

## Staff Report

Original signed by: City Manager Johnson

**Report Date:** September 5, 2019  
**Meeting Date:** September 10, 2019 – Joint Planning Committee  
**To:** City Manager  
**From:** Director of Community Services  
**Subject:** RCMP Passes

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### PURPOSE

To provide the North Cariboo Joint Planning Committee with additional information as requested regarding existing programs for emergency services organizations who receive discounted admission to the Arts and Recreation Centre and to provide an overview of various options related to the provision of discounted or free admissions to RCMP members in Quesnel.

### SUMMARY

- At its regular meeting on May 28, 2019 Quesnel City Council passed a resolution to approve the Public Safety and Policing Council Standing Committee recommendation to request that the Cariboo Regional District (CRD) contribute to the cost of providing Recreational Centre family passes to RCMP Officers serving the City of Quesnel and surrounding Electoral Areas A, B, C, and I.
- The motion was included as an agenda item for discussion at the June 11, 2019 Joint Planning Committee meeting where the Committee passed a resolution requesting that staff prepare a report outlining a range of options regarding discounted or free admission to the Arts and Recreation Centre for RCMP members as a means to aid in recruitment and retention.
- The Fees and Charges Bylaw for North Cariboo Recreation and Parks (NCRP) currently includes a Volunteer Rate that provides emergency services volunteers with a reduced admission rate that is equivalent to the Noon Hour Rate.
- Four local fire departments currently pay for the cost of facility admission for their members, and in some cases their families. Funding for these fire departments is provided by the City or the CRD depending on the jurisdiction of the department.
- There is currently no provision in the Fees and Charges Bylaw to waive fees.
- The Fees and Charges Bylaw does include language regarding marketing promotions that allows for temporary discounts and programs to promote facility use.
- The cost of admissions for RCMP members to use the facility may be paid by the members themselves or by the City and/or the CRD to the NCRP Service. Alternately, the cost could be absorbed as lost revenue by the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks Service.
- A wide range of options are presented for consideration by the Committee including:
  - Charging RCMP members the Volunteer Rate.



- Providing new RCMP recruits (and possibly their families) with free admission to the facility for a limited time.
- Providing all RCMP members (and possibly their families) with free admission to the facility.

## **POLICY**

- At its regular meeting on June 11, 2019 the NCJPC passed the following resolution:  
“THAT the North Cariboo Joint Planning Committee direct Staff to prepare a report outlining a range of options regarding the supply of Quesnel & District Arts and Recreation Centre passes to RCMP members to aid in recruitment and retention.”
- The Cariboo Regional District North Cariboo Recreation and Parks Fees and Charges Bylaw includes the following discounted admission for emergency services volunteers:  
“Volunteer Rate  
This rate includes RCMP Auxiliary, Volunteer Fire Department, and Quesnel & District Highway Rescue Society members. The volunteer rate provides these volunteers with admittance at any time, equivalent to the noon hour rate.”
- The Cariboo Regional District North Cariboo Recreation and Parks Fees and Charges Bylaw also include the following language regarding Marketing Promotions:  
“Marketing Promotions:  
In an effort to encourage facility use, temporary promotional discounts and programs may be offered, which include an exemption from a portion of the established fees set under this bylaw. Such programs shall be consistent with the goals and objectives of providing affordable, quality recreation opportunities while remaining fiscally responsible. All such programs will be temporary in nature.”

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- The cost to provide discounted or free admission to RCMP members is unknown and will vary depending upon the number of members included in the program, whether or not family members are included, the limitations if any that are placed on the program, and the frequency of use once a program is implemented.
- If the cost for the program is paid by the RCMP member at a discounted rate it will have no impact on the NCRP budget.
- If free admission is provided, the cost may be paid by the City and/or the CRD at no cost to the NCRP budget, or may be absorbed by the NCRP budget as lost revenue.
- Based on existing programs, the estimated cost for the program, including families, ranges from approximately \$20/year – approximately \$100/year per member. If thirty RCMP members were included in the program for example, the cost might range from \$600 - \$3,000/ yr.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT this report be received for information;**

**AND THAT the Committee provide direction to staff regarding the provision of discounted or free admission to the Arts and Recreation Centre for RCMP members.**



## ATTACHMENTS

- Volunteer Rate Spreadsheet

## BACKGROUND

### Existing Programs:

- The Arts and Recreation Centre currently has programs in place with four emergency service organizations (Quesnel Fire Department, Bouchie Lake Fire Department, 10 Mile Lake Fire Department, West Fraser Fire Department) who pay for their members to have free admission to the Arts and Recreation Centre.
- Under these programs the organization pays for member admissions based on the discounted Volunteer Rate provided for in the Bylaw.
- Three of these programs include family members and one is limited to members only.
- The discount provided in the Fees and Charges Bylaw is for volunteers and does not apply to family members. Family members, if they are included in a program, are charged regular rates.
- In addition to these four programs, individual members of organizations like Quesnel Search and Rescue and the RCMP Auxiliary are provided discounted drop-in admission at the Volunteer Rate provided for in the Bylaw.
- A table summarizing these programs is attached to this report.

### Fees and Charges Bylaw:

- The Fees and Charges Bylaw authorizes the CRD to charge fees for NCRP facilities and services and will need to be amended if RCMP members are to be provided with discounts or free admission not currently provided for in the Bylaw.
- The Bylaw includes a Marketing Promotion clause that allows for temporary discounts and programs to promote facility use.
- This clause could be applied to temporary special promotions to encourage facility use such as providing new RCMP members with a one year pass.
- Currently, the Bylaw does not provide a reduced fee that would apply to paid RCMP members.
- The Committee may decide to amend the Volunteer Rate so that it is broadened to include paid RCMP members.
- Expanding the Volunteer Rate to include paid RCMP members will allow members to pay a reduced rate when they use the facility, or if free admissions is approved, it will reduce whatever contribution is paid by the City and/or the CRD.
- The current discounted rate is equivalent to the Noon Hour Rate (\$3.75), which is \$2.75 less than regular adult admission (\$6.50).
- The Committee may wish to consider adjusting this rate if the Committee feels that it should be lowered, including the option of providing free admission to some emergency services volunteers and/or RCMP members.



#### Funding Considerations:

- Fees for RCMP member admission to the Arts and Recreation Centre can be paid by the member themselves (at a discounted rate) or by the City and/or the CRD in a manner similar to the way that the Fire Department admissions are paid.
- If fees are paid by the City and/or the CRD, the program could include family members as well, or could be limited to only include the RCMP members.
- If fees are paid by the City and/or the CRD, the program could be limited to certain RCMP members (such as new recruits) and could have a time limit imposed on them (such as 1 year).
- The City has the authority to budget for the expense without any restrictions or limitations imposed on it.
- The CRD, however, does not have a Policing Service (or other appropriate Service) to charge this expense to and may have limitations or restrictions on how it can provide funding for RCMP member admissions to the facility.
- The local RCMP detachment consists of municipal members, rural members, and highway patrol members who provide services in different areas and who are funded from different sources.
- If the City were to provide funding for municipal police officers to have free admission to the Arts and Recreation Centre it would create an inequity within the detachment that could negatively impact morale.
- The Staff Sergeant at the Quesnel Detachment would like to see all RCMP members of the detachment treated equally and would not like to see one group of members receive a benefit that is not available to the other members because of their assignment.
- Another option that the Committee may wish to consider is absorbing the expenditure as lost revenue to the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks Service by providing free or waived admission to some or all RCMP members and/or emergency services volunteers.

#### Advantages and Disadvantages:

- There are various advantages and disadvantage to each option available. Some general considerations include:
  - Providing discounts or free admission to RCMP members and their families may aid in recruitment and retention of members to Quesnel.
  - Providing free admission to RCMP members and their families may positively impact NCRP revenue if the fees are paid by the City and/or the CRD but will require the City and/or CRD to budget for this expenditure.
  - Absorbing the cost for admissions as lost revenue by providing free admission to RCMP members will negatively impact revenue for the NCRP Service but will also mean that the City and/or the CRD will not need to include the expenditure in other budgets.



- If the City and/or the CRD agree to pay the admission fees for RCMP members, the CRD may not be able to contribute if they do not have a Policing Service or other appropriate Service where they can charge the expenditure.
- Providing free admission to RCMP members may be viewed by some as being inconsistent or unfair to emergency service volunteers or to the community-at-large.



## OPTIONS:

### Questions:

- A wide range of options are available regarding the issue of free or discounted admission to RCMP members. In order to determine which option best addresses these priorities the Committee may wish to consider the following questions:
  1. Does the Committee want to provide discounted admission, free admission, or no discount to RCMP members?
  2. If the Committee wants to provide a discount, does it feel that the current Volunteer Rate is sufficient or would it like to amend the Volunteer Rate?
  3. If the Committee would like to provide free admission, would it prefer to 'pay' these fees to the NCRP Service in a manner consistent with the way that the Fire Departments fees are paid, or would they prefer to amend the Fees and Charges Bylaw so that no fee is charged for RCMP members, absorbing the cost as lost revenue to the NCRP Service?
  4. If the Committee would like to provide free admission, does it want to include families or just RCMP members?
  5. If the Committee would like to provide free admission, does it want to include all RCMP members or limit the program to specific members, such as new recruits?
  6. If the Committee would like to provide free admission, does it want to place a time limit on it such as one year?

### Various Options:

- The following options are proposed for consideration by the Committee:
  1. Use the Marketing Promotion clause in the Fees and Charges Bylaw to provide new RCMP recruits with free admission for one year.
  2. Use the Marketing Promotion clause in the Fees and Charges Bylaw to provide new RCMP recruits and their families with free admission to the facility for one year.
  3. Amend the Fees and Charges Bylaw to expand the Volunteer Rate to include RCMP members to allow members to pay a reduced rate for facility admission.
  4. Amend the Fees and Charges Bylaw to expand the Volunteer Rate to include RCMP members and reduce the fee for all groups covered by the rate so that all emergency services volunteers pay a lesser amount for admission to the facility.
  5. Combine Option 1 and Option 3.
  6. Combine Option 2 and Option 3.
  7. Option 3 AND provide free admission for a limited time to new RCMP recruits, but not their families, with the cost paid by the City and/or the CRD.
  8. Option 3 AND provide free admission for a limited time to new RCMP recruits and their families, with the cost paid by the City and/or the CRD.
  9. Amend the Fees and Charges Bylaw to provide free admission to all RCMP members, but not their families, with the cost absorbed as lost revenue to the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks Service.



10. Amend the Fees and Charges Bylaw to provide free admission to all RCMP members and their families, with the cost absorbed as lost revenue to the North Cariboo Recreation and Parks Service.
11. Option 3 AND provide free admission to all RCMP members, but not their families, with the cost paid by the City and/or the CRD.
12. Option 3 AND provide free admission to all RCMP members and their families, with the cost paid by the City and/or the CRD.
13. Any other option or variation of the above options as deemed appropriate by the Committee.

Recommended Actions:

- Depending on the option selected, staff recommend the following actions:
  1. If the Committee would like to provide a discount, but not free admission to RCMP members, staff recommend that the best approach would be to amend the Volunteer Rate in the Fees and Charges Bylaw to change the name to remove the word volunteer and to list RCMP members as part of that group.
  2. If the Committee would like to provide free admission to the facility for one year to new RCMP Recruits (and possibly their families) staff recommend that the best approach would be to use the Marketing Promotions clause in the Fees and Charges Bylaw to provide these passes as a special promotion to encourage facility use.
  3. If the Committee would like to provide free admission to all RCMP members (and possibly their families), without absorbing the cost within the NCRP Service, the only option available, since the CRD doesn't have a Service to charge the expense to, is for the City to pay for the cost of the admissions without a CRD contribution.
  4. If the Committee would like to provide free admission to all RCMP members (and possibly their families) and it wants both the City and CRD to share in the cost, the only option is to amend the Fees and Charges Bylaw to include a clause to that effect so that the cost can be absorbed as lost revenue in the NCRP budget.

|  | Bouchie Lake Vol. Firemen Dept. | City of Quesnel Vol. Firemen Dept. | Ten Mile Lake Vol. Firemen Dept. | West Fraser Vol. Firement Dept. | Quesnel Search & Rescue Society | RCMP Auxiliary             |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Program is for members only                      | no                              | no                                 | yes                              | no                              | yes                             | yes                        |
| Program includes family member                   | yes                             | yes                                | no                               | yes                             | no                              | no                         |
| Cost is covered by members                       | no                              | no                                 | no                               | no                              | yes                             | yes                        |
| Cost is covered by organization                  | yes                             | yes                                | yes                              | yes                             | no                              | no                         |
| Number of members in organization                | 23                              | 63                                 | 9                                | 19                              | 31                              | unknown (show their badge) |
| Number of family members in Program              | 30                              | 105                                | 0                                | 21                              | 0                               | 0                          |
| Admission by prepaid visits                      | yes                             | yes                                | yes                              | yes                             | no                              | no                         |
| Admission paid at time of visit (volunteer rate) | no                              | no                                 | no                               | no                              | yes                             | yes                        |
| Number of visits purchased in 2018               | 150                             | 1,450                              | 40                               | 90                              | na                              | na                         |
| Cost of visits for 2018                          | \$670.50                        | \$6,577.70                         | \$140.30                         | \$392.30                        | na                              | na                         |

|                        |         |          |         |         |    |    |
|------------------------|---------|----------|---------|---------|----|----|
| Cost per member 2018   | \$29.15 | \$104.41 | \$15.59 | \$20.65 | na | na |
| Visits per member 2018 | 6.52    | 23.02    | 4.44    | 4.74    | na | na |
| Cost per visit 2018    | \$4.47  | \$4.54   | \$3.51  | \$4.36  | na | na |