



Corporation of the Township of Brock

Staff Report to the Mayor and Members of Council

From: Joint Report from Alicia Bagshaw and Trena DeBruijn

Position: Recreation and Leisure Coordinator

Director of Finance/Treasurer

Title / Subject: 2023 Camp Subsidy Programs

Date of Report: June 5, 2023

Date of Meeting: June 12, 2023

Report No: 2023-PRF-018

1.0 Issue / Origin

The Township of Brock has been approached by the Region of Durham to enter into an agreement for two different summer camp subsidy programs. The two programs are as follows:

1. Region of Durham – Ontario Works
2. Region of Durham – Ministry of Education

2.0 Background

1. Region of Durham – Ontario Works

The Township of Brock “Township” has been participating in this program for a number of years. Historically staff would issue “Gift Certificates” for the full amount of day camp to the Region of Durham “Region” to distribute to their OW clients. Clients were permitted a maximum of 2 weeks of day camp. The Township would invoice the Region at the end of the summer for all the gift certificates that were used. In the past this program had approximately 5-15 individual campers redeem their gift certificates for camp.

Due to changes in Provincial funding, the funding available for this program in 2023 and future years has been reduced. Therefore, in order to continue to provide this service to our families who are recipients of Ontario Works, the Region has asked the Township to consider entering into a shared partnership (50/50) for 2023 and future years. This will be discussed further below in this report.

2. Region of Durham – Ministry of Education

This is a relatively new program that the Region is working to incorporate all municipalities within Durham. This program is 100% funded through the Region of Durham/Ministry of Education and Parents. The Region has specific eligibility criteria and if approved the parent portion is on a sliding scale based on family income. The Camp Subsidy program could subsidize up to 9 weeks of summer camp (including before and after care), plus Winter and March Break Camp.

3.0 Analysis

1. Regional of Durham – Ontario Work

The change to this program requires a 50/50 cost share between the Region and the Township. Staff met with regional representatives to advise that we do not currently have budget set aside for a 50/50 cost share in 2023. The Region has advised that for 2023 they will cover the costs for the program at 100% but would like to work towards signing an agreement with the Township for 2024 and future years (shared 50/50).

Staff would like to continue with the program in 2023 as it is covered at 100% by the Region, however, understand that this may be setting a precedent for continuing with the program in future years.

Staff understand that several other municipalities within the Region of Durham do participate in this cost sharing arrangement, however, our two closest neighbours, the Township of Scugog and the Township of Uxbridge are not currently participating. It is understood that the Township of Scugog cannot offer this program for 2023 as they have reached maximum capacity (no spaces available) and that the Township of Uxbridge has their own internal program, funded through Canadian Tire Jump Start funds.

For the Township to continue with this program in 2024, Council would need to allocate budget funds, and/or fundraise (or expand our sponsorship program) to offset the 50% portion the Township would be required to cover.

Staff identified and discussed an option of using Township Golf Tournament proceeds to assist with this program, however, the Golf Tournament Committee felt that this request would not meet the current golf funds policy as it stands, without modification, as the policy states that funding should not be used to support Township programs. In addition, there was also concern expressed around sponsor participation in the future to the golf tournament if it was felt that the Township was using the golf fundraising to support Township programming.

For 2023 there are approximately 194 children from the Township of Brock who are recipients of Ontario Works (we are unsure if this for children under 12 yrs of age or 18 yrs of age), however, we currently have 11 children that have applied to register for camp. The estimated cost for the 11 children is approximately \$4,400 and of this, the Township's share would be approximately \$2,200 (however, for 2023, the Region of Durham will fund the entire cost of \$4,400).

While not all eligible children will participate, we suspect that once this program becomes fully advertised for 2024, that the Township and the Region will see an increase in eligible children participating.

While staff are uncertain how many families may participate a year, a reasonable estimate (to start discussions) would likely be close to approximately 30 children (approximately 15% of eligible children) participating per summer (this will fluctuate each year depending upon factors outside the Township's control).

The average cost of a week of day camp, is approximately \$200 per child, including before and after camp care.

If 30 children participated, at two weeks per summer, the estimated cost of providing this program would be approximately \$12,000 per year. The Township would be asked to fund 50% of this cost or approximately \$6,000 per year.

This is an unbudgeted expense for 2023, however, the Region of Durham has indicated their willingness to fund the program at 100%, for 2023. Moving forward into 2024, the Township would be required to provide and fund their portion annually.

The Region has funding of approximately \$3,000 (not including the Ontario Works funding share) that they would be willing to provide for 2023. This would indicate a budget of approximately \$6,000 is available for 2023 and the Region has indicated that should this budget not be sufficient for 2023, they would cover any additional expenses (but again, only for 2023).

Staff suggest that, for 2023, a budget of \$6,000 be set (to be funded entirely by the Region of Durham) and that staff report back at the end of summer, leading into 2024 budget discussions. The report back will provide information on the number of children/families who participated in the program for 2023 and the estimated cost. This could be used to set a budget target for 2024.

In addition, staff suggest that should Council want to continue to provide this program for Ontario Works families in 2024, that the current sponsorship program be updated and promoted to include consideration of sponsorship funding for this purpose in 2024 (and future years).

2. Region of Durham – Ministry of Education

The Township of Brock is being asked to sign a partnership agreement with the Region of Durham to provide day camp subsidy. The funding for this program is provided 100% by the Ministry of Education through the Region of Durham.

As this is a new program, funded entirely by the Ministry of Education, staff recommend that we enter into an agreement with the Region of Durham to provide opportunities for children to attend camp in the summer. In addition, this would further enhance and expand our day camp programs and making it accessible to more families within the Township.

4.0 Related Policies / Procedures

5.0 Financial / Budget Assessment

1. Region of Durham – Ontario Works

While the cost of offering the camp subsidy program for Ontario Works families is currently unknown (has been estimated), staff recommend that Council enter into the agreement with the Region for 2023 and that staff report back at the end of the summer on program participation and suggest a budget target for 2024 (and future years).

There is no cost to the Township to participate in this program for 2023, however, participation in 2023 sets a precedent for continuing to participate in future years.

2. Region of Durham – Ministry of Education

There are no Financial/Budget impacts to participate in this program, as it's funded at 100% by the Region of Durham/ Ministry of Education and the parents.

6.0 Climate Change Impacts

N/A

7.0 Communications

The Township will work with the Region of Durham to advertise and support these programs for 2023.

8.0 Conclusion

Both subsidy programs are a great opportunity for the Township to further expand Summer Camp Programming as well as making it more accessible to more families in Brock.

9.0 Recommendation

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to enter into an agreement with the Region of Durham for Day Camp Subsidies in both the Ontario Works and the Regional/Ministry of Education Programs for 2023;

AND That Staff report back to Council at the end of summer on the success of these programs for 2023 and make recommendations on continuation of these programs for 2024 (and future years).