



Fort Frances Girls Women's Hockey Association



February 12, 2020

Mayor Caul and Members of Council:

In the late spring of 2019, the Town introduced a new ice cancellation policy to the various user groups. (TOFF Policy Number 2.5)

This new policy requires user groups to confirm our regular weekly ice requirements by September 15th for the months of September to December and by December 15th for the months of January to April. The previous policy allowed for ice to be cancelled up to two weeks before a scheduled date.

Generally, the Fort Frances Girls and Women's Hockey Association (FFGWWHA) has found this to be manageable except for tournament ice. The FFGWWHA has normally hosted our tournaments on the 1st and 2nd weekends in February.

Having to plan tournament ice by December 15th for the February tournament weekends is not realistic as teams are entering (or cancelling) our tournaments as close as two weeks before the tournament start date. When we were notified of the new policy, we understood this policy to affect regular weekly user ice and tournament contract ice was not discussed. TOFF Policy Number 2.5 Section 4.A.iv. reads "Regular users will not be allowed to cancel their weekly allotted ice time, request for changes must be made by September 15th ..." but the policy makes no mention of tournament ice. We were advised by arena staff that tournament ice contracts also fall under the cancellation policy.

Leading up to our two tournaments for February 2020, based on last year, we felt that we would need more ice than just the IFK and requested additional ice on the 52 Arena. It worked well for our Novice / Atom Tournament between January 31 and February 2, 2020. We played the tournaments on both ice surfaces and did not have to schedule ice at The Duke Arena as we did last year when our request for additional ice on 52 was denied. Having tournament events at The Duke Arena is actually quite inconvenient for the FFGWWHA because of the strain it puts on our volunteer pool when the tournament is being run out of the Ice For Kids Arena.

During the days leading up to December 15th when all January - March ice cancellations were due, amongst the stress of having to plan for 3 months of ice and all the variations that come with the season, our ice scheduler noticed that our 2nd tournament was going to be short ice. She sent an email to request more ice and an email was returned giving the option of Friday between 8:00am - 4:00pm and Saturday from 3:00pm - 10:00pm on 52 Arena. She missed the email and did not respond to it. She did not know that it had been added to the tournament ice contract. The contracts for the monthly ice were signed the same week and amongst them were the contracts for the tournament ice. It was a mistake to sign the contracts without reviewing them in entirety. At this time, we still hadn't realized

that the ice cancellation policy was supposed to cover tournament contracts, so it wasn't even on our radar.

When it was time to plan the tournament in January, unbeknownst to the FFGWHA, the extra ice was booked for FFGWHA for Friday from 8:00-4:00 and Saturday from 3:00-10:00. When our scheduler looked at the Memorial Sports Centre arena schedule online, all she saw was that the extra ice times that we needed for the tournament were booked and unavailable but she could not see who the ice times were booked to, not realizing it was ourselves. It was a complete miss on our part as an association. We did not think we had the ice. In fact, we ended up scheduling 3 games at The Duke on Saturday morning and 2 games on Saturday evening. We had to schedule games at The Duke on Saturday morning because Fort Frances Minor Hockey Association had the ice booked on 52 Arena for their regular Saturday programming and we had to book Saturday evening because of the Laker's game on IFK. The Friday ice granted to ice by the Town was not needed by the FFGWHA and couldn't have been used effectively because of the spacing required between games. We could have utilized 3 hours of the Saturday evening ice on 52 Arena, but by the time we realized that we had the ice, the schedules and programs were made and we felt it would add a level of confusion for the tournament conveners if we switched the ice.

I have emailed and discussed this situation with Mr. Aaron Bisson. However, because we have a signed ice contract and the cancellation policy referenced above, Mr. Bisson is unable to accommodate the FFGWHA's request for relief of ice costs incurred for ice on 52 Arena on Friday, February 7 between 8:00am and 4:00pm and Saturday, February 8 between 3:00pm and 10:00pm. These 15 hours of unused ice at \$122.83 plus HST per hour will cost our association \$2081.97. Therefore, the FFGWHA is formally requesting relief from these 15 hours on 52 Arena. The FFGWHA is a non-profit association and we are 100% volunteer run. We would like to note that when we found the error, we reached out to all regular ice users (Fort Frances Minor Hockey and Borderland Figure Skating Club) to try to "sell" the ice. Due to the short notice and atypical ice times they would have used, we were unable to sell it to the other ice users.

The Town does have some history in providing relief to community groups. Approximately two (2) years ago, the Town waived late fees on overdue invoices for the Fort Frances Minor Hockey Association. It is also my understanding that most recently, the Town has provided the Rainy River District School Board's Hockey Academy Program with relief on the cancellation policy due to job action by the Teachers' Union and has allowed the Hockey Academy to cancel ice in January and February without cost and book new ice in March and April.

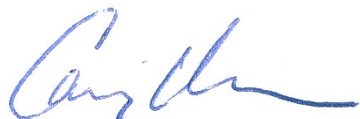
We would like to propose a solution to the Town. We Propose: That the FFGWHA pays the Town the lost revenue that would normally be earned between 8am-4pm on Friday's and 3pm-10pm on Saturday's. We feel that this is fair because it compensates the town for lost revenue due to our mistake.

Hockey associations host tournaments for many reasons. These include the showcasing of local hockey talent, being able to play teams that we normally do not get to play on a regular basis, highlight our association and to make money to offset our program delivery costs. Our tournament will post a

significant financial loss if we are not provided with some relief. Another significant spin-off benefit of hosting tournaments is the financial boost provided to our local businesses and the Town. Hotels, restaurants and stores all benefit. The town benefits from the facility rental and from the Municipal Accommodation Tax that is collected from the local hotels. For our Peewee / Midget Tournament, we had 10 out of town teams staying in local hotels. For our Novice / Atom Tournament, we had 8 out of town teams staying in local hotels. Sports tourism is a significant economic driver during the winter months in Fort Frances.

We look forward to reviewing this proposal with the Town and answering any questions that you might have.

On behalf of the FFGWHA,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Craig Miller', with a stylized, flowing script.

Craig Miller
President