

Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc
Recreation Facility Infrastructure Renewal Committee
Minutes

Wednesday, August 25, 2021
5:00 p.m.
Electronic Meeting - Zoom

Present: Mayor Joanne Vanderheyden
Deputy Mayor Brad Richards
Councillor Neil Flegel
Councillor John Brennan
Councillor Sandi Hipple
Councillor Frank Kennes
Councillor Steve Pelkman
Councillor Marie Baker
Councillor Larry Cowan

Also Present: Fred Tranquilli, Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk
Jennifer Pereira, Deputy Clerk/ Lottery Licensing Officer
(Recorder)
Bill Dakin, Director of Financial Services
Robert Lilbourne, Director of Community Services

Others Present: Chrissy Kernaghan, Mount Brydges Magic Blades
Kim Comartin, Mount Brydges Magic Blades
Heather Dearing, Mount Brydges Magic Blades
Ruth Vandewalle, Mount Brydges Skating Club
Majorie Kent, Mount Brydges Skating Club
Terry Racine, President of the Mount Brydges Legion

1. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

None.

2. Presentations/Delegations/Petitions

**2.1 Chrissy Kernaghan - Mount Brydges Skating Club- Magic Blades
Syncro**

Chrissy Kernaghan, Heather Dearing and Kim Comartin made a presentation on behalf of the Mount Brydges Magic Blades Synchronized Skating Group. They are overall concerned with the timeline in the Nustadia report and limited ice time. Moving the ice time to Strathroy will affect the skaters as the Tri Township is closer and in the core of the community of skaters. They are advocating to keep an arena facility within the community as it is needed. They indicate that they use a total of 10 hours of ice time a week between the Tri -Township Arena and the Gemini Sportsplex.

Councillor Hipple thanks the group for their presentation and asks how many hours would you use in total ice time. Chrissy Kernaghan confirms that it is a total of 10 hours of ice but points out that off ice training is also an important component to the training, so a multiuse facility would be beneficial.

Councillor Brennan requests a breakdown in hours used between the two facilities. Chrissy Kernaghan confirms that of a total of 10 hours, 8 hours are used at the Gemini Sportsplex and 2 hours at the Tri-Township Arena. She indicates that she has wanted to secure more hours at the Tri-Township Arena but has not been able to due to the amount of users.

Councillor Cowan asks how many people are involved in the Magic Blades as well as overall with the Mount Brydges Skating Club. Chrissy Kernaghan indicates that the Magic Blades had a total of 67 skaters for the year 2020.

Councillor Flegel thanks the group for their presentation and asks the group if you had more ice time and could forecast the growth and population of the group. Chrissy Kernaghan expresses that synchronized skating is something that is growing across the province. She indicates that if the group had more ice times it would lead to progression. Councillor Flegel comments on the impact of the club has had on the community. He asks what the groups vision is as far as dry land usage, as that is an important component of the program. Chrissy Kernaghan indicates that the usage of dry land would allow the group to stay competitive in the province.

Deputy Mayor Richards asks where the group does their off ice training currently. Chrissy Kernaghan says most of the time they utilize any space they can, outside or dressing rooms. They currently don't rent a space for dry land training.

2.2 Marjorie Kent - Mount Brydges Skating Club

Ruth Vandewalle and Marjorie Kent made a presentation on behalf of the Mount Brydges Skating Club. The programs they offer are Canskate and Starskate. The registration over the past 4 years are as follows: 2017/18- 110 skaters, 2018/19- 97 skaters, 2019/20- 113 skaters and 2020/21- 87 skaters. They currently rent 12 hours a week in ice time. The ice time is divided between 10 hours at the Tri-Township Arena and 2 hours at the Gemini Sportsplex. The group feels that the Nustadia reports comments on the decreasing of interests in ice sports would be transferred to this community is not the case. They feel that ice sports are an increasing sport across the province. They also added that despite the reports data, the community is continuing to grow. Finally, they expressed that the relationship with the Chippewa of the Thames should be a priority and it would be a huge loss as well as an opportunity to lead by example.

Mayor Vanderheyden expresses that the Nustadia Report was shared with the Chippewa of the Thames and Council has been in contact with them.

Councillor Pelkman thanks the Mount Brydges Skating Club for their presentation and asks how the time of year effects the community as a whole in the terms of community building. Marjorie Kent explains that changing things effects every family. The yearly skating carnival has 2 shows and are always sold out.

Councillor Brennan asks number of hours of ice time and how many are in the Tri Township versus the Gemini Sportsplex. Ruth Vandewalle explains that they retain a total of 12 hours per week, 10 hours at the Tri Township and 2 hours at the Gemini Sportsplex.

Councillor Flegel notes that the need for more ice time seems to be consistent with many organizations. He asks what age groups are in the 4:00 p.m. time slot. Ruth Vandewalle indicates that the more senior skaters will attend this earlier time slot and the younger skaters will come later so parents can bring them. Councillor Flegel asks if they envision a program that could be run through the day, that would assist with available ice time as well. Ruth Vandewalle indicates that the group has had these discussions and are looking at adult taught groups during day time hours.

Councillor Pelkman questions the jump in registration prior to Covid-19, he wonders how many more can you accommodate before you need to expand your ice time. Ruth Vandewalle indicates that form a Canskate

perspective there is room but from a Senior ice perspective, it does get a little crowded so going forward more ice may be needed.

2.3 Terry Racine - Mount Brydges Legion

Terry Racine, President of the Mount Brydges Legion presents the board. He expresses that without an arena the legion could not help the community in support of the organizations such as the Mount Brydges Skating Club, The Mount Brydges Bulldogs, Magic Blades and the Mount Brydges Cougars. He explains how important these gathering places have been over many years within this community.

Councillor Hipple thanks Terry Racine for his presentation. She asks what kind of fundraising would the Mount Brydges Legion be able to do with the implementation of a new arena. He indicates that they have had discussion with Lions Club and there would be some fundraising that they would do together.

Councillor Kennes refers to the cost involved in a project of this size and wonders the feeling of the community as there will be a significant tax rate increase. Terry Racine feels that the community is aware and would like the new arena but hopes that any fundraising can help minimize the increase to each ratepayer.

Councillor Pelkman feels that not all user groups have resources and asks what the loss of an arena would do to the Legion or the community. Terry Racine explains that it takes a community and partners to make it work and the relationships that have been developed. Mayor Joanne clarifies that any decision made on behalf of the community and paid for by the community of Strathroy-Caradoc as a whole.

2.4 Julie VanDenHeuvel - Strathroy Dance Club

Julie VanDenHeuvel presents on behalf of the Strathroy Dance Club. This organization is run out of the West Middlesex Memorial Arena. They presently rent the gymnasium in the facility and have dancers from Strathroy, Mount Brydges, Parkhill and surrounding areas. She felt that the report highlighted a couple of things that are necessary however feels a small town of Mount Brydges potentially losing an arena is devastating.

Councillor Pelkman asks what are the organizations requirement for the space at the WMMC. Julie VanDenHeuvel indicates that they use one dance room at the moment and are limited to the number of people in the room due to COVID restrictions.

Councillor Baker asks how many nights a week do classes run. Julie indicates that they run generally 6 days a week and use approximately 35 hours a week.

Councillor Flegel asks what the vision for growth for the organization is within the next 20 years and if a multi-use facility in Mount Brydges was built, would that effect the participation. Julie says if the program was not based in Strathroy, she feels that local participants would decrease. Councillor Flegel clarifies that the report was received for information and the organization would be notified if the time came of any changes.

3. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Deputy Mayor Richards

Seconded by Councillor Kennes

THAT: the committee meeting minutes of August 4, 2021 be approved as written.

Carried

3.1 Committee Meeting Minutes - August 4, 2021

4. Communications

Moved by Councillor Baker

Seconded by Councillor Pelkman

THAT: Council receive the communication items for information.

Carried

4.1 Community Correspondence

5. Unfinished Business

None.

6. Enquiries or Comments by Members

Councillor Kennes shares that he met with Bill Dakin, Director of Finance and Fred Tranquilli, CAO and Mayor Vanderheyden regarding the upcoming 2022 Budget as well as the asset management plan for the next 10 years. Suggests that the numbers be looked at as there are other capital infrastructure projects

that will be coming down the pipe. Bill Dakin indicates that he could provide Council with some financials in early September.

Councillor Flegel requests some understanding on the grant funding that are available and when they may fit into these projects. Robert Lilbourne, Director of Community Services indicates that there are a couple grants. We have been working with some consultants that have indicated these grants don't have an opening date due to the Federal election.

7. Schedule of Meetings

Wednesday, September 01, 2021 @ 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 08, 2021 @ 5:00 p.m.

8. Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Cowan

Seconded by Councillor Flegel

THAT: the meeting adjourn at 6:57 p.m.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk