



## Corporation of the Township of Brock

### Staff Report to the Mayor and Members of Council

**From:** Wayne Ward  
**Position:** Director Parks, Recreation and Facilities  
**Title / Subject:** Early Ice 2025 – 2026 season  
**Date of Report:** December 16, 2024  
**Date of Meeting:** January 13, 2025  
**Report No:** 2025-PRF-001

#### 1.0 Issue / Origin

Resolution C-2024-086 requested staff provide a report on early ice for the 2025/2026 season in any arena.

#### 2.0 Background

Early ice requests have been submitted for several years from Brock Minor Hockey Association as well as Sunderland Ringette.

In order to provide early ice the facility must be equipped with sufficient insulation in both the building envelope and the ice pad floor and also be equipped with the necessary refrigeration equipment to create an environment where ice can be built and maintained.

#### 3.0 Analysis

Early ice requests have been accommodated at the Sunderland Memorial Arena for a number of years with the ice plant being turned on as soon as possible after the Sunderland Agricultural Fair which is mid-September each year.

Ice making and painting takes approximately 6-8 days to complete once the ice pad has been cooled to a sufficient temperature and the ice floor sealed with a base layer of ice.

With the Sunderland Memorial Arena slated for closure to complete the renovation this site will not be available for early ice until the renovation has been completed.

The Rick MacLeish Memorial Community Centre utilizes an air-cooled condensing unit which relies on lower ambient temperatures to provide cooled air for heat exchange from

the chiller unit. Over the past two years this site has been challenging to get ice in and ready for use as the temperatures have been higher through September and October.

The Foster Hewitt Memorial Community Centre is the last option for early ice installation.

This site has similar events to Sunderland including the annual fall fair as well as the annual Beaverton Lions Club Elimination Draw. The fair is the weekend after Sunderland and the Elimination Draw has been held on the third Saturday after Labour Day for many years.

Staff contacted both the Beaverton Lions Club and the Beaverton Agricultural Society to inquire of how early ice would affect their events and if there was an opportunity for their events to be moved to different dates or if there was a way to accommodate their events while still providing the requested early ice.

The Beaverton Agricultural Society response is included in this report and notes that the Beaverton Fall Fair has been the same weekend for 169 years with 2025 being the 170<sup>th</sup> year. Having the fair on this weekend corresponds with other fairs in the area and provides an opportunity to have a midway and the 4H cow show, which are both major components of the fair. The agricultural society also notes that they require use of the entire fairground including the arena for their event.

The Beaverton Lions Club response is also included in this report. The items of moving the Elimination Draw noted in the response are possible conflicts with other community group fundraising such as the Sunderland Lions Club Blue Rodeo concert. The arena ice pad in the summer is not air conditioned and it was made clear how hot it can get in the arena ice pad area during the summer with the James Barker Band concert held in 2023. Should the Beaverton Lions Club not be able to host their event at this time their fundraising opportunities would be significantly diminished.

Planning for both events is already under way for 2025 as these events typically take a year or so to plan.

With only one site that could potentially accommodate early ice for the 2025/2026 season, that being the Foster Hewitt Memorial Community Center, the needs of the users must be taken into consideration. The request from Minor Hockey and Ringette for early ice for 2025/2026 cannot be accommodated due to these previous events.

Staff will discuss further with the Beaverton Agricultural Society and Beaverton Lions to see if the 2026 events could be held during alternate dates or locations to accommodate the early ice for the 2026/2027 season.

#### **4.0 Related Policies / Procedures**

## **5.0 Financial / Budget Assessment**

The additional costs for early ice cannot be easily determined as our electrical service is billed quarterly and the amount of electricity and natural gas required to install early ice is unknown for this location as it has never been installed at this site.

Staffing costs would be additional as the parks staff are also the arena staff and we would need to extend the contracts of parks staff to ensure parks maintenance continued through to the end of the grass season, typically into October. This cost would be dependent on the number of casual staff hired for the summer season which has not yet been determined as schedules for the arena staff from Sunderland arena have not been determined yet. The park at Sunderland arena will still need to be maintained for the fall fair and other users until end of September and into October.

## **5.1 Asset Management**

There is no known effect to asset management due to early ice.

## **6.0 Climate Change Impacts**

Early ice installation is typically more difficult in warmer weather as the building envelope is not perfectly sealed and there is likely going to be more strain on the refrigeration system to remove the heat from the ice pad area along with the dehumidifiers within the ice pad area. These processes use more electricity and water to support the installation of ice during warmer seasons.

## **7.0 Communications**

Not applicable

## **8.0 Conclusion**

The installation of early ice at any Township arena facility must be coordinated with the other users of the facility. Agricultural fairs and community group events that have been longstanding, if moved or unable to use the arena facilities may no longer occur.

The installation of early ice also puts a strain on the equipment and staffing as the warmer temperatures in early September make it more challenging to create and install ice and staffing needs to make, paint and build ice reduces the ability of staff to continue to maintain the parks and green spaces as the parks and recreation staff are responsible for both the arena operations as well as the parks maintenance.

Coordination between the ice user groups and the non-ice user groups that utilize the same facility may allow for early ice once the Sunderland Arena project has been completed may allow for multiple events occurring at the same venue to meet the needs of all users.

Early ice for the 2025/2026 season utilizing the Foster Hewitt Memorial Community Centre is not an option due to previously planned events such as the fall fair and Lions elimination draw.

## **9.0 Recommendation**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive report 2025-PRF-001, and that the request for early ice from Beaverton Minor Hockey and Sunderland Ringette for 2025/2026 season be declined, and

That staff continue to work with all user groups to see if alternatives can be found to allow for better coordination between user groups and events.