

**Subject:** Summer Aquatic Update**Recommendation:**

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2020-0079; and THAT Council approve, pending Provincial and Regional Public Health permission and/or guidelines, the opening of the Pelham Pool for public swim and possibly swim lessons during the summer of 2020.**

**Background:**

The Pelham Pool is normally bustling beginning mid-June and throughout July and August from 8am to 8pm 7 days a week. On average the pool sees 4500 users annually. Activities normally include swim lessons for all ages; lane swim; aquafit; swim team and public swims. Staff have opened a "wait list registration" for swim lessons to determine demand and there are currently 122 participants on the list.

RCW Facility Staff normally begin preparing the facility in May for opening, which requires approximately 2-3 weeks preparation. The pool building houses guard room, office, change room and washrooms that are used by pool and skateboard park participants.

**Analysis:**

Pending the legal capacity to open public pools due to Covid 19, staff proposes the facility be prepared for opening and when the Province lifts the restrictions, we are able to open. The Centre for Disease Control (CDC) has stated "There is no evidence that the virus COVID-19 can be spread to people through the water in pools, hot tubs, spas or water play areas. Proper operation and maintenance (including disinfection with chlorine and bromine) of these facilities should inactivate the virus in water". This statement supports the opening of the pool.

Over the past several months staff have been in contact and participating in training webinars with the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association and the Royal Life Saving Society in preparation of opening. The Royal Life Saving Society is lobbying the Province to open public pools the same time as beaches. The concern is Lifeguards do not supervise many beaches and there will be an increase in

drownings. Supervised pools will lessen the risk. New operating procedures will be implemented and staff training would be provided in, COVID 19 Aquatic Procedures; First Aid and Resuscitation Protocols update; and PPE for Aquatic and Facility Staff update.

Opening would be gradual, beginning with public swim and eventually swim lessons under the guidance of the Royal Life Saving Society. All staff and participants would be screened and encouraged to arrive ready to swim. Change rooms would not be available. We are fortunate, the facility has outdoor showers to be used prior to pool entry.

Staff have been in contact with the seasonal aquatic staff to confirm the willingness to work this summer, if approvals are received, administration is confident there would be enough staff to fulfill the operation.

Staff have been in communication with other Niagara Municipalities regarding pools. Many are still waiting to see when the Province will lift the restriction. City of Niagara Falls Council has approved preparation and opening all 5 pools pending Provincial restrictions being lifted.

### **Financial Considerations:**

2020 Budget – the existing budget is adequate for pool operations. There will be some additional cleaning costs, which are being recorded in the Town's overall Coronavirus costs in the hopes that they qualify for some type of future upper government reimbursement.

The 2020 aquatics budget is a net cost of \$62,000 of which \$30,000 pertains to the maintenance and operations of the pool and net cost of \$32,000 pertains to the delivery of the pool programs. If Council elects not to offer aquatics services in 2020, some amount of money on maintenance and upkeep must still be spent to maintain the assets. This is estimated at approximately \$20,000. This is a net savings of \$42,000.

The Town derives approximately \$59,000 in annual revenues from its aquatic services, which would be entirely foregone if the pool remains closed in 2020. There would also be savings of \$101,000 from closing the pool. The total net savings is \$42,000.

### **Alternatives Reviewed:**

Assuming it becomes permissible to operate a public pool, the Town has adequate resources budgeted to offer all of its regular aquatic services. As an alternative,

closing the pool could save approximately \$42,000. The Town is operating with a significant budget deficit at this point because of Coronavirus related costs.

**Strategic Plan Relationship: Build Strong Communities and Cultural Assets**

The Pelham Pool has been an important part of the Community offering a safe place to enjoy an afternoon/evening swim. With the heat alerts the pool has always been available as a cooling facility. Swim Lessons have always been very popular with classes filling quickly.

**Consultation:**

Ontario Recreation Facilities Association  
Royal Life Saving Society  
Area Municipalities  
Cowan Insurance

The Town's Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer provided financial analysis.

**Other Pertinent Reports/Attachments:**

NIL

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