

To: Regional and Corporate Services Committee

Date: 2018-03-13

From: Stacey Barker, Deputy Director of Regional Programs

File No: 3920-20-21771

Subject: Draft Fraser Valley Regional District Vedder River Campground Bylaw No 1476, 2018

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board give first, second, and third readings and adoption to the bylaw cited as "*Fraser Valley Regional District Vedder River Campground Regulation, Fees and Other Charges Bylaw No. 1476, 2018*".

STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS

Provide Responsive & Effective Public Services
Support Environmental Stewardship

PRIORITIES

Priority #4 Tourism
Priority #5 Outdoor Recreation

BACKGROUND

The Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) acquired the Vedder River Campground in 2017 from the Cultus Lake Parks Board offering a strategic addition to the Regional Parks Program. The campground is ideally situated along the Vedder River and helps fulfil the high demand for camping and outdoor amenities within the region. 2018 will be the first operational season under FVRD management and a draft bylaw has been prepared to regulate the use and administration of this campground by the FVRD, their contractors, and visitors.

DISCUSSION

To provide continuity for visitors, the draft FVRD bylaw is modelled on the prior Cultus Lake Park bylaw. The FVRD bylaw includes updated language and policies to align with FVRD Parks and BC Parks use regulations. It also identifies camping rates and fees which are compatible with other campsites in the region and policies to help ensure the safety and enjoyment by users of the campsite and to protect the environment.

Provisions within the *Fraser Valley Regional District Vedder River Campground Regulation, Fees and Other Charges Bylaw No. 1476, 2018* include the following:

- Discounts are provided for weekly, monthly, and seasonal stays.
- Three-night minimum reservations are required for long weekends.
- Winter camping is not permitted.

- Site alterations are only permitted with approval by the Campground Supervisor and must be completely removed upon check-out.
- Quiet hours are from 10pm to 8am. Check in time is 2pm. Check out time is 11am.
- Vehicles within the campground must have a valid permit, be fully insured, and not left idling.
- Pets must have identification tags, be kept on a leash or in a pen, and not be left unattended.
- Basic Wi-Fi is now included within the nightly camping rates. If campers choose to upgrade, premium Wi-Fi is available.
- Seasonal rates have not increased on the site for several years and are below market value. Rate increases are proposed for 2019 and 2020.

Rates for seasonal camping sites are currently highly discounted and have not been increased for several years. The current rate is \$2,200 for the season, and it will apply for 2018 as seasonal campers booked their sites last year prior to any rate review. There is high demand for these seasonal sites, reflected in a standing waitlist. Market research, including using comparable sites at Sunnyside Campground at Cultus Lake, suggests these sites are being severely undervalued presently. Staff are proposing a phased in rate increase to \$3,510 over the next two years. This would bring the rate closer to market value (e.g., the lowest price seasonal site at Sunnyside is currently \$3,840 per season), and it still represents a significant value to the camper as it is the equivalent of paying for three months and getting two months for free. Staff do recognize that the proposal is a significant rate increase (30% for 2019 and another 30% increase for 2020). The Committee could consider phasing in over a longer period if that is preferred. Staff will also be evaluating usage and demand throughout this season.

The general camping season runs from the Easter long weekend through the fall salmon fishing season in October; with seasonal camping from May 1 to September 30. Reservations for the campground can be made online or over the phone. The FVRD and the Campground Operator will be monitoring usage at the campground, and will be identifying opportunities or challenges that arise throughout the camping season. If bylaw amendments are suggested to enhance the operation or use of the campground, amendments will be recommended to the Board at a future time. It is important campers continue to enjoy the campground in a safe and responsible manner and the costs for management of the campground are adequately reflected in the fees.

COST

Revenues generated from this bylaw are included in the 5 year financial plan and are used to offset operating expenditures with the net proceeds being placed into reserves for future allocation.

CONCLUSION

Draft Bylaw No. 1476, 2018 will regulate the use and management of the Vedder River Campground, and outlines the fees and charges associated with it. The bylaw remains consistent with many provisions of the prior bylaw utilized by the Cultus Lake Parks Board for the site but has been updated to reflect policies utilized in the FVRD Parks Bylaw and by BC Parks. Most of the proposed camping

rates have remained similar to pre-existing rates, with some increases to reflect new services provided and to remain comparable with other campgrounds within the region.

COMMENTS BY:

Barclay Pitkethly, Director of Regional Programs

Reviewed and supported.

Mike Veenbaas, Director of Financial Services

Reviewed and supported.

Paul Gipps, Chief Administrative Officer

Reviewed and supported