

Report to Council - Request to begin community engagement

Re: Arena Facilities Future Ad-Hoc Committee 2022-01

From: Jim Bailey

Date: September 6, 2022

Recommendation:

That, the report of the Arena Facilities Future Ad-Hoc Committee be received; and
That the committee begins a community engagement process and report their findings at a future Council meeting.

Overview:

On April 19, 2022 Council received correspondence from Douro Minor Hockey requesting that Council and Staff consider required upgrades to arena facilities within the Township. Council passed the following resolution:

Resolution Number 123-2022

Moved by: Councillor Watson

Seconded by: Deputy Mayor Moher

Whereas, Many communities in our region have undertaken significant improvement projects at their arenas in recent years; and

Whereas, Provincial and Federal funding programs often require that capital projects are shovel-ready; and

Whereas, the property at the Douro Community Centre can accommodate future growth and expansion; and

Whereas Douro Minor Hockey is a strong organization that has provided healthy recreation opportunities for children and youth for generations;

Therefore be it resolved that a working group be established comprising of staff, a member of Council and representatives from Douro Minor Hockey to explore the options outlined in the letter.

Carried

On May 17, 2022 Council passed the following:

Resolution Number 151-2022

Moved by: Councillor Watson

Seconded by: Councillor Watt

That Jim Bailey, Gerard Sullivan, Kerri Riel and Liam Ryan be appointed to the Arena Facilities Future Ad-Hoc Committee effective May 17, 2022. Carried

Due to a number of scheduling conflicts, the Ad-Hoc Committee was unable to hold their first meeting until August 3, 2022. There were healthy discussions about possible partnerships and potential uses of both the Douro Community Centre and Warsaw Arena.

The Committee identified a broad process for putting forward a workable plan:

Step 1: Community Engagement to get understanding of the needs and wants of the community

Step 2: Drawing from the feedback received, create a list of the most desirable uses and potential partners and user groups

Step 3: Township staff to review and report on proposed uses and the general feasibility

Step 4: Conduct a feasibility study with focus on desired uses as it relates to investment level

Step 5: Once a viable option has been identified, move forward with proper costing

Step 6: Develop a strategy to create a shovel ready project and a plan to proactively seek funding opportunities

To continue building on the momentum around this initiative, the Committee would like to move forward with undertaking the Community Engagement portion of the project. The members have graciously volunteered to facilitate this over the next two to three months. They recognize that such an undertaking would cost thousands of dollars and the volunteers have experience and skills to support a successful community engagement process.

Should Council approve the request, the Committee would immediately launch a survey; building on a survey that was initially launched in 2017 and would begin promoting the survey at key community events throughout the Township in the coming weeks. As well, the Committee will hold an information session at the Douro Minor Hockey Kick-off Day on September 24, 2022 and invite the broader community, stakeholders and neighbouring user groups to attend.

Following the Community Engagement process, the Ad-Hoc Committee would report back to Council on their findings.

Conclusion:

The Arenas Facilities Future Ad-Hoc Committee is seeking support from Council to begin a Community Engagement process to identify community needs as it relates to the two arenas so that further planning can take place to upgrade the facilities.

Financial Impact:

None. Committee volunteers are offering to donate their time.

Strategic Plan Applicability:

To develop and/or assist with the development and delivery of social and recreational programs as well as effectively maintaining and updating recreational facilities to promote healthy lifestyles and meet the broad range of community needs.