



September 23, 2020

Dear Mayor & Council,

I am writing on behalf of the Fort Frances Minor Hockey Association with concerns stemming from the discussion and subsequent recommendation rendered at the Community Services Executive Committee (CSEC) meeting on September 21, 2020.

I would first like to acknowledge that the FFMHA recognizes and sympathises with the very difficult position that COVID-19 has imposed on services & operations of the Town in various aspects.

The item of greatest concern is that a majority of members of CSEC thought it was reasonable to increase ice user fees 50% without a clear understanding of how much may be required to cover a potential budget shortfall or if there will even be a shortfall at all. Many can attest that there have been heated debates on whether Council should increase Town user fees 2% vs 3%, so it was astounding to witness that an additional 50% was approved for an unsubstantiated deficit.

On the attached spreadsheet, please see the year to date financials (to Aug. 31st) as provided to the Administration & Finance Executive Committee for the September 22, 2020 meeting. It highlights the following:

1. The Recreation Facilities budget that includes the Memorial Sports Centre had used 42.8% (\$415,437) of the budget (\$970,938) after 66.7% of the year, or 57.2% (\$555,500) remaining in the budget for only 33% of the year remaining.
2. The Total Community Services budget is also looking quite favorable after 66.7% of the year with only 47.6% (\$1,023,906) utilized (of \$2,152,888).
3. The Community Services budget year to date (Aug. 31st) in 2019 was \$ 1,139,027 and in 2020 is \$1,023,906, that is \$115,120 lower in 2020 with an additional \$118,321 in the 2020 budget. This equates to a \$233,442 buffer from 2019 to 2020 at Aug. 31st.
4. On the surface the Town's overall budget looks quite encouraging with a current surplus of over \$7 million and only 4 months remaining, excluding any tax receivables.
5. The CSEC question two weeks ago on the status of the \$463,100 COVID relief money still remained a mystery at the meeting this week.

Despite the promising financial outlook for the Town in this extremely unpredictable & peculiar year, it is truly concerning that the CSEC and administration acknowledged that they didn't know what the financial impact of the additional cleaning requirements would be and yet rendered a recommendation to substantially increase ice user fees. This seems like an unjustifiable decision that approaches irresponsible taxation to citizens.

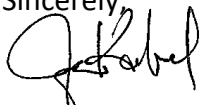
The FFMHA understands that we have a responsibility and obligation to ensure that our participants have a safe environment to enjoy recreation and we are willing to increase user fees if absolutely required. We will not do so without credible evidence that it is necessary.

The FFMHA humbly submits the following for Council consideration.

Be it resolved that Council approval will:

1. Support the commencement of the ice season (Oct. 5, 2020) with the current ice user fee in place that will be re-evaluated with all other user fees (typically November ~ 5-6 weeks) for implementation on January 1, 2021.
2. Authorize installation of the 2nd ice surface by MSC staff as ice demand dictates.
3. Endorse the application of the provincial document 'Framework for Reopening Ontario' at the Memorial Sports Centre, currently at Stage 3. The MSC operations will be fluid with the changes that the province adopts for community safety. The document encompasses 14 safety strategies including:
 - Maintaining physical distancing of at least two metres from people outside of your household
 - Wearing a face covering at all times except for on-ice
 - Frequent hand sanitizing
 - Limiting spectator seating to a maximum of 50 people
 - Cleaning frequently touched surfaces more often

Sincerely,



Jason Kabel

FFMHA President

	2019 OPERATING FORECAST	Actual to August 31, 2019	2020 OPERATING FORECAST	Actual to August 31, 2020	2020 Budget vs. Actual Variance	% YTD 8 of 12 months or 66.7%	Notes
COMMUNITY SERVICES:							
Sister Betty Kennedy Centre	54,132	24,579.48	36,018	35,137.41	(881)	97.6%	Ministry Funding still pending?
Children's Day Care	18,070	(29,377.05)	7,569	5,733.13	(1,836)	75.7%	
Best Start Hub	-	(49,270.15)	-	(740.08)	(740)	-	
Day Care Special Needs Resource	-	(29,967.68)	-	(3,001.15)	(3,001)	-	
Handi Transit Services	105,049	112,549.04	107,150	39,178.48	(67,972)	36.6%	
Townshend Theatre	-	(8,434.36)	-	826.28	826	-	
Recreation Facilities	822,077	456,151.68	970,938	415,437.54	(555,500)	42.8%	Less than 50% of the annual budget after 66.7% of the year
Recreation Programs	154,502	49,727.70	117,187	124,572.84	7,386	106.3%	No summer program revenue
Community Services	141,996	74,721.37	114,000	3,334.82	(110,665)	2.9%	Seems to be a coding issue here
Sunny Cove Camp	29,765	18,231.80	38,583	20,720.19	(17,863)	53.7%	Very little to come from SC budget for the year
Public Library	497,448	369,827.44	521,546	297,025.51	(224,520)	57.0%	Looking good
Library Co-op	-	(5,256.67)	-	-	0	-	
Museum	172,825	127,839.41	210,407	92,110.60	(118,296)	43.8%	Well under budget
Waterfront (Sorting Gap)	38,703	27,704.91	29,490	(6,429.81)	(35,920)	-21.8%	Made a profit
Total Community Services	2,034,567	1,139,026.92	2,152,888	1,023,906	(1,128,982)	47.6%	Less than 50% of the annual budget after 66.7% of the year
TOWN							
SUBTOTAL	0	(6,619,867.40)	-	(7,004,958)	(7,004,958)		On the surface the Town's budget looks quite favorable for 2020 (\$7 million with 4 months remaining excluding more tax receivables)

Year to date comparison 2019 vs 2020

	2019	2020	Variance 2020-2019
Budget	2,034,567	2,152,888	\$118,321
Year to date AUG 31	1,139,027	1,023,906	-\$115,121
Total	<u>\$895,540</u>	<u>\$1,128,982</u>	<u>\$233,442</u>

\$233,442 more in the 2020 budget at Aug. 31st than in 2019
Does the Town actually need to increase user fees?