

AGENDA
For the Special Meeting of the Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee
To be held in Council Chambers
Saanich Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon Avenue
Wednesday, February 3, 2021 - 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Due to COVID-19 measures, Saanich is unable to accommodate the public for any Council, Committee of the Whole, Advisory, Board or Foundation meetings while maintaining the limits on large gatherings due to the Public Health Order.

As per the Order of the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, *Emergency Program Act*, Ministerial Order No. M192, public attendance at the meeting is not required if it cannot be accommodated in accordance with the applicable requirements or recommendations under the *Public Health Act*.

To hear this meeting by phone, please call 1-833-353-8610, access code 9232581#.

- 1. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT**
- 2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES** (attachment)
 - January 6, 2021
- 3. CHAIR'S REMARKS**
- 4. PRESENTATION – JAKE ENNS**
- 5. UPDATE ON OVERDOSE CRISIS NOTICE OF MOTION**
- 6. REVIEW OF COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN**
- 7. REVIEW OF 2020 HEALTHY SAANICH COMMITTEE ACTIONS**
 - For information
- 8. DIVISION REPORTS FOR INFORMATION** (attachments)
 - Community Services - C. Caravaca, Senior Manager, Community Services
 - Parks – E. Riccius, Senior Manager, Parks
 - Recreation – T. Solares, Senior Manager, Recreation

* Adjournment *
Next Meeting: March 3, 2021

Updated version: October 2020

Traditional Territorial Acknowledgement

*It is appropriate that we begin by acknowledging that our municipality lies within the traditional territories of the Lkwungen (Lay-kwung-gen) peoples known today as Songhees and Esquimalt Nations and the **WSÁNEĆ** (weh-saanich) peoples known today as **WJOLEŁP** (Tsartlip), **BOKÉĆEN** (Pauquachin), **STÁUTW** (Tsawout), **WSIKEM** (Tseycum) and **MÁLEXEŁ** (Malahat) Nations.*

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

We are committed to celebrating the rich diversity of people in our community. We are guided by the principle that embracing diversity enriches the lives of all people. We all share the responsibility for creating an equitable and inclusive community and for addressing discrimination in all forms.

MINUTES
HEALTHY SAANICH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
January 6, 2021 at 6:05 p.m.

Present: Chair: Councillor Ned Taylor

Members: Nadia Rajan (via telephone), Clare Attwell, Carren Dujela, Silvia Mangu Alene (via telephone), Jasindra Jawanda (via telephone), Abigail Toledo (Youth) (via telephone), Kam Judge, Liz Miller (SCAN), Jasmine Noble (via telephone)

Staff: Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager, Community Services and Megan MacDonald, Committee Clerk

Regrets: Ryan Henderson

MINUTES

MOVED by C. Dujela, and seconded by C. Attwell “That the minutes of the Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee meeting held November 4, 2020 be adopted as circulated.”

CARRIED

CHAIR’S COMMENTS / WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed new members to the committee. The Chair encouraged all members to contact him if they have any questions, concerns or ideas about the committee. Members of the committee and staff participated in roundtable introductions.

BRAINSTORMING SESSION

The Chair presented a list of ideas that was compiled from committee member suggestions on items that the committee could potentially act on. The committee discussed new additions to the brainstorming idea list, the following were noted as important items:

- Support and resources for Community Associations.
- Participatory democracy opportunities and participatory budgeting opportunities, the City of Victoria has implemented My Great Neighborhood program, as well as considering their budget process through equity.
- Partnerships/collaboration with the Native Friendship Centre.
- How Saanich is responding to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), how we are following through with UNDRIP recommendations and how we are building indigenous reconciliation into our governance structures.
- Mental health, potentially the development of a post-COVID mental health strategic recommendation report which may include:

- Recommendations around potential digital and other mental health supports/strategies that we could recommend Saanich Council support in anticipation that COVID has and will continue to result in a significant mental health burden on Saanich residents.
- Presentations from front-line experts (e.g., Dr. Vincent Agyapong on Text4Hope, a Text-messaging service structured by cognitive behavioral therapists).
- Consideration of other free digital options.
- Evidence-supported no-cost therapies to support mental health that can be implemented by Saanich residents themselves. (e.g., nature therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, mindfulness, meditation).
- Report could have recommendations for Council's consideration but also for Saanich residents to consider (presentation of the evidence, our recommendations to them, lists of free resources that could prove helpful), which could be a public facing document.
- Recommendations would be tailored to be at a municipal level.
- The housing crisis and affordable housing including possible partnerships with the Province, alternative models, new approaches, intergenerational living. Addressing housing issues in a way that is cohesive.
- Increasing awareness ending stigma of peoples with diversabilities.

The following topics were identified as items the committee is interested in learning about in 2021:

- Saanich Council's Strategic Plan.
- Current work on Indigenous Reconciliation.
- Summary of calls to action/recommendations to date.
- Council to direct staff to report back on naturescape.
- Social Purpose Real Estate Collaborative (SPRE), organization working on:
 - State of non-profits in our community, impacts of COVID.
 - One Planet region.
- Check in with Saanich Community Association Network and School District 61.
- Learn about strategic plan items such as the housing needs assessment and housing strategy.
- Greater Victoria Acting Together.
- Climate change and Saanich's Climate Plan.
- Participatory democracy, participatory budgeting, better support for local projects and new community-led initiatives.
- Youth recreation/sport.
- Can we write letters/send ideas to other advisory committees?
- Sanctuaries cities, welcoming cities, welcoming newcomers.
- Update on Braefoot Community Association/Braefoot building .
- Recent land acquisitions at Swan Lake.
- Current food security initiatives, roadside stands, backyard gardening, biodiversity.
- Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee recommendations from 2020.
- Increasing awareness and ending stigma of peoples with disabilities.
- What worked and what didn't work throughout the pandemic.
- Is Saanich Archives connected with Royal BC Museum for COVID experience data?
- Protections for sensitive ecosystems.
 - What are other communities doing and what is Saanich/Saanich Council doing?
 - Indigenous, racial, and gender perspectives must be taken into consideration.
- Election processes, democratic processes, transparency, voting records, conflict of interest.

The following items were identified as being high priority for the committee to address in the near future:

- Mental health, youth mental health and increasing access to mental health supports.
- The overdose crisis.
- Climate change and Saanich’s Climate Action Plan.
- The housing crisis, homelessness, safe and affordable housing.
- Participatory democracy, participatory budgeting opportunities.

REVIEW OF COMMITTEE MEETING DATES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chair confirmed that meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month, except for July, August and December.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference were provided to members of the committee for information.

DIVISION REPORT – COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Senior Manager of Community Services presented a division report. The Community Services team has been focused on providing safe activities to small groups.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:58

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for February 3, 2021

Chair

I hereby certify these minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

To: Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee;
Parks Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee

From: Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager- Community Services

Date: February 3rd, 2021

Subject: Community Services Division Update

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee receive this report as information.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an overview of Community Services division activities.

DISCUSSION

Inclusion and Accessibility: 1-on-1 Inclusion Leader support requests have increased for Spring Break 2021 despite the climate of COVID-19. Initial family requests have increased by 40% in comparison to 2020. However, in reality only 4/10 families followed through with needing support in March 2020, where this year we have 14 families, many requesting Inclusion Leader support for both weeks of Spring Break. Support requests from families without Support Child Development funding have become more prevalent. This has spiked discussion for funding solutions within Saanich to provide these services for families with additional barriers.

Older Adult Services: COVID-19 health restrictions have greatly affected our older adult community program offerings and as a result, had squashed opportunities for this population to stay social and connected. A once thriving group, the Cedar Hill Social Club, was required to cancel its last modified session before the winter holidays. This didn't sit well with the programming team... So we adapted!! In a safe-COVID-manner, a Saanich Elf delivered some cheer via the doors steps of 14 program participants! In late January, a Chair Fitness and Brain Games programs has launched under the new Provincial Health Order restrictions and staff are piloting a telephone check-in service for the older adults that used to frequently attend activities with the Cedar Hill Social Club.

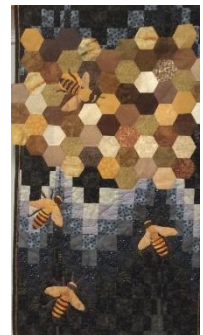
BC 55+ Games in Victoria has been postponed until 2022 but we are still able to go ahead with the "Give It a Try" events. We have postponed all sessions until Provincial Health Order restrictions lessen, but remain hopeful that we will be able to support this recreation programs in 2021.



Community Arts: The [HeArts Together Community Art Project](#) has installed another display – this time at Majestic Park. This month, hearts are being made to contribute to the project by dozens of participants through the Victoria Native Friendship Centre and the Métis Nation of Greater Victoria.

Exhibitions: *Saanich Municipal Hall - Through February 12:*

- Main Floor Window:** Silver Swan Quilters @ Swan Lake - textiles
- Main Floor Gallery:** Linda Rose Stagg - paintings
- Second Floor Gallery:** Janie Lucas - paintings



Silver Swan Quilters

Special Events: Residents will have the opportunity to celebrate the Family Day weekend creatively this year. Due to the on-going pandemic we are not able to host the in-person Family Arts Festival at the Cedar Hill Recreation and Arts Centre in 2021. While we cannot come together in person, our Family Arts “Family Bubble” Festival will offer lots of opportunities for families to celebrate community, creativity and culture. Activities planned will include virtual cultural performances and online arts activities that can be undertaken and enjoyed at home and outdoors. A full list of activities will be available on the Saanich website.

Diversity and Equity: February is a busy month for cultural celebrations and events although they are all modified this year.

February is Black History Month. There are a variety of online presentations, a Ross Bay Cemetery Walking Tour on Black Pioneers, a symposium on Black Immigration in BC and the RBC Museum has a new online exhibit on BC’s Black Pioneers. More info at <https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/parks-recreation-community/community-services/diversity-and-equity.html>

February 11 is Moose Hide Campaign Day. The Moose Hide Campaign is a movement to end violence against women and children. This movement started locally in the Indigenous community and it has become a national event. Pins are available on the Moose Hide website and a limited supply will be available at Municipal Hall. You can also support the movement by joining the online event on the 11th at moosehidecampaign.ca

This year, February 12 marks the beginning of Lunar New Year. This an important celebration with many in the Asian community. There will be no gatherings this year and no celebration at the Municipal Hall but we will have some online video performances and the centres will have their information displays and decorations up.

Financial Assistance: The 2021 LIFE Program has growing attention from individuals and families seeking assistance to access recreation. With changes in program offerings due to COVID-19, there has been growing concerns regarding limitations in accessibility (there are limited numbers of people that can access the weight room/pool/ice surface at one time) and the elimination of the annual pass option available at 50% off the usual price. LIFE Participants are expressing their concerns and I am exploring options that can be entertained both within the District of Saanich and inter-municipally. The Canadian Tire Jumpstart program has announced a big change for 2021 – the elimination of paper applications. This will result in the elimination of assisting those low income families who struggle with the online application process. I will be strategizing option to assist families through the online process to ensure citizens can receive benefits they qualify for.

The after school programs facilitated in partnership with PISE and supported by the BCRPA have resumed at Tillicum Elementary School for Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. With all COVID safety protocols in place, this program successfully operated from October-December of 2020 and with positive anticipation will continue into 2021.

Operation Helmet was a “feel good” project that saw 18 new helmets delivered to the participants of the Heroes Hockey program and 2 students from Marigold School. These helmets were accompanied by \$100 grants for Saanich Recreation – both helmets and grants were made possible by KidsFUNd and Jumpstart. A rewarding pre-Christmas venture! 6 helmets and grants are still available and will be given to those in need throughout winter 2021.

Child and Youth Services: Although our programs were a bit slow to get moving after the New Year, our registered numbers have picked up and are moving ahead at capacity. Our Girls on the Go Program is full of eager girls working on some amazing projects and incredibly happy to be able to interact with one another outside of school. Parents have commented on how they have seen their kids coming home much happier than when they first left the house. A true testament to the importance of social wellness. Cedar Hill Art programs and workshops are also full, facilitating social distanced art programs to youth. Teaching new painting techniques to youth who have not painted using Acrylics or Watercolours previously.

The Outdoor Adventure Club had a successful start to their new year, outside exploring the trails of our local parks and learning the art of layering for the weather! This group continues to ask for more opportunities to learn skills and will be planning a safe, physically distanced, masked trek to Goldstream Park at the beginning of February. Adventure awaits!

Film Industry: The film industry continues to be very active in Saanich with four new locations in January. Gyro Park is the site of one of the latest projects filmed for the production called “Maid” which is will be an upcoming Netflix series. Other locations include two private residences in the Cadboro Bay area and the Tillicum Laundry facility next to Hampton Park. The Maid series is expected to continue filming in the CRD throughout the year.



PARKS, RECREATION
& COMMUNITY SERVICES

REPORT TO: Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee

DATE: January 19, 2021

FROM: Eva Riccius, Senior Manager, Parks

SUBJECT: **Parks Division Update**

The following update is provided for the Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee:

Park Planning and Development

Planning and Design:

- **Washroom Plan** – Parks staff are working on an RFP for new public washrooms for parks. The goal is to have one or two installations completed this year (McMinn and Playfair Parks).
- **George Tripp Youth Park** – Saanich Council recently unanimously approved a design-build contract to Bike Track Ltd out of Revelstoke. Staff will now begin the process of working with Bike Track to engage youth and the community on the design of the youth park. Construction is anticipated to occur this year.
- **Cuthbert Holmes Park Trail Relocation and River Improvement Project** – Approximately 200 m of the asphalt trail adjacent to SilverCity Theatre will be relocated to allow a 30m wide river buffer to be restored. In-stream improvements to the Colquitz River are also planned this year. This is a multi-year project that will further actions identified in the Cuthbert Holmes / Tillicum Parks Management Plan (2015). The river buffer restoration component will begin with invasive English hawthorn removals beginning soon.
- **Normandy Park Playground Replacement Project** – Public participation is underway to collect feedback on what type of play equipment residents would like to see at Normandy Park. The playground has been identified as a priority upgrade and is in the planning phase with construction in 2021. The online survey is available from January 5th to February 8th, 2021.
- **Cedar Hill Park Management Plan** – The plan, approved by Council in October 2020, has been updated and is now posted on the project [webpage](#). Goals and Actions for 2021 have been established which include:
 - Natural Areas Plan – providing a tool for the systematic removal and restoration of identified Natural Areas (Zones 1-15) in the park,
 - Hydrological and Environmental Assessment and Restoration Plan for Kings and Jenkins Pond,
 - Design review and upgrades to the Derby Road Connector focusing on the area between the parking lot to the ProShop as this multi-use section is heavily utilized by pedestrians, cyclists and golfers.

- **Allenby Park Playground and Sportcourt Replacement Project** – The playground and sportcourt at Allenby Park have been identified as priority upgrades. Residents will have an opportunity to provide comments with an online survey from January 18th to February 21st, 2021. Public participation feedback will finish this spring with construction anticipated to start in the summer.
- **Lambrick Park** - Staff has started background research on the park in preparation for an upcoming planning project to consider the ‘precinct’ or internal area of the park. This project is scheduled to span into 2022. Also, a site plan has been completed to reroute an existing trail to the south of the Recreation Centre to accommodate the construction of a Chemical Storage Area. Construction will begin later this winter.

Construction:

The Construction Section has been working on the following major projects:

- **Horner Park** – All major components of the Horner Park renovation project have been completed and the park has been fully open to the public since early December. Some of the general landscaping work as well as installation of the drinking fountain, the central plaza and decals for the playground will be completed as weather permits. Overall community response to the new upgrades has been very positive.
- **Quadrant 1 Trail Resurfacing Program** – work is being completed on gravel trails within Quadrant 1 (South Saanich). Most recently work has been completed at Cedar Hill Park with a new section of trail allowing a safe access to the day-care in the back of the building installed at the request of Recreation Centre staff.
- **Parks ID Signage** – The crew has been installing new park ID signs across the Parks system. We are planning on completing a total of 25 new park ID signs in 2021 with two parks completed so far. With addition to installing new park ID signage we have also worked on updating many parks and beach accesses regulatory signage as well as directional and wayfinding signs at many locations throughout Saanich.
- **Hampton Park** – Work on renovation of the main parking lot in the park will commence soon. The project will include enlarging the existing parking area with additional parking stalls as well as an additional exit/entrance to improve traffic flow. Engineering and Public Works Department staff have completed their sidewalk and boulevard improvements work on Hampton Road in December 2020.
- **Bridge and Staircase Replacement Program** – Our crew is working on repairing and replacing steps on steep slopes in Donwood and Boulderwood Parks.
- **Trail washout repairs** – Our crew is working on and has completed repairing many trails damaged by intense rain events in recent weeks. Affected parks include Panama Flats, Colquitz River, Copley East, Annie, Playfair, Mt.Tolmie, Vantreight, McBriar, Knockan Hill and a few others. This work will continue throughout the winter.

Park Operations

Maintenance Section:

Maintenance is continuing to support core services:

- Washrooms are being cleaned daily and have been receiving a lot of graffiti.
- Refuse is still quite heavy with quite a lot of dumping in parks. Parks is continuing to deal with camping in parks and cleaning up debris and garbage abandoned.
- Parks shop is busy repairing equipment and getting ready for 2021.
- The maintenance crews are cleaning catch basins and grading parking lots to minimize water damage.
- Irrigation section is installing quick couplers and raising valve boxes. They are also working on plans for various parks including Saanich Commonwealth Place and Municipal Hall as well as various locations for drip irrigation for newly planted trees.

Horticulture Section:

Horticulture staff completed landscape improvements at 3500 Blanshard in mid December. January and February will see staff focused on completing pruning and maintenance at over 200 of our neighbourhood traffic circles. We continue to provide grounds maintenance at all municipal facilities, parks and streetscapes.

Urban Forestry Section:

UF continues to be extremely busy after a mid-December storm generated many new tree related calls. UF staff have started working on the hazard tree abatement project in Cuthbert Holmes Park. This project will see the removal/reduction of 112 dead firs within 3m's of the main park trails. UF supervisory staff continue to review Engineering drawings for tree impacts, and provide onsite Arborist supervision for Public Works projects. Our formal Park tree planting for 2020/21 is 90% completed. The planting crew has moved onto boulevard tree planting. The first neighborhoods up for planting are Cordova Bay, Royal Oak and Gorge/Tillicum.

Natural Areas Section:

December was a very busy planting month for the Natural Areas section; over 30 restoration sites were planted including about two dozen sites cleared by our Pulling Together volunteers. Over 3000 native trees and shrubs were planted before Christmas. A few more sites are yet to be planted and a big order of forbs and grasses was just placed with Saanich Native Plants. Our goal is to create more diverse pollinator restoration areas to add to the mix of native trees and shrubs already establishing. Some of the forb and grass species include: Harvest Brodiaea, Field Chickweed, Mountain sneezeweed, Fool's Onion, Woolly Sunflower, Roemer's Fescue, Sea Blush, Strawberry, Fringecup, Yarrow, Graceful Cinquefoil, Trillium, and Canada Goldenrod.

The final numbers for trees planted in natural areas for 2020 are:

- 373 trees planted from 5 gallon pots or bigger,
- 421 trees planted from 1 gallon pots (most of these came from the Fanny Bay Salmonid Enhancement Society and the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society),
- 85 tree plugs, all Western Red Cedar.

The total of 879 trees were planted in creekside, under canopy forest and Pulling

Together volunteer restoration sites.

Haro Woods kept the crew busy with an active mountain bike group building many bike runs through the park, mostly running off the UVIC property close to the family housing. As per the Haro Woods Management Plan, staff dismantled the jumps and filled in the holes. We will look at getting some native plants in to cover up the exposed soil disturbance. Many sections of Cedar split-rail fencing were built in Haro woods to help keep trail users on the designated trail system. Haro Woods was one site that plants were supplied to Pulling Together volunteers (50 Sword fern and 50 Dull Oregon grape).

Staff continues to manage invasive English Holly trees in many parks. The program is effective and is paying off with many forests, that were once dominated with Holly trees, now re-establishing an understory of native plant species in a more open canopy. Haro Woods, Ferndale Forest, and Konukson are a few of the parks where Holly has been removed.

Projects coming up include:

- Mount Douglas summit split-rail fencing and restoration planting,
- Planting of the 1000 plus forbs and grasses from Saanich Native,
- Begin restoration work in Cuthbert Holmes Park along the Colquitz Creek,
- Bare earth trail repairs,
- Continue with Holly/Hawthorne treatments,
- Winter Lesser celandine survey and treatments,
- Supporting Pulling Together volunteers and Park Stewardship Coordinator to outline restoration plans for 2021,
- Working with Public Works Storm & Wastewater crew to plan for creek work in the 2021 Fisheries window,

Community Development and Business Systems

Park Stewardship:

- **Volunteer support** - Parks' Stewardship Coordinator has been busy supporting the good work of our community-based stewardship programs. 58 Lead Stewards with volunteer groups (43 park sites) and 11 Park Ambassador are active to varying degrees while adhering to Covid-19 protocols for volunteering. Regular check ins indicate that volunteers are complying with protocols and extremely appreciative for the efforts taken by Parks staff so that they can continue stewardship activities. On average two school groups per week were supported during October and November with stewardship activities in parks. Considerable interest from new folks wishing to volunteer continues, but until Public Health Officer orders are lifted, opportunities for new volunteers and school/community groups are on hold.
- **Collaboration with Natural Areas staff** - Natural Areas staff continue to support Pulling Together volunteer efforts in the field. Fall was very busy, with over 24 Pulling Together Lead Stewards carrying out planting projects. More than 1000 plants were ordered and still counting, making this a record for a fall order of native plants. Plantings occurred on sites where hours of volunteer time was spent

removing and managing invasive plants. Parks like Konukson, Ferndale Forest, Feltham, Whitehead, and Arbutus Cove were planted to enhance biodiversity. Natural Areas staff also assisted in supported school stewardship opportunities.

- **Other initiatives** - A very full year ahead is expected while we continue to support current volunteer groups, plan stewardship projects, respond to volunteer inquiries, and support a variety of external and internal initiatives. 2021 also marks the beginning of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, this is an exciting opportunity to engage the community in restoration and stewardship of Saanich Parks natural areas.



Volunteers planting while maintaining a safe distance

Park user groups: Fall season saw soccer starting up their usual season with COVID-19 protocols in September and ball ended at Thanksgiving. COVID-19 created an immense, but necessary, administrative workload in supporting groups with COVID-19 safety plans and updates to comply with the frequently changing Public Health Officer orders. Overall in 2020, Parks resumed / re-resumed more than 100 user groups and issued permits accordingly for various activities. Parks would like to acknowledge the role that all parties played to bring activity back safely into parks including Parks staff, Public Health Office, sport governing bodies and the user groups (and more). Everyone acted with integrity and professionalism during these sensitive and challenging times with the goal of doing it right for public safety. 2021 is off to a slow start with the current province-wide restrictions, but planning will proceed as normal to resume groups unless PHO orders and restrictions remain in place.

There were some good news stories on the park partner project front despite COVID-19. The artificial turf at Hampton Park was completed (mainly externally funded), dugout roofing and building siding at Layritz, Lacrosse scoreboard replacements at Braefoot and Lambrick and various bulb replacements for field lighting at Braefoot. 2021 will likely see some more exciting and important park partner projects.

Tree Protection: Council received and supported a staff [report](#) in November 2020 outlining a plan to develop mapping and tracking of the urban forest. This is in part preparation for the review the Urban Forest Strategy which was funded at the end of 2020. Staff will be preparing terms of reference for the Urban Forest Strategy review.



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

REPORT

To: Parks, Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee
Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee

From: Tiana Solares, Senior Manager - Recreation

Date: 1/27/2021

Subject: February 2021 Monthly Report

RECOMMENDATION

That the Parks, Trails and Recreation and Healthy Saanich Advisory Committees receive this report as information.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committees with an overview of the previous month's Recreation Division activities.

DISCUSSION

Cedar Hill Campus

Programs

Although programs were scaled back due to the most recent Provincial Health Order, many are still going strong within their new safety measures. Kid's Tennis, Kid's Dance, Badminton, and Martial Arts programs have continued with very strong fill rates. Adult private tennis lessons are thriving and have allowed adults to continue to develop their skills in a one-on-one setting. Squash Club Members are now able to participate in household only game play, while non-household members can continue solo practice or private lessons. Both studios (Arts and Pottery) have also continued to see excellent usage.

Campus Additions

Parks recently provided a new pathway behind the centre which created a full walkable loop around the facility. This has allowed Cedar Hill to reach one of the goals within the Older Adult Strategy; specifically, that of providing walking loops around facilities for older adults with mobility challenges. It has also had a particularly positive impact on patrons within the preschool program. Due to COVID-19 safety planning, these patrons had been required to walk a lengthy alternate route to drop off their preschoolers. However, the new pathway significantly reduced the distance required to reach the program drop off and is now a constant source of praise from patrons.

Cedar Hill is also preparing to receive the new Welcome Desk this week. Volunteers are currently being trained and this program will provide yet another friendly face for people to see as they are welcomed

into the centre. This will also assist the Cedar Hill reception team by allowing the volunteer to answer questions, provide direction, and offer program information. SCP was the first facility to receive a welcome desk and Cedar Hill will be second, with each year bringing in a new kiosk to another centre as a part of the Older Adult Strategy - Age Friendly Spaces.

Golf

Due to heavy rains, staff have worked incredibly hard to manage saturated fairways and washed out trails with 2020 having been the ninth wettest year on record. By the end of 2020, thirty two hundred feet of drain line had been installed which included eight hundred feet in December and seventy yards of Fir chips laid on the Park trail. Christmas came early in that twenty five evergreen trees were dropped off by Saanich Parks and Golf course staff planted them all by the end of 2020. Staff continue to strive to make Cedar Hill one of the most popular golf courses in the region and again was awarded the number one public golf course in the city from the Times Colonist Readers' Choice for now the third year in a row and staff are looking forward to making it four!

Gordon Head Community Recreation Centre

Full Year Preschool Programs: We had a strong finish to 2020 for our full-year preschool programs (ECO Program and Exploring Our World). Our registration numbers continued to increase throughout the fall. With our safety plans in place and the adaptability and dedication of our staff, we have proven that these programs not only can run safely, but are extremely important for children and families during these unsettled times. It is wonderful to see the joy and social connection happening between the children each day and feedback from families has been extremely supportive.

"I wanted to tell you what a WONDERFUL experience we have had. Tammy and Kristine are amazing leaders who have such caring hearts and take the time to teach the kids. I am so impressed what my daughter has learned (at 3!) and even more impressed that she is learning about global issues like climate change" – ECO Program parent

Weight room: Since the Provincial Health Order changes on November 19, the registered drop-in participation numbers in the weight room have dropped by 9%. The long term Health Services contract with Shelbourne Physiotherapy (for both aqua and dryland rehabilitation services) ended early during the pandemic. GHRC is taking the opportunity to explore new options, including Island Health, for use of the weight room office and program space. We are re-imagining what community health services could include located directly in a recreation centre. Good news, we held our first ever public women's only weight room session in January with seven women attending. This will continue to be offered on Thursdays nights and is anticipated to grow.

Aquatics: Due to the November PHO and changes, water fitness classes were cancelled and these are gradually being brought back on line in 2021. As the year progresses, GHRC hopes to bring back additional services including lane swimming and private rentals.

Facility: In response to neighbourhood concerns, GHRC has purchased new acoustic panels intended to reduce the noise levels emitting from the north side of the Air Source Heat Pump. The panel costs were split between GHRC and Saanich Sustainability in order to preserve the energy savings from the heat pump. By installing these new panels by Spring 2021, we hope to reduce noise levels for the centre's neighbours to the north.

50th Anniversary: On January 13, 2021, Gordon Head Recreation Centre turned 50 years old. Over half a century, GHRC has developed a strong community presence and staff regularly meets young

and old who remember their first swimming lessons in the GHRC pool. Please stay tuned for COVID-19 friendly celebrations which will happen throughout this anniversary year.

G.R. Pearkes Community Recreation Centre

The Gold Slab Project is continuing. The Design stage is complete, and the construction tender is soon to be released. Over the last number of months staff has worked with the design consultant team and completed the tender-ready drawings for the Slab/Elevator Project. During this time a grant was applied for to cover partial cost of the Elevator Replacement project. The grant stream is the BC government's Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program (CERIP), and decisions are expected in mid- to late February. Staff remains to be advised whether the original construction timeline remains achievable. However, once a Contractor is selected, a more firm timeline will be determined. User group engagement is ongoing, and will increase in frequency once we have a more concrete timeline.

There are some small upgrades occurring within the lobby area, specially moving the vending machine area, and updating the trophy display cases to showcase our community groups equally. Several years ago, the Junior B Predators donated one trophy cabinet, which this project will supplement. This small project is estimated to be completed by the end of February.

Like other centres, Pearkes program teams have been very busy this year. Fitness staff team members worked hard in December and January to alter Pearkes fitness programs to be low impact, in accordance with Provincial Health Officer orders. Skating drop-ins and lessons remain heavily subscribed. These have always been well attended, and with the reduced capacity during COVID, we are see all these offerings at full registration.

Saanich Commonwealth Place

Saanich Commonwealth Place was honoured to be named as a finalist (top three) for the best Gym/Fitness facility in the 2020 Times Colonist Reader's Choice awards. Weight room participation continues to be strong with an average 83% fill rate of weight room Reserved Drop-In spaces at SCP in January. To reduce congestion, fitness staff recently adapted some of the most popular weight room classes to take place in the multipurpose room using free weights. Facility Technicians spruced up old weights from storage for the adapted program and the dedicated long-time participants are thrilled with the changes.

After a short hiatus over the holidays to adapt to new protocols, group fitness classes and Waterfit have resumed with 28 Reserved Drop-In class offerings each week. Participation rates are holding strong with an average fill rate of 89% for dry land fitness classes and 91% for water fitness in January. This is in addition to the 25 registered fitness classes offered each week.

In the Aquatics area, demand for length swimming continues to exceed the available spots but it is anticipated that demand may be alleviated with two additional municipal pools in the region (City of Victoria and Westshore) reopening in late January and early February. Swimming Lessons are running successfully in the modified "Swim with Me" format with full registration on both Saturdays and Sundays. SCP will be adding evening lessons to the schedule in the Spring session.

Kiddie Capers, the 10 month program for preschoolers, has adapted to be entirely outdoors in the Friendly Forest at the NW corner of SCP property. This program used to be a blend of indoor and outdoor learning but COVID protocols prompted staff to adopt this new model, which has been a

resounding success. For the first time in 25 years, the program is already full with returning families and siblings for next September.

Facility Operations staff and project consultants continue planning work on the Boiler Replacement Project which will be going to tender in the coming months. In addition to new Bio-mass boilers, the project scope includes upgrades to air handling, filtration and control systems throughout the facility.

In addition, staff and consultants are wrapping up design work for two capital improvement projects anticipated for 2022. The new mezzanine fitness space will provide a dedicated room for specialized fitness classes like TRX and Aerial Yoga as well as general recreation programs. The Aquatics Office expansion will increase office space for our five Aquatic Programmers and add windows enabling them to view the pool deck.

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