Minute No. 73
Report - Standing Policy Committee on Public Works - December 9, 2003

Item No. 2 **Proposed 2004 - 2006 Parks and Open Space Division Fees and Charges Policy**
File PR-2.10

On December 10, 2003, the Executive Policy Committee referred the matter to the Chief Administrative Officer with instructions.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On December 10, 2003, the Executive Policy Committee referred the matter to the Chief Administrative Officer to consult with the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres and appropriate user groups, including the Winnipeg Youth Soccer Association Inc., for report back to the January 13, 2004 meeting of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On December 9, 2003, the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works did not concur in the administrative recommendation and submitted the matter to Executive Policy Committee and Council.

Further the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works directed the Administration to consult with representatives of the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres and appropriate user groups with respect to the Proposed 2004 - 2006 Parks and Open Space Division Fees and Charges Policy and report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works and further, that the Executive Policy Committee not approve the proposed fee increases until the public consultation process has been completed.

Winnipeg

Re: PROPOSED 2004 - 2006 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE DIVISION FEES AND CHARGES POLICY

For Submission To: The Standing Policy Committee On Public Works

Original Report Signed by: Director of Public Works

Report Date: November 27, 2003

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the proposed 2004 – 2006 Parks and Open Space Division Fees and Charges Policy be approved for implementation effective January 1, 2004.
2. That the revenue generated from the new youth athletic user field fee be distributed as shown in the financial impact statement.
3. That the appropriate officers of the city do all things necessary to implement the forgoing including the execution of any documents.

Report Summary

KEY ISSUES:

1. The Fees and Charges Policy is due for revision. Item 5.0 of the policy states *That the Fees and Charges Policy for parks and related programs and facilities be reviewed at least once every three years*. The last revision was approved December 13, 2000 for the period 2001 to 2003.

2. The main change to the policy is the establishment of a youth athletic field user fee of $10.00 per booking to provide enhanced athletic field maintenance and to reduce net tax-supported costs by:

    - Increasing gross revenue $270,000 through the new fee
    - Using $132,223 of the new revenue to increase aeration and top dressing of fields (re-establishing a desirable level moving from once every 5 years to once every 2 years)

- Providing an additional $31,555 from new revenue to the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centers (GCWCC) athletic field maintenance program to make up losses to inflation over the last seven years.
- The balance of $106,222 goes to general parks operations.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION:

General Implications

	None
X	For the organization overall and/or for other departments
X	For the community and/or organizations external to the City of Winnipeg
	Involves a multi-year contract

Comment(s):
This policy change generates revenue to allow for enhanced athletic field maintenance and reduced mill rate tax support.
Community Centres and sports associations will need to increase registration fees by about $5.00 to $10.00 per youth for the season to cover athletic field charges.

Policy Implications

	None
X	Yes

Comment:
Establishes a new policy of charging for use of athletic fields by youth sports groups (17 years and under).

Environmental Implications

X	None
	Yes

Comment(s):

Human Resources Implications

	None
X	Yes

Comment:
Additional seasonal staff will be required and some existing seasonal staff will work longer.

Financial Implications

	Within approved current and/or capital budget
X	Current and/or capital budget adjustment required

Comment:
The Parks and Open Space Division budget will have an increase of $270,000 in revenue.

REASON FOR THE REPORT:

Policy 5.0 of the current Parks and Open Space Fees and Charges Policy requires that a review be carried out every three years. Council must approve revisions to the policy and its related fees.

HISTORY:

Parks and Open Space fees and charges were originally adopted by Council on August 18, 1982 as part of the former Parks and Recreation Department Fees and Charges Policy.

The policy was reviewed and approved by Council every two years from 1982 to 1994 and every three years from 1994 to 2001.

In 2001 the Parks and Open Space Fees and Charges Policy was developed to reflect the new organizational structure, that is, parks and open space managed within the Public Works Department separate from recreation in the Community Services Department.

Council approved the current Parks and Open Space Fees and Charges Policy on December 13, 2000.

DISCUSSION:

The Parks and Open Space Fees and Charges Policy was reviewed with consideration to issues and trends in park management. The recommended changes are summarized in the Fees and Charges Review (Appendix A). All changes, excluding the youth athletic field charge, are administrative in nature and reflect current operational procedures. These fees have been part of the Parks and Open Space revenue stream for several years but were not referenced during the last review in 2001 – 2003.

Appendix B recommends wording changes within the Fees and Charges Policy that would more accurately reflect the current Parks and Open Space operation.

In 1994 Council approved the establishment of a user fee for adult athletic fields but rejected a proposed fee for youth bookings.

In 1995 an athletic field sweat equity maintenance program was approved by Standing Committee directing athletic field revenue back into maintenance of neighbourhood fields through the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres.

The establishment of an athletic field fee for youth bookings will aid in improving scheduling and use of fields. This will generate revenue, which can be used to improve field maintenance, and lower the net mill rate supported budget.

Benchmarking

Winnipeg is one of a few municipalities that does not charge a youth athletic field fee. Below is a comparison of prairie cities (GST not included):

	Adult	Youth
Regina	$38.00	$20.90
Calgary	$31.00	$16.50
Edmonton	$26.95	$13.00
Saskatoon	$16.00	$6.00
Winnipeg	$19.10	$10.00 proposed

Impact

There are over 33,000 youth based out of our 72 Community Centers participating in soccer, softball, baseball and football.

Registration fees, charged by community centers in partnership with minor sports associations, range from $45.00 to $105.00 depending on the participant's age. This would cover a season of 15 to 25 games. The introduction of a youth athletic field user fee of $10.00 per booking would increase registration fees around $5.00 to $10.00 per youth per season or about 50 cents per game played. (The $10.00 per booking rate is in keeping with the fees and charges policy, which generally has children's fees at 50% of adult fees)

For comparison purposes indoor soccer registration, which includes indoor field user fees, is $160.00 per child 9 – 17 years of age.

Athletic Field Youth Fee – Revenue Distribution

Projected revenue from the introduction of a youth athletic field fee is $270,000, the following revenue distribution is proposed:

General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres – Athletic Field Sweat Equity Maintenance Program (Increase funding from $700 to $800 per full field)	$31,555
Parks and Open Space athletic field aeration and top dressing (Increase expenditures offset by a portion of the user fee revenue.)	$132,223
General Parks Operation	$106,222
Total revenue	**$270,000.**

Conclusion

Because athletic fields for youth are free, community centers and sport organizations currently book a substantial block of time beyond their actual needs. The introduction of a fee facilitates the development of a more accurate identification of field requirements. (This was the case with adult user groups when a fee was introduced in 1994). The benefit then is the availability of booking slots for use by others.

It is proposed that most of the revenue generated by a youth athletic field user fee be turned back into athletic field maintenance improvements.

The GCWCC athletic field maintenance program has had its per field funding frozen for the last 7 years. In order to make up most of the losses to inflation, it is recommended that the per field funding be increased from $700 to $800 for full field maintenance and from $200 to $250 for assisted maintenance. This would be about a $31,555 increase to the amount granted annually to the GCWCC.

Aeration and top dressing of athletic fields has been reduced dramatically over the last 10 years resulting in compacted and poorer quality fields. This maintenance function would be re-established at a desirable level, once every 2 years instead of once every 5 years, with an increase of $132,223 to the Parks and Open Space budget offset by using a portion of the revenue generated.

Lastly, $106,222 of this new revenue source would go to general parks operations.

Financial Impact

Approval of the Fees and Charges Policy will set the framework for proposed fee increases, which will allow the Corporation to manage its costs within inflation.

Financial Impact Statement

Date: 4th November 2003

Project Name: **First Year of Program** **2004**

PARKS & OPEN SPACE DIVISION FEES AND CHARGES POLICY

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt - External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -				
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -				
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ 163,778	$ 169,178	$ 174,686	$ 180,304	$ 186,035
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	270,000	275,400	280,908	286,526	292,257
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ (106,222)	$ (106,222)	$ (106,222)	$ (106,222)	$ (106,222)
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	-	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ (106,222)	$ (106,222)	$ (106,222)	$ (106,222)	$ (106,222)

Additional Comments: Further amendments to the Fees and Charges have been recommended and are summarized in Appendix A and B. All changes within both Appendices, with the exclusion of the youth athletic field charge, are administrative in nature. The fees outlined in Appendix A have been part of the Parks and Open Space revenue stream for several years but previously have been ommitted in the schedule. Changes in Appendix B reflect wording changes to more accurately reflect the current operation.

"Original signed by Darcy Stewart, CA"
Manager of Finance & Administration

In preparing this report, there was consultation with and concurrence by: N/A

THIS REPORT SUBMITTED BY:

Department: Public Works
Division: Parks and Open Space Division
Prepared By: Don Budinsky, Manager of Parks and Open Space (2675)

APPENDIX B

Fees and Charges Policy
2004 – 2006
Summary of Revisions

14.0 Miscellaneous Equipment Rentals

Policy

That, where possible, the Division will make ~~benches, tables~~, bleachers, ~~vehicles,~~ and~~ trailers~~, band mobiles~~, and other miscellaneous equipment~~ available to community groups and organizations.

NEW ADDITIONS TO POLICY:

17.0 Weed Control

Policy

That a fee be charged to the homeowner for non- compliance of Boulevard By-law (5895/92), this fee would include the re-inspection and administration fee.

That a fee be charged for work performed by Parks staff on private property as result of a violation of the Manitoba Noxious Weeds Act section 27.

Rational:

This fee would be charged to the owner or occupant of land in the event that Parks staff is called upon to maintain a boulevard that abuts or flanks the land that he or she owns or occupies.

This fee would be charged to the owner or occupant of land in the event that Parks staff is called upon to maintain private property as a result of a violation of the Noxious Weeds Act section 27. This confirms the existing practice.

18.0 Donations

Policy

That gifts or donations to enhance parks be accepted at the discretion of the Parks and Open Space Division and tax receipts be issued to donors in keeping with the City's general policy on donations.

Rational:

This is an opportunity for the public and business community to commemorate an event, create a lasting legacy or to donate back to the community. The Division is able to reduce amenity replacement costs and increase revenue generation.