



PO Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Chebucto Community Council**  
**July 7, 2009**

**TO:** Chair and Members of Chebucto Community Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** *Denise Schofield*  
Denise Schofield, Acting Director, Community Development

**DATE:** June 4, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Chocolate Lake Community Recreation Centre, 14 Purcell's Cove  
Road, Halifax

### INFORMATION REPORT

**ORIGIN:**

February 2, 2009 Chebucto Community Council meeting (item 12.3)

MOVED BY Councillor Mosher, seconded by Councillor Walker, that Chebucto Community Council request a staff report on the Chocolate Lake Recreation Centre including current and future required operating costs to maintain the facility and further, any options for the continuation of core programming for the future. MOTION WAS PUT AND PASSED.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Chocolate Lake Community Recreation Centre (CLCRC) serving the Mainland South and Chebucto communities is located at 14 Purcell's Cove Road in Halifax. The building was constructed in the 1940's and served as the South Armdale School until the early 1970's. At that time the City of Halifax took possession of the property and changed the use to a Community Recreation Centre. It has been a Community Recreation Centre for over thirty-five (35) years but was never "purpose-built" for recreation.

The Centre has a total floor space of approximately 2600 square metres; three storeys not including the sub-basement. The Centre includes a gymnasium/stage, an air conditioned fitness and weight training facility, dance and art studios, photography darkroom, preschool play facility, three meeting and program rooms, recreation offices, kitchen, washrooms/showers, and a number of storage areas. For over thirty years it has been the home of the Atlantic Karate Club and more recently the Nova Scotia Lifeguard Services.

Outdoor facilities include a baseball diamond, recreational play field and parking lot. Across from the Centre is a supervised beach area at Chocolate Lake and outdoor tennis and basketball courts.

Since 1990 the Chocolate Lake Community Recreation Centre has undergone a number of upgrades including:

- new windows and vinyl siding
- new electrical room and new wiring throughout the building
- construction of new offices and front desk reception area
- fitness centre and weight training facility
- upgrades to the heating system
- new hardwood floor in the gymnasium
- paved parking lot
- new roofing

The Chocolate Lake Community Recreation Centre provides recreational opportunities, programs and services for preschoolers, children, youth, adults, and seniors from surrounding neighbourhoods including Springvale, Armdale, Cowie Hill, Kline Heights, Purcell's Cove, Jollimore, Fleming Heights, Herring Cove as well as other Mainland South and Chebucto communities, and other HRM communities.

The following are program statistics for 2007:

### **2007 STATISTICS**

Number of Programs - 288

Total Registration - 4,184

Program Hours - 5,408

Fitness Memberships - 623

Rental Hours - 3,455

**2007 OPERATING COSTS**

Total Revenues .....	<b>\$211,293.00</b>
Community Recreation Services Expenditures...	\$358,068.00
TPW Expenditures .....	\$112,364.00
Total Expenditures.....	<b>\$470,432.00</b>
<b>Net.....</b>	<b>-\$259,139.00</b>

Operating costs are less than a number of other recreation centres of similar or smaller size including Needham, George Dixon, St. Andrew's, Findlay and LeBrun Centres.

**BUILDING CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORT**

In January 2008, a Building Condition Assessment Report was submitted by Dillon Consulting Limited. The assessment included the site, building structure, building envelope, mechanical, electrical, interior finishes, life safety, elevators, and function. This report detailed physical repairs to remedy deficiencies and refurbishment into three separate categories and time frames:

- (1) Immediate Improvements (should be carried out immediately). Estimated Cost - \$105,700.
- (2) Short Term Improvements (1-5 years). Estimated Cost - \$274,325.
- (3) Long Term Improvements (6-10 years). Estimated Cost - \$265,950.

The Assessment of the building was performed using methods and procedures that are consistent with good commercial and customary practice as outlined in ASTM Standard E2018-01 for conducting a building condition assessment by performing a walk through survey and the Protocols for Building Condition Assessment published by the NRC in 1993.

**DISCUSSION**

The process for considering the future of any recreation facility is best described in the 2008 Community Facilities Master Plan. Before a building reaches the end of its life cycle, there is a well defined framework that begins by reassessing community needs to determine if a new or replacement building is indeed required or if community need can be met through other existing infrastructure. The Chocolate Lake center has a remaining life span of approximately 10 -15 years.

It is feasible for HRM to continue to operate the Chocolate Lake Community Recreation Centre under the current service delivery model for both building operations and programming at this time. There are capital costs as per the Building Condition Assessment report associated with the continued use of the centre over the next ten years, but these are consistent with the age of the building. As the building nears the end of its life cycle, the process for reassessing community needs would be enacted.

**July 7, 2009**

The centre is popular with residents of all ages and therefore Community Recreation Services intends to utilize the building into the foreseeable future taking into consideration the building limitations. As noted earlier, the Community Facilities Master Plan describes the framework for assessing and validating community requirements for new or replacement facilities. Therefore, as CLCRC nears the end of its lifecycle, the best option is to initiate a community study to assess needs and determine the appropriate course of action.

Exploring the feasibility of constructing a new, smaller but more efficient recreation centre to replace the Chocolate Lake Centre either on the existing site or on HRM property on Herring Cove Road adjacent to Chocolate Lake should not be considered until such time as the building nears the end of its lifecycle and the full process for assessing needs and determining options is completed.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

None at this time.

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN**


This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

None

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/agenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Hugh MacDonald, Acting Coordinator, Community Recreation Services, 479-4486

Report Approved by:   
Karen MacTavish, General Manager, Community Recreation Services, 490-4734