

Township of South Frontenac

Staff Report



To: Recreation & Leisure Services Advisory Committee

From: Director, Public Services

Date of Meeting: Thursday, November 28, 2024

Subject: Summer Program Registration and Fees Model

Report Number: 2024-013

Summary

This report details recommended changes to the registration process and funding structure of the summer Day Camp program. The report also directs staff to report to Council with the changes upon approval from this committee and proceed with the requirements for setting fees under Bylaw 2016-73.

Recommendation

That the Recreation and Leisure Services Advisory Committee support the proposed changes to the summer program registration model outlined in Report Number 2024-013; and

That the Recreation and Leisure Services Advisory Committee support the proposed changes to the summer program funding model outlined in Report Number 2024-013.

Background

At the May 25th, 2023, Recreation and Leisure Services Committee meeting, committee members inquired about standards and practices for other municipal program registration formats, specifically for residents and non-residents. The inquiry was in response to the extremely high demand for day camp spaces. [Staff reported back with findings at the August 24th, 2023, meeting.](#)

2024 registration facts for context

Demand continues to be extremely high for the township's Day Camp program. In 2024, most programs were at capacity the morning they opened for registration, if not, shortly thereafter. The waitlist at all three sites continues to be high even after the introduction of the McMullen Beach Site offering an additional 280 spaces throughout the summer. In addition, the resident and non-resident participant ratio continues to be quite evenly split, particularly at The Point.

Gilmour's Point Camp: The ratio of resident and non-resident is the lowest of the three sites with most participants being residents.

McMullen Beach Camp: The registration is split very evenly between residents and non-residents, with one week in 2024 seeing more non-residents than residents.

The Point: The registration is split very evenly between residents and non-resident, but with more non-residents than residents registering over all throughout the summer. Four weeks had more non-residents than residents and one week had an even split, leaving three weeks with more residents than non-residents.

Grand Total: for the 2024 season across all three sites and including the bus, before/aftercare and camp, the totals were 524 resident, 385 non-residents, and 231 waitlisted. In other words, 42% of registrants were non-residents.

Discussion/Analysis

After reviewing registration trends, receiving several comments from parents/ guardians, and with inquiries and past direction from this committee, staff developed several program goals:

1. Achieve a sustainable funding model by 2027.
2. Establish a funding model that recognizes the tax base subsidy.
3. Establish a registration model that recognizes the tax base subsidy.
4. Ensure opportunities for camp are more evenly distributed and give more kids a chance to go to camp.

Staff researched several municipal recreation program registration formats, policies, and benchmarking for setting program fees. This research resulted in several options that were considered which can be found in Exhibit A.

With consideration of all the options explored, staff are recommending several changes to the funding and registration models.

Recommended changes to the funding model to achieve goals 1 and 2:

Programs are currently funded through a registration fee that is subsidized through the recreation operating budget. The funding model has not had a thorough review in several years. Staff have reviewed the operating budget and have developed a cost recovery forecast that aligns with the proposed changes to the registration format and that is sustainable for program development while recognizing the tax base subsidy.

- Differential pricing:
 - Non-resident rate should be full cost recovery fee with no subsidization.
 - Resident rate should be reduced in a similar format to the recreation fee structure and the proposal is for a 20% subsidized rate.
- Phased-in price increase to achieve cost recovery:
 - Over 2025, 2026 and 2027, registration non-resident rates will increase by \$23.31/ year, then rounded to the nearest \$5 increment to reach full cost recovery. Resident rates will increase by \$9.82/ year, then rounded to the nearest \$5 increment to reach full cost recovery, less 20%.

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- From 2028 and beyond, an automatic 4% registration fee increase will be implemented to account for inflation and to align with the Recreation Facility Fee Rental Schedule.

The proposed fee schedule is presented in the Financial Implications below.

Recommended changes to the registration model to achieve goals 3 and 4:

- Resident and non-resident specific spaces:
 - The Point and McMullen – 20 out of 35 spaces to be opened initially for residents.
 - Gilmour Point – 15 out of 25 spaces to be opened initially for residents.
 - Resident spaces will be held for one month. If after one month the spaces are not filled and there is a waitlist for non-residents, the spaces will be filled by non-residents from a first come, first served off the waitlist.
- Monetary penalties for withdrawals – Staff will be working with the Treasury Department to establish a refund process that aligns with relevant municipal legislation.

Note that staff also initially recommended and investigated the possibility of having a cap for the number of weeks a participant can register for camp, but the registration software does not have that functionality. Upon further investigation, staff were alerted to the fact that parents could create multiple profiles for the same child and register them in more programs, rendering the policy ineffective.

Financial Implications

Historical and proposed fee structure:

Year	Non-Resident Rate/ Week	Resident Rate/ Week
2022	\$125	\$125
2023	\$125	\$125
2024	\$150	\$150
2025	\$175	\$160
2026	\$195	\$170
2027	\$220	\$180
2028	\$225	\$185

Next Steps

Following consideration of this matter at the Recreation and Leisure Services Advisory Committee it is anticipated that staff will prepare an information report for consideration by

Council in December, 2024. Subsequently a Public Meeting will be held in accordance with By-law 2016-73 in January, 2025.

Relationship to Strategic Plans

- Not applicable to this report.
- This initiative is supported by the following guiding principles of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.
- Priority: Community

Climate Considerations

- Not applicable to this report.
- This initiative supports climate change mitigation/adaption efforts in South Frontenac; and/or impacts the Township's resilience to climate change.

Notice/Consultation

- Manager, Recreation and Facilities
- Deputy Treasurer
- Treasurer/ Director of Corporate Services
- Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments

Exhibit A – Program Fee and Registration Options Considered

Approvals

Submitted By:

Amanda Pantrey

Amanda Pantrey, Recreation and Events Coordinator

Approved By:

K Bolton

Kyle Bolton, Director of Public Services