

CORPORATE REPORT

To: Recreation, Culture & Airpark Services Commission
From: Christina Vugteveen, Manager of Parks and Recreation

Date: 2020-10-20
File No: 7710-01

Subject: Recreation, Culture and Airpark Services Facilities Update October 2020

INTENT

This report is intended to advise the Recreation, Culture & Airpark Services Commission of the re-start plan while dealing with the impacts of COVID-19. Staff is not looking for a recommendation and has forwarded this information should members want clarification or to discuss the item further.

STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS

Foster a Strong & Diverse Economy
Support Healthy & Sustainable Community
Provide Responsive & Effective Public Services

BACKGROUND

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hope and Area Recreation Centre was closed to the public effective March 16, 2020. Since the closure, staff have been busy and working towards a re-start plan which will be able to serve the public while meeting the requirements set out by the authorities.

DISCUSSION

The opening of both the Almer Carlson Pool and the Hope and Area Recreation Centre has been highly anticipated by the community and staff. The Province of British Columbia's *Restart Plan* includes the restoration of services under enhanced protocols dependent on the direction from various authorities, including the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control, Fraser Health and WorkSafeBC, as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve. The British Columbia Recreation & Parks Association, various aquatics and sports associations and governing bodies, and municipal liaisons have been working together to create guidelines, approved by the Province, for re-opening and lifting restrictions. This phased approach to re-opening recreation facilities is continuing to evolve.

Safety Plans

Safety plans are a requirement that establishes a framework within which facilities and programs can operate according to the guidelines set out by the Province. Separate plans have been completed for the fitness area (weights and cardio), the arena, the Almer Carlson (AC) Pool, Dan Sharrers Aquatic Centre (DSAC) Pools, Club Child, and the airpark. All safety plans are posted at www.fvrd.ca for public information and are updated as needed. Basic requirements include increased health messaging signage, enhanced cleaning procedures, and public usage protocols to incorporate physical distancing. Supplies have been secured, and safe work policies and procedures have been implemented for staff. Training has occurred, and current vacancies are being filled. Staff will continue working towards the best possible outcome.

AC Pool

We had a successful month of operations in August on a schedule of 11:30 am-6 pm. Customers were able to book a time to come and swim by signing up on-line to swim laps or book a family swim. An extra staff member was on site to assist with the requirements for operating a pool under the COVID-19 guidelines.

Fitness

The weight room and the cardio room re-opened in September. Interested patrons are able to sign up for a time slot online or by calling the Recreation Centre. This area is staffed at all times to support the requirements for operating these spaces according to the guidelines, which involves a thorough cleaning and sanitation regimen after each use. Most of the time slots are currently being filled, and we are looking for more staff to be able to offer more hours. We are also in the process of planning for the re-opening of some fitness classes.

Arena

The arena re-opened to rentals in September. All user groups are required to have COVID safety plans in place, and there is extra time between bookings to allow for required cleaning and sanitization. A few groups have decided not to rent facilities as it's not feasible for them to operate in a COVID environment, but many others have made adaptations and have established proactive plans, including minor hockey and figure skating. The arena is in great shape to welcome these enthusiastic groups back to the facility as the dressing rooms and dark hallways received a fresh paint facelift during closure, and a long-awaited modern new score clock has been installed.

Club Child

Club Child, our after-school child care program, opened back up in September and welcomed 24 children. This program takes place at Coquihalla Elementary School. There are many modified protocols in place to facilitate the program according to the COVID-19 requirements, including an additional staff person. The program is being well received by the community.

DSAC Pool

All pool projects have been completed, including the chemical feed system replacement which was led by the District of Hope. The swim club is back in the pool on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and we are anticipating a gradual opening of the pool to the public by the end of October with some aquafit classes, lane swims, and public swims with registered timeslots pending sufficient staffing levels.

Recreation Programs

This summer, staff created "Camp in a Box," which was well-received by the community. Staff is working on plans to reinstate programs where possible, including swimming lessons and public skating while finding innovative solutions to expand recreation in other ways.

Other

The facility has been refreshed and is ready to welcome the public back. Project highlights include new fitness equipment and layout, as well as a new lift to the mezzanine which is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2020.

COST

Cost savings during the closure will be used to fund the extra staffing requirements for fitness and Club Child. An overview of the operational changes with COVID-19 will be discussed as a part of the 2021 budget deliberations.

CONCLUSION

The use of recreation facilities is an important part of the Hope, Area A, and Area B communities. Staff are working hard to restore services to the public in a safe and effective manner.

COMMENTS BY:

Stacey Barker, Director of Regional Services: Reviewed and supported.

Kelly Lownsbrough, Director of Financial Services: Reviewed and supported.

Jennifer Kinneman, Chief Administrative Officer: Reviewed and supported.