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PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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Western Region Community Council
June 26, 2006

TO: Chair and Members of Western Region Community Council

SUBMITTED BY: Cathie O'Toole
Cathie O'Toole, CGA - A/Director, Financial Services

DATE: June 6, 2006

SUBJECT: **Revision of Boundary for Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre Area Rate**

ORIGIN

The purpose of this report is to determine if the Interim Area Rate Guidelines have been satisfied thus far with regard to revising the boundary for the existing area rate for the Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre (HWCC).

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Western Region Community Council approve :

- 1. That the boundary for the Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre area rate be revised in accordance with the map in Appendix B of this report to include only the communities of Harrietsfield and Williamswood effective with the 2006-07 fiscal year.**
- 2. The 2006-07 Business Plan and Operating Budget for the Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre attached to this report (Appendix D).**
- 3. That the area rate for the 2006-07 fiscal year be set at \$0.019 per \$100 of residential and resource assessment within the mapped area depicted in Appendix B of this report.**

BACKGROUND

The Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre (HWCC) is owned by HRM and managed by a community board of directors under a management agreement with HRM. Serving the “Sambro Loop”, the centre provides after school and pre school programs, summer day camps, public Internet access site programs (otherwise known as Community Access Programs, or CAP site), dart leagues, dances for adults, youth and preteens as well as a series of community events including an Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony, Heritage Evenings, and a family fishing day. The HWCC employs a manager, but also relies on the many volunteer hours of the residents, Board and committee members who chaperone dances, tend bar, organize special events, and offer their business and organizational skills to the facility.

The original mandate for the area rate revenue was to fund the mortgage payments for the HWCC. The last mortgage payment was made in the 2005-06 fiscal year. The Board of Directors for the HWCC determined that the revenue from the area rate is necessary on a continuing basis to ensure that the facility will be properly maintained as it ages and to fund the increasing cost of repairs, cleaning service, and utilities. They also proposed that some of the revenue be used to establish a capital reserve for major repairs and renovations and that some of the funds be used to support program delivery.

The catchment area for the original area rate extends from Harrietsfield around the “Sambro Loop” to Herring Cove. A map of the current catchment area is provided in Appendix “A”. A list of communities in the current catchment area is provided in the Discussion section.

With the expiration of the original mandate and the area rate with it, continuation of this area rate under a new mandate is equivalent to implementing a new area rate. The Interim Area Rate Guidelines specify the requirements for implementation of a new area rate. These Guidelines were adopted by Council in January 2000 to create a process to assist communities to establish new area rates, ensure that all taxpayers have an opportunity to participate in setting a rate, and ensure that rates are set only for valid municipal purposes and not for services already covered by the general rate.

DISCUSSION

The current status of this area rate in terms of the Interim Area Rate Guidelines is as follows:

- 1. Area rates can only be used for the provision of services within the municipal mandate; services traditionally provided by the municipality.***

Section 65 (ag) of the Municipal Government Act states that “Council may expend money required by the municipality for playgrounds, trails, bicycle paths, swimming pools, ice arenas and other recreational facilities.” The Halifax Regional Municipality and its predecessor municipal units have

traditionally funded, either entirely or partially through partnerships, the construction and ongoing operating costs of recreation facilities.

- 2. Area rates are not to be used to provide different levels of a municipal service within urban and suburban areas where said service is covered by the general tax rate.***

The communities to which the area rate is applied are entirely outside the urban and suburban areas of HRM. Further, the HWCC is not duplicating any services currently provided directly by HRM to the community.

- 3. In order for a proposed new area rate to move to the process as outlined in #4 below, it must have the support of the area's Councillor(s).***

The catchment area for this area rate falls entirely within District 18. Councillor Adams was advised by staff that with the expiration of the mandate for this area rate, it would be necessary to consult with the communities within the catchment area to determine if the majority of property owners supported continuing the area rate for a new mandate. The Councillor indicated his support for continuing the area rate if that was the wish of the majority.

- 4. Proposals for new area rates must be advertised publicly, clearly identifying affected areas, the purpose for the rate, rate information and the duration the rate is expected to be charged. A public meeting will be held and those attending the meeting will be informed of the rationale for the rate and consulted on its appropriateness.***

In February 2006, an Area Tax Rate Ballot (Appendix C) was mailed out to all property owners in the catchment area. A stamped envelope was included for convenience of returning the ballot. The ballot included background information on the original purpose of the area rate, details on what the area rate revenue would be used for in the future, the amount of the area rate, a phone number to call for more information, how the completed ballots could be returned, and the deadline for doing so. Property owners were asked whether or not they supported continuing the area rate. On the reverse side of the ballot was information regarding the services provided by the HWCC along with the proposed 2006-07 operating budget for the area rate revenue.

A public meeting was held to discuss the area rate on March 2, 2006 at the Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre at 1138 Old Sambro Road, Harrietsfield. The date, time, location, and purpose of the meeting were indicated on the Area Tax Rate Ballot which was mailed to every property owner within the existing catchment area.. About 20 residents attended the meeting.

The results of the balloting were as follows:

**Summary of Balloting Results by Community
 Harrietsfield-Williamswood Community Centre**

Community	Ballots/ Properties	Votes "Yes"	Votes "No"	Response Rate	% Voting "Yes"
Bald Rock	33	3	17	60.6%	15.0%
Bear Cove	32	3	7	31.3%	30.0%
Duncan's Cove	57	8	9	29.8%	47.1%
East Pennant	83	15	31	55.4%	32.6%
Halibut Bay	48	2	24	54.2%	7.7%
Harrietsfield	242	56	37	38.4%	60.2%
Herring Cove	25	3	6	36.0%	33.3%
Ketch Harbour	212	25	63	41.5%	28.4%
Portuguese Cove	288	27	79	36.8%	25.5%
Sambro	208	31	55	41.3%	36.0%
Sambro Creek	41	10	10	48.8%	50.0%
Sambro Head	116	16	25	35.3%	39.0%
West Pennant	128	42	33	58.6%	56.0%
Williamswood	685	174	101	40.1%	63.3%
Total:	2,198	415	497	41.5%	45.5%

912 out of 2,198 ballots were returned; a response rate of 41.5%. The balloting results indicate that while the majority of respondents in the existing catchment area did not want to continue the area rate, a majority within the communities of Harrietsfield and Williamswood did support the area rate and the new mandate for it. The Community Centre is located in Harrietsfield. Williamswood is the next nearest community.

- With the concurrence of the Councillor, the request is forwarded to the Community Council for review and a recommendation to Halifax Regional Council. Where a Community Council does not exist, the request will go directly to Halifax Regional Council.*

The purpose of this report is to provide the Western Region Community Council with the necessary information required to consider making a recommendation to Halifax Regional Council for continuing this area rate within a revised catchment area. The results of the public meeting and vote were outlined previously in this report, and the implications to the Municipality are identified under the Budget Implications section which follows.

- Any proposed new area rates recommended by a Community Council (or, in the absence of a Community Council, the Councillor for the area) will be submitted to Halifax Regional Council through a staff report with a recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer. The staff report will identify the implications to the Municipality*

along with the results of any public meeting.

7. *Halifax Regional Council is responsible for approving all area rates.*

Completion of steps 6 and 7 are contingent on the Western Region Community Council approving the Recommendation contained in this report.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

As the majority of funding is from the area rate, there is minimal impact on the HRM General Operating Budget. The transfer from the rural general rate (to offset for not being able to levy the area rate against commercial and business occupancy assessment) will be reduced from \$6,800 to \$600.

The largest impact will be on the budget of the HWCC since the area rate revenue raised will drop by more than one-half from \$44,300 to \$19,900. As a result, the HWCC has a significantly reduced capacity to fund some of the items referred to in the Background section of this report. This is reflected in their revised 2006-07 business plan and budget which is included in Appendix D.

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.

ALTERNATIVES

Community Council could choose to not change the existing boundary. This is not recommended as the majority of ballot respondents in the communities outside Harrietsfield and Williamswood voted not to continue the area rate.

ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A: Existing Boundary of Area Rate for Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre
- Appendix B: Recommended Boundary of Area Rate for Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre
- Appendix C: Sample Area Tax Rate Ballot with information regarding the services provided by the Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre
- Appendix D: 2006-07 Business Plan and Budget for Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre

**Revision of Boundary for Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre Area Rate
Community Council Report**

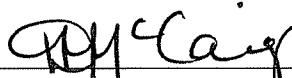
- 6 -

June 26, 2006

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

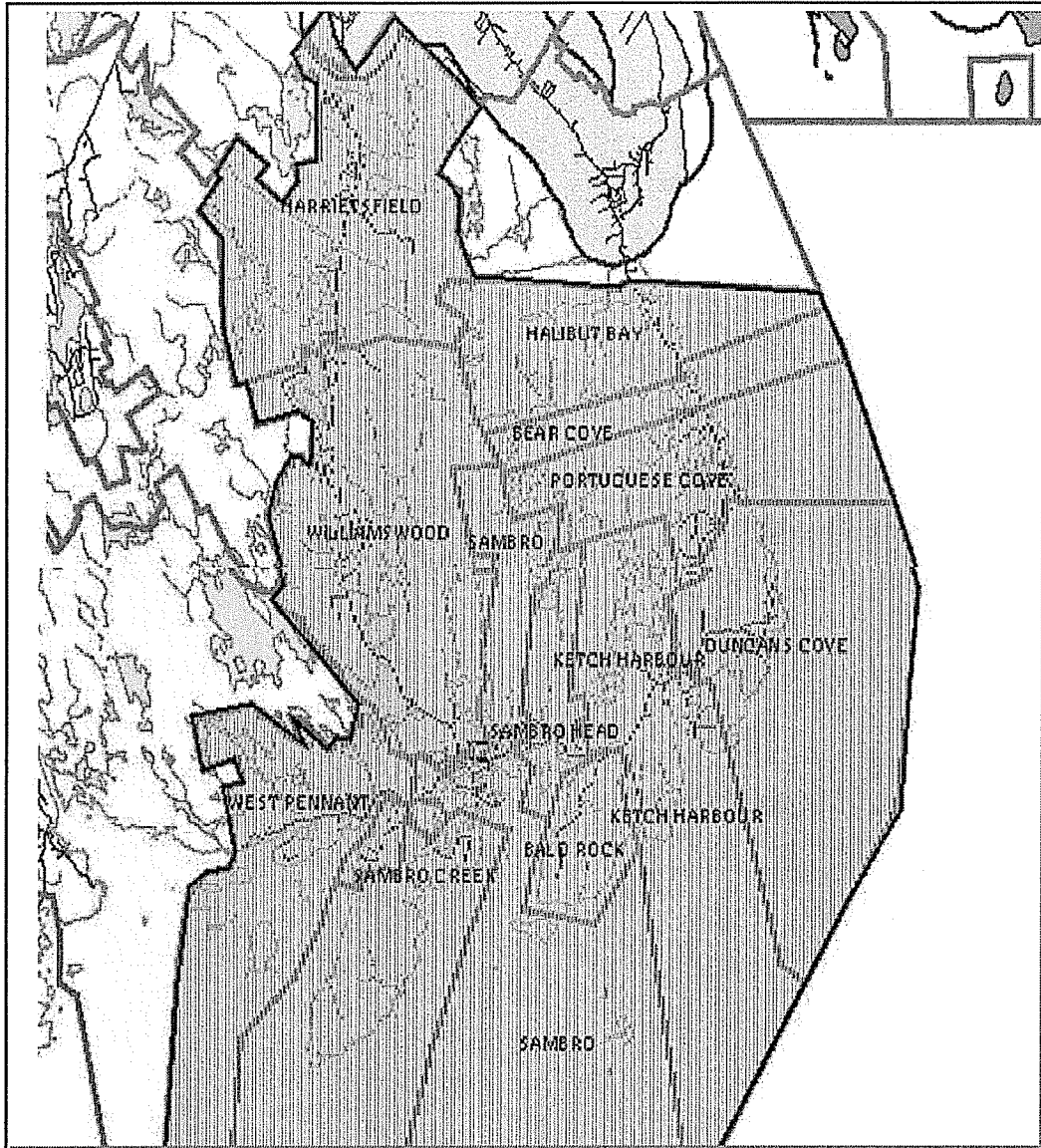
Report Prepared by: Gordon Roussel, Financial Consultant 490-6468

Report Approved by:



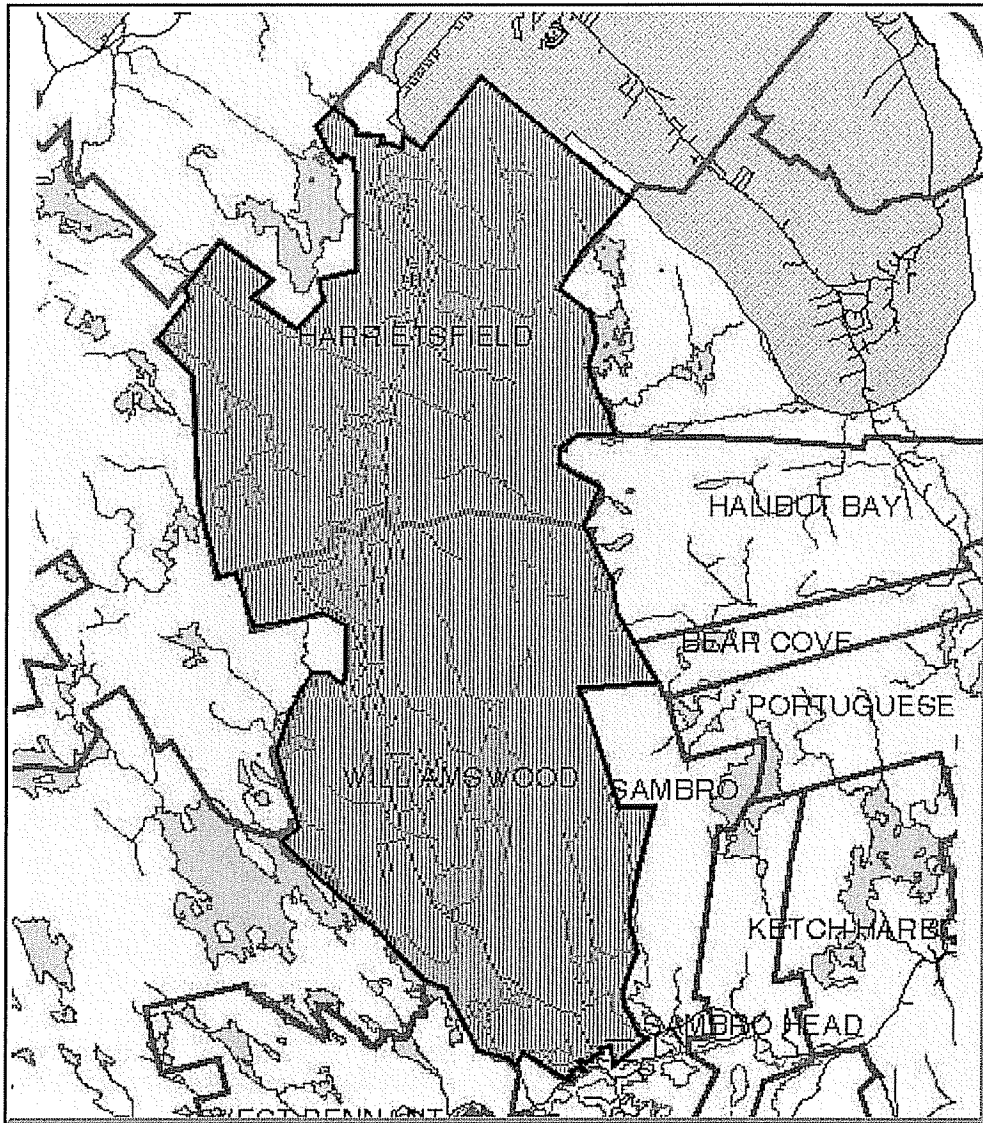
Debbi McCarg, CMA, A/Manager, Budget & Financial Analysis 490-7203

Appendix A



Existing Boundary of Area Rate for Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre

Appendix B



Recommended Boundary of Area Rate for Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre

Appendix C



AREA TAX RATE BALLOT

February 13, 2006

DOE SUSAN AND GEORGE
123 ANYWHERE ST
HARRIETSFIELD NS CA B3V 1B1

Assessment # 01234567
123 ANYWHERE ST
LOT 123 HARRIETSFIELD

Dear Resident:

For the last several years, property owners in the Harrietsfield-Williamswood area have been paying an area rate through their property tax bills to cover the mortgage payments for the Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre. Any surplus funds remaining after the mortgage payments were made has been used to maintain the facility and cover utility costs. The last mortgage payment will occur this year.

In order for the centre to continue to operate, ongoing funding is required to ensure that the facility is properly maintained as it ages, and to cover the increasing cost of repairs, cleaning service, and utilities. The Community Centre Board of Directors is proposing that the area rate be continued in order to cover these ongoing costs, and to establish a capital reserve for major repairs and renovations. The Board is also proposing that some of the funds be used to support program delivery. Please refer to the reverse side of this ballot for details of the services offered by the Centre, as well as the proposed 2006-07 Operating Budget for the Community Centre.

The purpose of this ballot is to determine whether the majority of property owners in the catchment area wish to continue the area rate for the purposes identified above and in the proposed Budget. Property owners within the catchment area pay an area rate of 1.9 cents per \$100 of assessed value on their property tax bills for this service. This equates to \$19.00 per year for every \$100,000 in assessed property value.

To address any questions or concerns which you have, an information meeting will be held:

Thursday, March 2, 2006 @ 7:00 p.m.
Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre
1138 Old Sambro Road, Harrietsfield

Completed ballots may be dropped off at the meeting, faxed to 490-4122, or mailed to:

Councillor's Support Office
Halifax Regional Municipality
PO Box 1749
Halifax, NS B3J 3A5

If you are unable to mail or fax your ballot, or drop it off at the meeting, please contact the Community Centre at 446-4847 for assistance. If you lose your ballot, please contact Gordon Roussel at 490-6468.

Please note that all ballots must be received by March 10, 2006 (No exceptions!). If you are mailing in your ballot please allow adequate time for delivery. The results of the balloting will be posted on the internet at www.hwcc.com and in the Centre's monthly newsletter.

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- YES, I am in favour of continuing the area rate for the Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre and paying an area rate of 1.9 cents per \$100 of assessed value on my property tax bill.
 - NO, I am not in favour of continuing the area rate for the Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre.

Assessment # 01234567

NOTE: Only one vote per assessment number will be counted. Ballots with written-in, typed-in, or altered assessment numbers will not be accepted.

Appendix C

OUR MISSION

To create an open environment and implement action plans which help the area residents increase their sense of Community Centre ownership.

To strengthen community spirit by developing programs and conducting events which address the needs of all the area residents.

To develop programs and services that makes the centre accessible for all community groups.

To implement user- friendly helpful programs that increase the sense of openness and acceptance within the Centre for all area residents.

To develop a business plan, this will ensure the future financial success of the residents' Community Centre

OUR PROGRAMS

After School Program: Offered to children grades primary-six. Programming consists of age appropriate, activities, games, and crafts, we also offer a homework club. Programming runs Monday-Friday from school dismissal until 6:00. We offer full day programming on school in-service days. We also offer a Christmas & March Break Camp, and provide a full Summer Day Camp program.

Friday Night Mixed Darts: Play starts at 7:00, cash bar available; must be 19 years to attend.

Sunday Afternoon Youth Darts: Kids ages 12-18 are invited to come Sunday afternoons from 2:30-4:00 and practise their bulls' eye. Admission is free, and refreshments are served.

Pre-Teen Dances: Offered to kids in grades 4-6 monthly, canteen services are available, we have door and dance prizes to give away.

Youth Dances: Offered to kids in grades 7-9 monthly, canteen services are available, we have door and dance prizes to give away.

Girl's P.J. Parties: Offered to girls of all ages, on a bi-monthly basis. Girls are invited to have their nails, hair and make-up done, so they look their best when they enter the karaoke contest.

OUR SERVICES

Currently we provide program space to the following organizations:

Harrietsfield Brownies: Monday Nights

Harrietsfield Guides: Monday Nights

Gospel Light Kids Club: Friday Nights

Gospel Light Sunday Church Services: Sunday Mornings

Scrap booking: Wednesday Nights

Majorettes: Wednesday Nights

We also offer rental space for anyone wishing to hold a birthday party, wedding, or reunion.

OUR BUDGET 2006-07

ITEM	REVENUE	EXPENSE
AREA RATE	\$45,000.00	
HEATING OIL		\$4500.00
ELECTRICITY		\$3200.00
WASTE WATER		\$5000.00
DRINKING WATER		\$2000.00
PROGRAM DELIVERY SUPPLIES		\$9000.00
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE		\$15000.00
OFFICE SUPPLIES		\$4000.00
SECURITY		\$1500.00
MISCELLANEOUS		\$800.00
TOTAL	\$45000.00	\$45000.00

Appendix D

Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre Annual Business Plan & Budget 2006/2007

Name of Association or Society	Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre
Registry of Joint Stocks Company ID #	301559

	Primary Signing Authority	Secondary Signing Authority
Name & Title	Kevin Prime, Chair	Karyn Hammond, Treasurer
Phone Number	902-475-5001	902-475-3426
Mailing Address	1940 Old Sambro Road Halifax, NS B3V 1B9	40 Gloriavale Drive Halifax, NS B3V 1B6

Business Plan & Budget approval anticipated at Annual General Meeting to be held	June 23, 2006
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Mission and Description of Services Provided (Including who the services are provided to)

Mission

To create an open environment and implement action plans, which help the Harrietsfield/Williamswood Community residents, increase their sense of Community Centre ownership.

To strengthen community spirit by developing programs and conducting events which address the needs of all area residents.

To develop programs and services that makes the centre accessible for all Community groups.

To implement user friendly, helpful programs that increases the sense of openness and acceptance within the centre for all area residents.

To develop a business plan, which will ensure the future financial success of the area residents' Community Centre.

Description of Services Provided

Core Programs:

- After School Program – providing programming to 24 full time and 18 part time offered Mon- Fri to children grades primary-six. Programming consists of arts & crafts, sports, group activities, and homework club. Access to our cap site is also available during our After School Program and scheduled appointments to area residents in need of Internet access or assistance with computers.

- Creative Play For Tots- providing programming to 5 full time and 4 part time offered Mon, Wed, and Fri to children ages 3-5. Programming consists of arts & crafts, music, games, and physical activity.

Extra Curricular Activities:

- Twirl– offered Wednesday evenings to ages 5 -12. Programming consists of teaching dance routines while implementing physical activity. Total amount registered for this past years program 13.

- Darts- offered to ages 19 & up Friday nights with 32 registered members, and to ages 12-18 Sunday afternoons with 7 registered members.

Planned Events:

- Pre-teen Dances offered to children grades four-six once a month.

- Youth Dances offered to children grades seven-nine once a month.

- Girls Night open to ages 5 & up once a month, offering dance, crafts and group activities.

- Boys Night open to ages 5 & up, offering sports, crafts, and group activities.

- Children’s Holiday Parties offered to families in the area to acknowledge and celebrate holidays such as Halloween, Christmas, Valentines Day, and Easter.

- Adult Dances: Halloween, St Patrick’s Day

- Fishing Derby

Rentals:

Offers rental space and equipment to area residents for children and adult birthday parties, family reunions, meetings, and weddings.

GOALS FOR 2006/07	
1.	Start a monthly chip bingo
2.	Hold a semi -annual Dinner and Auction Fundraiser
3.	Create a school readiness program for children entering school in the fall, which will run in conjunction with the Summer Day Camp.
4.	Circulate a needs assessment to area residents to ensure that the centre is continuing to offer the services wanted, and to find out if there is any more services that can be offered.
5.	Recruit more volunteers to lower costs of running programs.
6.	Build a storage building to store centre equipment and property while not in use.
7.	Purchase a new advertisement sign.
8.	Have the lower and upper level driveway paved.
9.	Have exterior of the building painted.

Area Rate Information

Purpose of Area Rate:	Maintain the structure of building and purchase supplies and equipment to offer programming.
Will the Purpose <u>or</u> Amount of the Area Rate change in 2006/07?	Yes
If so, how and why has it changed, and have the majority of homeowners voted to approve the change?	We are now going to utilize some of the area rate funds collected for programming because residents that utilize our programs are unable to pay an increase for service. Yes area residents paying an area rate for the Centre have approved these changes. The amount of the area rate has changed because as of Sept 2006 the mortgage on the building was paid off. Ballots were sent out to residents of the original catchment area and the majority voted against continuing an area rate, however the residents in Harrietsfield and Williamswood came back with a majority vote to continue paying the area rate to support the operations and maintenance of the Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Centre.
Amount of Area Rate for 2006/07:	\$20,500
Area subject to Area Rate:	Harrietsfield and Williamswood
Year Area Rate to Expire (if applicable):	NA
Do you anticipate a surplus or a deficit at the end of this year (2005/06)? How much?	\$8,545 SURPLUS
If a surplus exists at the end of the fiscal year, how is it to be applied?	The surplus will be carried forward to cover maintenance costs.

**Harrietsfield Williamswood Community Center
Budget
2006/07**

ITEM	REVENUE	EXPENSE
Area Rate	\$20,500.00	
Prior Years Area Tax Surplus	\$17,623.00	
Program Revenue	\$61,500.00	
Rental Revenue	\$5000.00	
Donations	\$1000.00	
Fundraising	\$2500.00	
Grants	\$5000.00	
Heating Oil		\$4500.00 (area rate)
Electricity		\$3200.00 (area rate)
Waste Water		\$5000.00 (area rate)
Facility Managers Salary		\$30,500.00
Program Wages		\$27,200.00
Wage Benefits		\$5200.00
Rental Wages		\$2300.00
Program Delivery Supplies		\$11,423.00(area rate)
Custodial Cost & Supplies		\$9000.00
Licensing Fees		\$800.00
Repairs & Maintenance		\$10,000.00 (area rate)
Office Supplies		\$2500.00(area rate)
Security		\$1500.00(area rate)
TOTAL	\$113,123.00	\$113,123.00