Pool Service joining Electoral Areas F, G, H and the City of Parksville and Town of Qualicum Beach as a participant.
2. To change the tax apportionment funding model from 50% usage / 50% property assessment to 1/3 usage, 1/ 3 property assessment and 1/ 3 population.

From this meeting, a series of resolutions were approved including #23-247 as provided below.

#23-247

1. *That staff provide the Select Committee with the detailed usage survey data, as appropriate, from 2010 and 2015 which would include methodology and standard deviation.*
2. *That staff provide the Select Committee with a variety of cost apportionment models for consideration.*

This report speaks to number one (1) of the above resolution with number two (2) addressed in a separate staff report.

At the December 6, 2022, Regular Board Meeting a staff report was received for information that provided both historical information on the District 68 and District 69 Sports Fields and Recreation Services Agreements and the formulas used in calculating financial contributions of partners. Also provided were the percentages of the assessments within Bylaw #899 (Ravensong Aquatic Centre) and Bylaw #1358 (Oceanside Place). Reliability, validity and methodology of past surveying was also provided and confirmation that the same survey methodology is intended to be used with some further refinements, for the 2023 survey.

As per the Board's April 18, 2023, direction, the detailed usage survey information for 2010 (Attachment 1) and 2015 (Attachment 2) is provided.

Summary of District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Services Agreement

Within District 68 of the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN), 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 centres, eleven City sports fields and two Electoral Area sports fields (Electoral Areas B and C). This shared contribution is outlined within the District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Services Agreement. Shared contribution within this agreement is based on one hundred percent (100%) participant usage.

Summary of District 69 Sport Field Agreement and Cost Sharing of Oceanside Place and Ravensong Aquatic Centre

Within District 69 of the RDN, 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 and one sport field in Electoral Area E. This shared contribution is outlined within the District 69 Sports Field Agreement. Shared contribution within this agreement is based on fifty (50%) usage and fifty (50%) property assessment.

Bylaw #899 (Ravensong Aquatic Centre) and Bylaw #1358 (Oceanside Place) outline the established cost sharing model between District 69 Electoral Areas, the City of Parksville, and the Town of Qualicum Beach related to Oceanside Place and Ravensong Aquatic Centre recreation facilities. The apportionment calculation began in 2014 after RDN Board approval and was phased in over a five-year period to its current level of 50% usage and 50% assessment. Prior to 2014 cost sharing was based solely (100%) on assessment.

Both the District 68 and District 69 service agreements are set to expire December 31, 2025. Bylaw #899 and Bylaw #1358 do not expire and can be amended at any time as per Board direction.

Survey Research Terms

In preparation of this report staff met with the consulting firm RC Strategies (RCS). Partners within RCS have led and completed both the 2010 and 2015 RDN usage surveys and are leading the 2023 usage survey currently underway. Specific to this report and Board direction, RCS was asked to provide comment to "ensure RCS and RDN staff are using survey research terms with accuracy and consistency and this information is correctly provided to the RDN Board." RCS has prepared a response which is summarized below and provided in full as Attachment 3.

Survey Sample: A particular group of people targeted with a list of questions aimed for extracting specific data.

Survey Returns: All surveys returned, regardless of if completed or not.

Net Survey Sample: Survey returns that have been completed and returned. A net survey sample is virtually always a subset of the population being surveyed. Very rarely is the entire population included in the results of a study.

Random Sample: A survey sample where every individual in the population would have an equal opportunity to respond and would be equally likely to respond. A number of variables will affect this such as reading levels and language as well as timing of the random sampling to name a few. Researchers rarely use the term Random Sample as it is very hard to defend that a sample is truly a pure random sample.

Representative Sample: A survey sample to which some testing has been applied by the Pollster and they are confident the sample is close to representative of the entire population on a variety of characteristics.

RCS goes to great lengths to ensure that it can refer to its final survey samples as representative of the entire population, or comment on why and how it may over or under - represent certain subsets of it.

Statistical Reliability: The consistency that survey answers truly reflect the overall survey sample.

Confidence Interval: A statistical calculation of how reliable a sample is deemed to be. The interval is expressed in two parts. A loose “industry standard” level of confidence that is most often sought is to be 95% confident that the results are with plus or minus 5% of perfectly reliable. That means that if a survey was repeated 20 times, in 95% of those times (19 out of 20) the answers would be within 5% of the answers in the initial survey.

Sample Size: Number of net survey returns required to have confidence in the results. The larger the sample the more reliable it is and the higher the confidence in its result to a certain point. Confidence interval tables show the number of net survey returns required to have confidence in the survey responses. The number of survey responses over the numbers shown in these tables will not result in significantly more reliable results.

Validity: Completely separate from reliability. Validity refers to how information is collected. Survey questions that include some inherent bias are not likely to be valid.

Mean: An average survey answer or score.

Median: A survey answer or score that falls in the mid point off all answers or scores.

Standard Deviation: A calculation which illustrates how much variability there is in survey answers and answers the question “do most answers fall close to the mean (a small standard deviation) or are answers spread over a wider range (a larger standard deviation)”.

In the RDN usage studies a respondent either uses a facility or doesn't. There is no continuum of answers, no mean, no median and no standard deviation of answers to calculate.

Summary of Methodology and Reporting of Usage Surveys by RC Strategies

1. The methodology used is sufficiently valid and reliable to be used to apportion net costs of operation for pools, arenas, and sports fields. While no data is perfect, RCS asserts that the information available and its analysis generate results which are more reliable and valid than industry standard levels of confidence. Industry standard level of confidence in survey data is plus or minus 5% nineteen times out of twenty. For the RDN usage surveys, the combination of data sources with different levels of reliability are complicated to combine into a cohesive confidence level. However, the overall result is almost certainly within 2.5% (2010) and 2% (2015) nineteen times out of twenty.
2. If the methodology were repeated consistently, use by area of residency would have to shift by more than 2.5% (2010) and 2% (2015) for it to be reliably picked up (nineteen times out of twenty) by the process.
3. The level of reliability in the RDN usage surveys is improving over time rendering results which are more reliable.
4. There are no reasons to indicate that the survey periods in February and May/June of 2015 were atypical of users or uses during other months of that year. There is also no reason to assume that the year 2015 is atypical of recent years. Therefore, the consultants believe that this methodology, which solicits residency from a large sample of facility users from each pool, is quite valid and reliability represents all drop-in users of each pool with an accuracy of about +/- 4% (2015) nineteen times out of twenty.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications regarding this information report.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

Social Wellbeing - Make the Region a safe and vibrant place for all, with a focus on children and families in programs and planning.

REVIEWED BY:

- T. Osborne, General Manager, Recreation and Parks
- D. Holmes, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

1. Regional District of Nanaimo 2010 Recreation Facility and Field Use Analysis
2. Regional District of Nanaimo 2015 Recreation Facility and Field Use Analysis
3. RC Strategies Usage Survey Research Terms