

COUNCIL AGENDA/INFORMATION

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Director	CAO

DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER

750 – 17TH STREET, WEST VANCOUVER, BC V7V 3T3

COUNCIL REPORT

Date: September 22, 2008 File: 01.0117.20/CS
From: Corinne Ambor, Park Programs Manager
Subject: **Community Sport Working Group Final Report**

RECOMMENDED THAT:

1. The attached report entitled “Final Report from the Community Sport Working Group” be received for information;
2. The Community Sport Working Group recommendation to implement an ongoing field sport forum be approved;
3. The Community Sport Working Group recommendation to develop a formal field allocation policy be approved;
4. The Community Sport Working Group recommendation to convert the field usage fee system to an hourly system be approved in principle.

Purpose

This report outlines the Community Sport Working Group’s final report, its recommendations, and the implications of those recommendations.

Executive Summary

The Community Sport Working Group began its work in January 2008. The Working Group’s final report recommends formation of a *Field Sport Forum* to provide ongoing input on operating and capital requests and the opportunity for ongoing dialogue relating to field sport. The report also recommends development of a *Field Allocation Policy* based on existing practice, and finally, conversion to an *hourly field usage fee* system.

1.0 Background

1.1 Prior Resolutions

From the July 21st, 2008 minutes of Council:

THAT the report dated July 8, 2008 from the Manager of Park Programs titled “Community Sport Working Group – Interim Report” be received for information.

From the October 1, 2007 minutes of Council:

THAT Council recommend that the Community Engagement Committee establish a Community Sports Working Group and that the Community Engagement Committee draft the terms of reference.

1.2 History

West Vancouver has a long history of highly evolved volunteer field sport groups. These groups offer various opportunities for youth to be involved in field sport, and they schedule, manage, coach and keep their respective sport systems running for the benefit of thousands of primarily young people, almost entirely on volunteer labour.

There is a good historical relationship between the Parks and Community Services Division and field sport groups. Feedback from sport groups in West Vancouver is generally complementary to the relationship between staff and the condition of our fields. There is always room for improvement, and the field sport community has been supportive of the work of the Community Sport Working Group's efforts in this direction. The recommendations contained in the attached report from the Community Sport Working Group seek to improve and further support this relationship.

2.0 **Policy**

2.1 Policy

The Community Sport Working Group is guided by the Community Engagement Policy.

3.0 **Analysis**

3.1 Background

The Community Sport Working Group met monthly and sometimes more often. Task subgroups also met regularly to review and then create the recommendations contained in the final CSWG report. Discussion with field user groups occurred throughout the process.

3.2 Discussion

There are three main recommendations in the Working Group's report:

A. Implement an ongoing Field Sport Forum

The Working Group recommends that a West Vancouver Field Sport Forum be implemented to maintain ongoing communication between field sport groups and Municipal staff and Council. The priority for this staff-supported group will be to work with field sport groups to determine priorities for capital allocation, in conjunction with the Parks Department.

Similar structures are present in other jurisdictions. The model proposed by the Working Group is a "made in West Vancouver" version, drawing on successful collaborative models for groups and on the suggestions of the sport groups themselves. The Forum would need a level of formality in terms of regular meeting dates and staff support.

Its purpose is not a governance role, but rather an opportunity for regular discussion and input which will augment staff's role in providing good quality and safe sport fields that meet the needs of the various groups that use them. The draft Terms of Reference attached to the Working Group's report form the basis for the proposed work of this group.

B. Develop a formal Field Allocation policy

The Working Group recommends that a Field Allocation Policy be prepared for Council approval. West Vancouver has had a field allocation "practice" in place for many years but this has not been written down in a policy format. Points to be included are included in Appendix "F" of the Working Group report.

Staff will draft the policy based on the Working Group's suggestions and input from the field sport community, and bring it forward for Council approval.

C. Convert the Field Usage Fee system to an hourly system

Sport field user fees were introduced for the first time in the 2008 budget year. They were levied on a per-player basis. Several sports felt that this system did not adequately recognize the differences between the sports and was unfair in its application. The principle of an hourly fee usage fee was supported almost unanimously by the field sport groups. The rationale for the change is that fees should reflect use. An hourly system achieves this.

The Working Group looked at various models of field usage fees around Metro Vancouver. The proposed approach for West Vancouver is to estimate the number of hours played and divide this into the \$100,000 budget target. Within this approach, certain accommodations are recommended by the Working Group:

- Lower fees for youth sports that are not governed by the clock;
- Sports that use grass and alternate gravel fields will be charged for one field.

It is recognized that the hourly system will change how field fees are borne by the various sports; some sports will bear significantly higher rates due to their longer seasons or higher usage of the sport fields. This is particularly true for soccer and little league baseball.

Estimated rates

To meet the budget target, staff researched the field booking history, spoke to field sport groups who have long seasons about their actual time on the fields, and worked in the accommodations noted above from the Working Group to find a formula that would achieve the target. It is acknowledged that estimating future actual hours involves some guesswork. Staff does not expect a shortfall but other variables like weather and numbers of players registered cannot be predicted with great accuracy.

Should Council support this change, staff will work with the Finance Department to develop a model for charging hourly field usage fees. Based on preliminary research, these fees are expected to be in the order of \$9.50 - \$10.00 per hour. This is somewhat higher than the sport groups were expecting when they suggested this system. The recommendation is for approval in principle of an hourly field usage fee. A thorough analysis will result in a firmer number which can be bounced off the respective sports for their final concurrence. This will return to Council when and if an amendment to the Fees and Charges Bylaw is required.

The support for lower fees for youth was very strong from both the user groups and the Working Group. However, because youth form such a large component of the field sport community (4 youth for each adult), adults would carry a considerably higher hourly rate in order to offer a slightly lower rate for youth. As well, youth do have priority for field bookings over adult. Therefore, it is recommended that fees are the same for both adult and youth players.

Other fees

By way of context, field usage fees will not change for commercial users as they already pay a market rate (adult fees of \$40/ hour on gravel; \$74.00 on artificial turf). As well, the capital replacement fees currently charged for Artificial Turf (\$27/ hour for youth; \$37/ hour for adult) go into a fund for the future replacement of the turf carpet.

The Capilano Rugby Club, which has a lease and license agreement at Klahanie Park, has taken the position that they should be exempted from field usage fees due to their agreement. The terms of their lease provide for rent to be paid to the Municipality, although the Municipality still performs maintenance on their fields. Discussions with rugby are ongoing, and

therefore the hours for rugby played on Klahanie field is not included in the hourly fee calculation.

Field Hockey is also suggesting that fees for their sport be dealt with differently than others because of their projected investment in new surfaces at Hugo Ray Park. These requests from Rugby and Field hockey will be brought back separately.

Hourly vs. per capita field usage fee system

Each system has benefits and drawbacks. These are outlined in the table below:

Hourly Field Usage Fees	Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the principle of fees reflecting actual use of fields • Strong support for this principle from sport field user groups • Can be accomplished with existing booking and financial systems
	Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to estimate anticipated hours of use on fields • Per hour fees will result in significant fee increases for some sports • Implementing a new fee system for the second time in two years will place some additional administrative burden on staff
Per Capita Usage Fees	Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System is already in place • Meshes with the North Vancouver field usage fee system
	Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not reflect actual use of fields • Sports that use less field time pay the same fee as sports that use considerably more time.

Staff supports the hourly fee recommendation of the Working Group, recognizing that there is a certain amount of guesswork for the first year. For this reason, it is recommended that there be a review of the system after two years to ensure it is working as planned. This will be another role for the Sport Forum recommended above.

For this first two-year period, it is also recommended that if the fees are more than \$5,000 over the \$100,000 target, that the surplus be allocated to the

following year, as a way of giving confidence to the user groups that the new system is designed to meet but not exceed the original target set by Council.

An important comment was that the recommendation for consultation with field user groups if future changes are considered to field usage fees or other aspects of field use in West Vancouver. This would allow them to anticipate changes and prepare budgets well enough in advance so as not to put an undue hardship on the organization or its volunteer members. The Field Sport Forum would be the ideal venue for such consultation.

3.3 Environmental Implications – n/a

3.4 Social Implications

Field sport provides many opportunities for community connection and volunteer involvement for children, youth and adults, through playing, coaching, managing and involvement in various levels of administration of these volunteer groups. Participation in field sports is an important part of growing up in West Vancouver, and is part of the social fabric of this community. The Community Sport Working Group has successfully brought the field user community together and sparked a constructive dialogue that forms the basis for the ongoing Field Sport Forum.

3.5 Financial Implications

Hourly field usage fees will be set to bring in the same level of revenue as the current per capita field usage fee. The proposed system of hourly fees is designed to be as simple as possible and not to create an administrative burden.

Staff support will be needed for the Field Sport Forum and this will be accommodated in current staffing levels.

3.6 Consultation

All field sport groups that book time on West Vancouver's sport fields have been consulted during the Working Group's mandate. The Working Group meetings themselves were open and were attended by some field sport groups. The April 30, 2008 Field Users Forum brought together many groups and provided an opportunity for input at the beginning of the Working Group's mandate. Preliminary recommendations from the Working Group were sent out in early September to get feedback. The resultant comments from the sport groups can be found in Appendix "D" of the Working Group report.

4.0 Options

4.1 Council may:

- (a) Approve the recommendations contained in this report;
- (b) Request further information.

Author: _____

Concurrence _____
(optional)

Appendices:

Final Report from the Community Sport Working Group, including appendices "A" through "F".