Agenda – Executive Policy Committee – November 18, 2025

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – November 4, 2025

Item No. 3 Annual Fee Waivers Report and Recreation, Leisure and Library Fees and Charges Policy LW-009 Amendment

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On November 4, 2025, the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the following to Council:

1. That the total department fee assistance provided in 2024 (Appendix A) and the list of groups and organizations in this report that received facility rental fee waivers in 2024 that exceeded $5,000 as approved by the Director of Community Services in accordance with the delegated authority under the Community Services Department's Recreation, Leisure, and Library Fees and Charges Policy LW-009, be received as information.

2. That the amendment to the Community Services Department's Recreation, Leisure and Library Fees and Charges Policy No. LW-009, attached to this report as Appendix B, be approved.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all that is necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – November 4, 2025

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On November 4, 2025, the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

COUNCIL DECISION:

On September 26, 2024, Council adopted the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services, which included the following:

3. That the Public Service be directed to report back annually in the Fall and to include the following in the 2025 annual report:

    A. Recommendations to address long-term use of Community Services facilities by groups and organizations that meet the criteria of the Community Services Department Recreation, Leisure and Library Fees and Charges Policy No. LW009.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Annual Fee Waivers Report and Recreation, Leisure and Library Fees and Charges Policy LW-009 Amendment

Critical Path: Standing Policy Committee on Community Services - Executive Policy Committee - Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
J. Sarna, K. Borland	C. Fernandes	T. Graham	J. Dunford

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Services Department reports each year on organizations who receive facility fee waivers. Fee assistance supports people, groups or organizations by removing financial barriers to participate.

The Community Services Department Recreation, Leisure and Library Fees and Charges Policy No. LW-009 (the "Policy") requires the Department to include in the report:

- A list of groups or organizations that received fee waivers valued at over $5,000.00; and
- All fee assistance provided during the past year.

Fee assistance is considered through an application process. The Policy speaks to eligibility criteria. The Director of Community Services has authority to waive or reduce fees including:

- Equipment rentals;
- Facility rentals;
- Program fees; and/or
- Public admission fees.

People and non-profit organizations, public schools, and government departments must meet criteria objectives to qualify for the program.

The Community Services Department approved a total of $2,321,833 in fee assistance in 2024.

The total department fee subsidies in 2024 include:

1. Recreation ($2,310,097) for registered programming, memberships, equipment rentals, and facility waivers;
2. Libraries ($11,736) for facility waivers.

The 2023 Policy update did not permit an organization to apply for fee subsidies beyond one year. A recommended policy amendment will support these organizations after one year. Fee assistance is subject to funds being available in a Council-approved budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services receive as information the total department fee assistance provided in 2024 (Appendix A) and the list of groups and organizations in this report that received facility rental fee waivers in 2024 that exceeded $5,000 as approved by the Director of Community Services in accordance with the delegated authority under the Community Services Department's Recreation, Leisure, and Library Fees and Charges Policy LW-009.

2. That the amendment to the Community Services Department's Recreation, Leisure and Library Fees and Charges Policy No. LW-009, attached to this report as Appendix B, be approved.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all that is necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

Section 5.4.B of the Community Services Department Recreation, Leisure and Library Fees and Charges Policy No. LW-009, requires the Community Services Department to report annually to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services with a list of groups or organizations in receipt of fee waivers, including the amount of fees waived, for the previous year where the value of the waiver exceeds $5,000 and a total for all fee subsidies provided.

In addition, on September 26, 2024, Council directed the Public Service to include in the 2025 annual report recommendations to address long-term use of Community Services facilities by groups and organizations that meet the criteria of the Policy.

Council approval is required to amend Council policies.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no direct financial or other implications resulting from the recommendations of this report. The values of fee assistance provided to individuals, groups and organizations are subject to limits established in the Department's annual operating budget.

Where fee subsidies are provided, revenue is offset by an amount equal to the revenue for the service provided based on the applicable fees and charges. Potential loss to revenue from the provision of fee assistance is estimated to be minimal as the facility would likely not be used by the individual or organization or would not attend the recreation program if the fee assistance was not provided.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

On October 24, 2007, Council approved the establishment of a Community Services Department Fees and Charges Policy (the Policy) to provide the framework and principles for the setting and administration of fees and charges for applicable recreation, leisure and library services, including criteria for fee assistance. While Library Service provides facility rental fee

waivers, it is the Recreation fee subsidies and waivers that are the majority of the waivers to citizens of Winnipeg because most of the library service is free.

Recreation fee subsidies target low-income families and individuals that are residents of Winnipeg to provide equitable access to recreation/aquatics facilities and programs. Facility admission and/or program fees are either waived or reduced. Eligibility is based on Statistics Canada Low Income Cut-Off guidelines and applicants are required to provide verification (i.e., social assistance case number, refugee assistance case number, Canada Revenue Agency Notice of Assessment, or statement of income from CPP Disability). The Recreation Fee Assistance Program is explained on page 5 of the Fall 2024 Winter 2025 Leisure Guide.

On April 27, 2023, Council approved an update to the Policy and adopted the Community Services Department Recreation, Leisure and Library Fees and Charges Policy No. LW-009 (the "Policy"). The Policy continues to provide criteria for fee assistance with two significant changes from the 2007 Policy:

- The Department is to report annually to the Standing Policy Committee - Community Services with a list of groups or organizations in receipt of fee waivers, including the amount of fees waived, for the previous year where the value of the waiver exceeds $5,000 and a total for all fee subsidies provided.
- The Director of Community Services is provided with authority to waive or reduce fees to non-profit groups or organizations and public schools that provide services that align with and support Council-adopted plans, policies, and strategies. However, as currently written, this authority is only available where the organization's use of a department's facility or equipment is for a period of less than one year.

On February 22, 2024, Council approved an amendment to the Policy with key changes which include:

- All non-resident fees for recreation and library services reflect a surcharge of an additional 100 percent of the resident fee.
- A Policy amendment to include government agencies in the list of organizations that the Director of Community Services can waive or reduce fees if the services of the agency and the request for fee reduction meet all the criteria of the Policy.

These updates to the Policy were intended to increase the transparency regarding fee assistance provided by the Department through an annual report, and to ensure Council supports continued fee subsidies and waivers to groups and organizations that wish to access Community Services facilities to deliver their programs and services.

This report marks the second annual report under this policy. The first report was adopted by Council September 26, 2024. Recommendations approved by Council included extending authority delegated to the Director of Community Services to approve fee rental waivers to groups or organizations that meet Policy criteria, beyond the period of one year, throughout 2024 and 2025. In 2024, Council directed the Public Service to report back with recommendations through this report to address long-term use of Community Services facilities by groups and organizations that meet the criteria of the Policy.

In addition to this report, select information regarding fee assistance is shared publicly in the City's annual budget documents under the Recreation Service. The 2025 Adopted Budget

includes the number of registered recreation course subsidies and fitness membership subsidies. The 2025 Department budget for fee assistance is $2,545,000. As of August 31, 2025, $1,912,218 has been recorded in the City's financials, or 75 percent of the approved fee assistance budget.

Subject to the limits established in the Department's annual operating budget, which was $2,423,000 in 2024 ($2,545,000 in 2025), authority is delegated to the Director of Community Services to waive or reduce fees to provide fee subsidies for recreation and leisure programs, public admissions and facility and equipment rentals to:

- Residents of Winnipeg who demonstrate a financial need to remove barriers to access recreation and leisure programs and public admissions offered by the Department.
- Recently-arrived refugees (meaning within their first five years of arriving in Canada, aligning with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's period of settlement support) and where the definition of refugee per the Newcomer Welcome and Inclusion Policy and Strategic Framework is "a person who has fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and has crossed an international border to find safety in another country."
- Individuals temporarily relocated to Winnipeg due to the evacuation from their home community due to natural disasters (such as fires and floods). In such circumstances, the Director shall seek compensation from disaster assistance programs where available for subsidies offered.
- Non-profit groups or organizations and public schools where the fee subsidy is necessary to remove barriers to participation by at-risk, special needs, or low-income individuals, equity groups, vulnerable or marginalized populations.
- Fee subsidies for facility or equipment rentals may only be provided where the facility or equipment is used for recreational, healthy living, cultural, library, educational, food security, or reconciliation-focused activity.

2024 Fee Subsidy:

In 2024, the Department provided fee waivers and subsidies to individuals, groups and organizations for departmental recreation, leisure, and library facility rental, equipment rental, program, and public admission fees, valued at a total of $2,321,833:

2024 Fee Subsidy	
Recreation:	
Leisure Guide programming subsidy	**$ 399,128**
Equipment rental waivers	**$ 4,161**
Facility fee waivers	**$ 847,239**
Facility memberships (10-visit rechargeable passes)	**$1,059,568**
Library:	
Facility fee waivers	**$ 11,736**
Total fee waivers and subsidies	**$2,321,833**

These subsidies and waivers were approved by the Director of Community Services in accordance with the criteria established in the Council approved Community Services Department Recreation, Leisure and Library Fees and Charges Policy No. LW-009. See Appendix A for further details.

Annual list of subsidies and waivers provided to groups and organizations greater than $5,000.00:

A total of $808,278 in Recreation facility waivers that exceeded $5,000 was provided to groups or organizations. There were no waivers greater than $5,000 for Library Services.

	Organization	2024 Rental Value	
1	Kaakiyow Li Moond Likol Adult Learning Centre Winnipeg School Division	$	190,583
2	Healthy Start for Mom and Me	$	97,770
3	Golden Rules Seniors	$	71,094
4	Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata	$	56,169
5	Seven Oaks School Division	$	54, 901
6	Eagles Nest	$	51,837
7	SOURCE Program	$	43,258
8	St James Assiniboia School Division	$	35,601
9	Harvest Manitoba	$	33,448
10	Ka Ni Kanchihk (Medicine Bear and Umatter/Strong Women's Programs)	$	23,933
11	Lord Selkirk Park Resource Center	$	17,726
12	Community Education Development Association (CEDA) - Pathways to Education	$	14,906
13	Winnipeg Lawn Bowlers Club	$	14,556
14	3 Royals Pipe and Drum	$	14,218
15	Women's Health Clinic	$	14,047
16	New Directions	$	11,471
17	Graffiti Arts	$	11,201
18	553 Royal Canadian Army Cadets Corp (RCACC)	$	9,580
19	St John's High School	$	8,867
20	Division Scolaire Franco-Manitobaine - Adaptive Group	$	7,356
21	Equal Opportunities West	$	7,242
22	Fearless R2W	$	6,539
23	Grant Park High School	$	6,145
24	Speed Skating Manitoba	$	5,830
Recreation facility fee waivers (greater than $5,000)		$	808,278
Recreation facility waivers (less than $5,000)		$	38,961
Total: Recreation facility fee waivers		$	847,239
Total: Library facility fee waivers		$	11,736
Total CMS 2024 Facility Fee Waivers (Recreation and Library)		**$**	**858,975**

Policy Amendment

Prior to the 2023 Policy update, the Director of Community Services could approve a fee subsidy or waiver for any length of time to a group or organization that met the criteria of the Policy. Many groups and organizations have received subsidies or waivers for years to deliver their community-based services in Community Services facilities. The intent of the 2023 Policy update was to provide transparency relative to the Department's fee waivers and approve longer term facility use by such organizations. However, the language in the update unintentionally limited organizations' ability to apply for and receive fee subsidies or waivers each year.

The proposed policy amendment clarifies that subsidies are subject to the Department's annual budget and will remain subject to approval on an annual basis but will remove the restriction on organizations from being approved for a subsidy in more than one year.

This change will allow Community Services to continue to determine how to best provide ongoing support to these organizations while also providing certainty that these organizations will have available facilities to deliver their services.

Financial Impact Statement Date: October 3, 2025

Project Name:
Annual Fee Waivers – Recreation, Leisure and Library Fees and Charges Policy LW-009

COMMENTS:

There are no direct financial or other implications resulting from the recommendations of this report.

The value of fee subsidies provided to individuals and/or organizations is in accordance with the Community Services Department Fees and Charges Policy, which are subject to limits established in the Department's annual operating budget.

Ozzy Garrett, CPA - Oct 3/2025

Ozzy Garrett, CPA
Manager of Finance
Community Services Department

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

- Legal Services

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

Goal 1 - Leadership & Good Governance
1.7 Equitable Service Access
1.15 Community Capacity Development

Goal 3 - Economic Prosperity
3.12 - Poverty Reductions
3.16 - Optimize Facility Access
3.19 – Community Capacity Development

Goal 4 - Good Health and Well-Being
4.11 Equitable Service Access

Goal 5 - Social Equity
5.1 Equitable Service Access

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Consideration was given as to whether this report connects to the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan (CAP), and it was determined that the CAP is not applicable to this specific report.

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

Goal 6: All City Services are Equitable, Inclusive and Accessible

10-year Objectives: A. Residents have equitable access to City services, in particular demographic groups who experience marginalization C. Use of City tools and resources are maximized to reduce systemic equities.

Action 6.4 City Managed Facilities - Community Group Use of Space: Identify and communicate a transparent process for how community groups can access and use City facilities, with particular emphasis on removing red-tape and expediting access for community groups serving low-income and marginalized populations. This shall include on-line and accessible information and clear pathways for how to access low-cost leases (subject to property availability), rental fee waivers, and access to City facilities, particularly those in areas of higher poverty.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Community Services
Division: Recreation Services
Prepared by: Jennifer Sarna
Date: October 3, 2025
File No: CMS-2025-01

Attachments:

Appendix A - Fee Assistance Program - Budget Analysis

Appendix B – Proposed Amendments to Community Services Department Recreation, Leisure and Library Fees and Charges Policy No. LW-009