

COUNCIL REPORT

M&C No.	M&C 2019-17
Report Date	January 31, 2019
Meeting Date	February 11, 2019
Service Area	Transportation and Environment Services

His Worship Mayor Don Darling and Members of Common Council

SUBJECT: 2019 Sports Field Rates and Outdoor Facility Allocation Policy

OPEN OR CLOSED SESSION

This matter is to be discussed in open session of Common Council.

AUTHORIZATION

Primary Author	Commissioner/Dept. Head	City Manager
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RECOMMENDATION

City staff recommends Common Council approves the proposed 2019 Field Rates and Outdoor Facility Allocation Policy as referenced in M&C 2019 - 17.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Common Council approves rates charged to users of various multi-purpose fields and ball diamonds in the City. The rates proposed are expected to recoup funds necessary to meet the City's approved 2019 General Fund Revenue budget.

The Outdoor Facility Allocation Policy determines how ballfields, multipurpose fields, tennis courts and arena floor rentals are allocated to users.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

M&C 2016-51 outlined a four plan (2016-2019) to gradually increase rates charged to users who book ball fields in Saint John. Common Council at the time approved the 2016 rates only.

REPORT

Field Rates

The field rates for 2019 that were proposed in the 2016 plan and that Council is currently being asked to endorse are as follows:

Field Class/ Age Category	2019 Rates
Class A Adult Hourly	\$ 42.24
Class A Youth Hourly	\$ 18.90
Shamrock Artificial Adult Hourly	\$ 74.25
Shamrock Artificial Youth Hourly	\$ 45.50
Class B Adult Hourly	\$ 27.89
Class B Youth Hourly	\$ 6.25
Class C Adult Hourly	\$ 25.41
Class C Youth Hourly	\$ 5.50
Class A Adult Daily	\$ 337.92
Class A Youth Daily	\$ 151.20
Shamrock Artificial Adult Daily	\$ 594.00
Shamrock Artificial Youth Daily	\$ 364.00
Class B Adult Daily	\$ 223.08
Class B Youth Daily	\$ 50.00
Class C Adult Daily	\$ 203.28
Class C Youth Daily	\$ 44.00

Use of these rates are projected to recover funds from user fees necessary to meet the approved 2019 General Fund Revenue budget for ballfields of \$152,758. These user fees are expected to recover 11% of the \$1,429,986 cost to operate and maintain these facilities as budgeted in 2019.

A four year gradual rate adjustment plan directed by Council in 2016 is presented in the table below. Rates were adjusted to match additional revenue goals of \$53,000 in 2016 and \$10,000 per year in each of 2017, 2018, 2019 with more of the additional revenue being generated from adult users than youth users.

Field Class/ Age Category	2016 Rates	2017 Rates	2018 Rates	2019 Rates
Class A Adult Hourly	\$ 33.28	\$ 35.84	\$ 39.68	\$ 42.24
Class A Youth Hourly	\$ 15.30	\$ 16.20	\$ 17.10	\$ 18.90
Shamrock Artificial Adult Hourly	\$ 63.25	\$ 68.75	\$ 71.50	\$ 74.25
Shamrock Artificial Youth Hourly	\$ 38.50	\$ 42.00	\$ 43.75	\$ 45.50
Class B Adult Hourly	\$ 21.97	\$ 23.66	\$ 26.20	\$ 27.89
Class B Youth Hourly	\$ 4.25	\$ 4.50	\$ 5.50	\$ 6.25
Class C Adult Hourly	\$ 20.02	\$ 21.56	\$ 23.87	\$ 25.41
Class C Youth Hourly	\$ 3.74	\$ 3.96	\$ 4.84	\$ 5.50
Class A Adult Daily	\$ 266.24	\$ 286.72	\$ 317.44	\$ 337.92
Class A Youth Daily	\$ 122.40	\$ 129.60	\$ 136.80	\$ 151.20
Shamrock Artificial Adult Daily	\$ 506.00	\$ 550.00	\$ 572.00	\$ 594.00
Shamrock Artificial Youth Daily	\$ 308.00	\$ 336.00	\$ 350.00	\$ 364.00
Class B Adult Daily	\$ 175.76	\$ 189.28	\$ 209.56	\$ 223.08
Class B Youth Daily	\$ 34.00	\$ 36.00	\$ 44.00	\$ 50.00
Class C Adult Daily	\$ 160.16	\$ 172.48	\$ 190.96	\$ 203.28
Class C Youth Daily	\$ 29.92	\$ 31.68	\$ 38.72	\$ 44.00

The field classification is driven by the characteristics of the fields and the amenities available (i.e. regulation sized, lights, etc...). The field classification in turn also impacts the level of maintenance offered. Typically Class 'A' fields are located in major district parks such as Memorial Field, Allison Grounds and Forest Hills complex. Class 'B' and 'C' fields are more neighbourhood-based and have lower overall usage.

Allocation Policy

A proposed new Sports Field Rates and Outdoor Facility Allocation Policy is attached to this report for Council endorsement.

The major policy components are a priority scheduling process, residency requirements, deadline for requests, payment terms, cancellation procedure, concessions, advertisement at facilities and insurance requirements. This new policy is very similar to the Ice Allocation Policy that Council has previously adopted.

It has been the past practice for groups to mass book field time from April through to November. This created a first come first serve system for fields. Staff felt this was not a fair allocation process. Using the feedback from the groups, seasonal application deadlines were established for spring, summer, and fall. (four groups provided feedback- Saint John Soccer, Moosehead Slo Pitch, Irish Rugby and Fundy Minor Football- all provided deadline dates as to when they needed field confirmations). The booking deadlines have now been in place for 2 seasons.

Scheduling priority process, residency requirements, insurance requirements and cancelation deadline were adopted from the Ice Allocation Policy to maintain consistency throughout all facility rentals.

The Outdoor Facility Allocation Policy was sent out to 27 field/arena league users on January 10th, 2019 for input.

These users included Saint John Soccer, Fundy Minor Football, Fundy Soccer, Saint John Little League, Lancaster Little League, Fundy Minor Football, Fundy Lacrosse, Fog City Rollers, Saint John Junior Roller Derby, Molson Coed Softball League, Moosehead Slot Pitch, Jr and Sr Alpines, Moose Light Softball, Fundy Lacrosse, Wanderers Football, Southern United, Saint John Church League, Women's Slo Pitch, Pirates Baseball, Phillies Baseball, Saint John Ultimate Frisbee, Womens and Men's touch football and all high schools.

Minimal feedback was received and did not justify changes to the policy as written

Examples of such concerns included:

- Implementing the 5 business day cancellation policy was a concern for two users.
- One user looked for clarification on advertising at facilities and since has been contacted by the Operations Manager and a resolution reached.
- One user suggested having a 'true up' at the end of the season regarding bookings. Essentially, the group wanted to report after the fact what times they did not use the facility and in return not be charged. It was explained to the user that having a true up at the end of the season doesn't allow the city to maximize bookings. If a group was scheduled to use the arena floor from 6pm-9pm and ended up only using 6pm-7pm there are 2 hours that could have sold but the city did not have the opportunity. Also, specifically to the arena floor rentals where the groups are key holders, staffs need to know when people are in our facilities. Night Security does their checks based around the printed schedule and staff schedule maintenance around the printed schedule.

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STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This report aligns with Council's Growth priority in relation to revenue generation, Fiscal Responsibility by linking revenue sources with cost of service delivery, and Valued Service Delivery in clarifying how field users can expect to be served by a transparent Allocation Policy.

The adoption of the Sports Field Rates and Outdoor Facility Allocation Policy satisfies a Play SJ deliverable.

City staff has highlighted the 11% user fee recovery rate relative to Operating & Maintenance costs with the recommended 2019 field rates to make a link to a portion of the City's Operating Budget Policy:

USER CHARGES AND FEES

1. The City will seek to balance the need for services and the ability to raise fees, charges, and taxes to support those services. User fees will be assessed relative to the cost of providing the services;
2. Service areas should assess the cost of activities supported by user fees on an annual basis to identify the impact of inflation and other cost increases;
3. Council may decide against full cost recovery in cases where greater public benefit is demonstrated;
4. Service areas should develop cost recovery policies that will be used as a basis for setting the charges or fees, as well as the service cost recovery goals based on quantitative targets (percentage recovery targets) and how the charges and fees will be levied and collected;

SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

The recommended field rates are projected to recover funds budgeted in the 2019 General Fund Revenue budget. The recommended policy provides a standardized booking procedure and clear payment terms for all users.

INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Facility user groups were consulted in preparing the Allocation Policy as detailed previously in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

2019 Sports Field Rates and Outdoor Facility Allocation Policy
M&C 2016-51 Revised 2016 Sports Field User Rates