



Staff Report

Finance

Report To: COW_Finance_Admin_Fire_Community_Services
Meeting Date: March 18, 2024
Report Number: FAF.24.022
Title: Proposed Amendments to the Fees and Charges By-law, Solid Waste Management Fees By-law, and Water and Sewer Charges By-law – Public Comments
Prepared by: Sam Dinsmore, Acting Director of Finance / Treasurer

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.24.022, entitled “Proposed Amendments to the Fees and Charges By-law, Solid Waste Management Fees By-law, and Water and Sewer Charges By-law” for information purposes.

B. Overview

This report outlines the comments from the Public Meeting for the proposed amendments to the Fees and Charges By-law, Solid Waste Management Fees By-law, and Water and Sewer Charges By-law, as well as Staff’s response to these comments.

C. Background

The proposed amendments to the Fees and Charges By-law, Solid Waste Management Fees By-law, and Water and Sewer Charges By-law were reviewed as part of the 2024 Draft Budget. On March 12th, 2024, the Town held a Public Meeting to provide the public with the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed amendments to the Fees and Charges By-law, Solid Waste Management Fees By-law, and Water and Sewer Charges By-law.

The 2024 budget process and document included the Fees and Charges for each Department. The draft By-laws were advertised as per the Town’s notice policy and included on the Town’s website.

Staff are proposing that these By-laws be presented for Council’s consideration at the April 2nd, 2024 Council Meeting.

The Town received four written comments up to 12:00pm March 8, 2024, in advance of the Public Meeting (Attachment 1), zero after the deadline prior to the Public Meeting and one at the Public Meeting. Below is a summary of the comments received from the public.

D. Analysis

The following comments have been received.

Paul and Nancy Clements

Paul and Nancy Clements provided comments on the user fees for Town facilities. User fees for all facilities increased in the last budget, however the rates for the Hall Rental at Beavery Valley Community Centre where they play pickleball went up substantially higher than any other user group. Paul and Nancy Clements are asking that in this year's budget, the increase be more moderate and are requesting to continue to receive the subsidy.

Staff Response – the fees at the Beaver Valley Community Centre were increased by 3% which is in line with the other increases made to Town fees and charges. Previously the Town didn't have pickleball courts on the arena floor during the off-ice season however that is now an available service, staff include a fee for the first time for this in the 2024 budget.

The subsidy for pickleball has been included in the 2024 fees and charges by-laws at the same rate as it was in 2023.

Kait Murray, Executive Director, Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce

Kait Murray was requested to support one of the Chamber members in objecting to increases in the cost of using the Tomahawk Sports Facilities that are included in the proposed 2024 budget.

Staff Response – the greens fees and season passes at Tomahawk were not changed from 2023 to 2024. A few fees were added, such as the pull-cart rentals, as new services are brought in at this facility.

Andrew Robertson, Mixed Movements

Mr. Robertson provided comments on the Fees and Charges to request the Town continue their 2023 "All Parks (Commercial / For Profit) fee" of \$55 per day, for the 2024 season.

The 2024 draft budget proposes a change to the "All Parks (Commercial / For Profit) fee" of \$27.50 per hour. This change will increase Mr. Robertson's rental cost by as much as 400% year over year, based on an average 8 hour summer camp day.

I have spoken with both Terry Green (Manager of Park and Trails) & Ryan Gibbons (Director of Community Services). Who confirmed with myself, they would agree to keeping the 2023 "All Park (Commercial / For Profit) fee" of \$55 per day, for the 2024 season.

Staff Response – this fee was converted to a per hour fee for commercial/for-profit organizations at the request of another commercial operators. At Council’s direction the Town could carry both the per hour cost (\$27.50) and a full day charge (\$55) through 2024 staff will review these charges to ensure they are sufficient.

Paul Wilson

Mr. Wilson provided comments on the Fees and Charges RE: waste water disposal fees and indicated that the significant increase in the fee is burdensome. Mr. Wilson is urging council and staff to look in to the matter and consider lowering the fee applied to holding tanks back down to an affordable level.

In addition Mr. Wilson spoke at the public meeting regarding this fee. Has a holding tank that requires pump outs. Increase is \$200 per pump out which equates to \$1,000 per year. Used to be a holding tank versus septic tank charge why did the Town unify the charges?

Staff Response – the septage waste fee was increased by 3% as per the Town’s practice in matching fee increases to cost of living increases. Prior to 2023 the Town did have two charges one for holding tanks and one for septic systems however through the 2023 budget this was changed for the following reasons:

- The cost to pump and treat holding tank waste is the same as septage
- The Town considered billing rates of other municipalities and this structure is similar to what is done at neighbouring municipalities.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

N/A

G. Financial Impacts

The fees and charges collected by the Town for various services helps to offset the required costs but back onto the taxpayer through annual property taxes.

H. In Consultation With

Allison Kershaw, Manager of Water and Wastewater Services

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has been the subject of a Public Meeting which took place on March 12th, 2024. Those who provided comments at the Public Meeting, including anyone who has asked to receive notice regarding this matter, has been provided notice of this Staff Report.

Any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Sam Dinsmore, Acting Director of Finance / Treasurer directorfit@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

1. Public Comments

Respectfully submitted,

Sam Dinsmore
Acting Director of Finance / Treasurer

For more information, please contact:
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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	FAF.24.022 Proposed Amendments to Fees and Charges By-laws Public Comments.docx
Attachments:	- FAF.24.022 Attachment 1.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Mar 14, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Sam Dinsmore - Mar 13, 2024 - 9:30 AM

Shawn Everitt - Mar 14, 2024 - 3:19 PM