

Staff report

**FILE**: 1700-02/2018/645

**DATE:** February 1, 2018

**TO:** Chair and Members

Comox Valley Sports Centre Commission

**FROM:** Russell Dyson

Chief Administrative Officer

Supported by Russell Dyson Chief Administrative Officer

R. DYSON

**RE:** 2018 – 2022 Financial Plan – Comox Valley Recreation Complex Service – Function 645

# **Purpose**

To provide the Comox Valley Sports Centre Commission with the proposed 2018-2022 financial plan and work plan highlights for the Comox Valley Recreation Complex Service, function 645.

# Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

THAT the proposed 2018 - 2022 financial plan for the Comox Valley Recreation Complex Service, function 645, which includes:

- a reduction in programs/service levels/operational hours as per Appendix A of the staff report dated February 1, 2018;
- an unchanged requisition from 2017 levels; and
- an increase to fees and charges in 2018;

be approved.

## **Executive Summary**

The Comox Valley Sports Centre Commission (Commission) considered the recreation complexes service budget impacts, issues and operational challenges at its November 21, 2017 meeting. The Commission discussed a combination of service levels, fees and charges and tax requisition changes. This report presents a proposed financial plan for the recreation complexes service that maintains the tax requisition, the impact of which includes increases to fees and charges and service level reductions. The report also describes options associated with finding a balance between tax increases and service level reductions. Highlights include:

- The tax requisition is unchanged from the 2017 levels;
- For a property assessed at \$400,000, the tax levy at the proposed 2018 budget would be \$116.76;
- A 2017 aquatic safety review/audit has identified certain requirements for staffing to ensure public safety;
- Increased staff requirements to:
  - o ensure compliancy with Technical Safety BC, in part following a fatality at a recreation complex in B.C. in 2017
  - o ensure public safety at pool facilities to comply with Lifesaving Society
  - o maintain aging infrastructure and extend facilities' lifespan
- Decrease in staff requirements due to reduced service levels as shown in Appendix A, including earlier closing hours, reduced swimming lesson opportunities and facility closures during spring and summer breaks and holidays;
- Overall increased personnel costs of \$273,991;

- Contributions to asset management to maintain and prolong functional lifespan for facilities;
- The savings from the reduction in debt servicing costs following the retirement of a debt issue in 2017 enables increased reserve contributions and will assist in funding capital/operational projects;
- Operations associated with ammonia regulations and Lifesaving Society will be monitored through 2018 and may result in further financial impacts.

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# **Policy Analysis**

Bylaw No. 2410, being the "Bylaw to Establish the Comox Valley Recreation Complexes Service" was adopted to establish a service for the purpose of constructing, equipping, enlarging, operating and maintaining ice arena-swimming pool complexes and to contribute towards the cost of existing community use facilities and structures in the service area. Participants in the service include the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland and the residents of Electoral Areas 'A', 'B' and 'C'.

The heat reclaim project was identified in the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Strategic Plan. The engineering portion of the project reached completion in December 2017 with a final cost of \$553,111. Upon BC Hydro and Fortis close out inspections and approvals the system will be in full use. We anticipate future long term cost savings through reduced energy consumption estimated at \$50,000 per year which will be returned to the reserves in the form of reserve contributions. These estimated cost savings will start to be realized in years 2-5 of the 2018-2022 financial plan. The current financial plan does not reflect any cost savings. In 2018 staff will be monitoring our operations costs and provide an updated cost savings plan in the 2019-2023 financial plan.

The Comox Valley Recreation Facilities Master Plan was also identified in the strategic plan in 2016 and adopted by the Commission in August 2017. Costs allocated within the proposed 2018 budget line item operating expenditures associated with the master plan provide for safety/accessibility improvements with an addition of hand rails in the Arena 1 stands. The approximate cost is \$9,000. Staff will continue to analyze and may bring further initiatives forward in future years.

#### **Options**

Providing affordable access to recreation facilities, programs and services is essential for residents to enjoy a healthy and active lifestyle in the region. This report is designed to provide information to the Commission and provide three options:

- 1. To approve the proposed 2018 2022 financial plan for the Comox Valley Recreation Complex Service, function 645, which includes a reduction in programs/service levels/operational hours as per Appendix A, requisition will remain unchanged from 2017 and fees and charges will receive an increase.
- 2. To amend the proposed 2018-2022 financial plan for the Comox Valley Recreation Complex Service, function 645 by reducing certain programs/service levels as highlighted in Appendix A, increasing the requisition and/or decreasing contributions to reserves and implementing an increase in fees and charges.

3. To amend the proposed 2018-2022 financial plan for the Comox Valley Recreation Complex Service, function 645 by continuing to provide full programs/service levels as in 2017, increase the requisition and/or decrease contributions to reserves and move to personnel costs, with an increase in fees and charges.

Funding increases would help contribute to sustainable recreation programs and services and safe and well maintained facilities.

# Financial Plan Overview

Each year the CVRD prepares an updated five-year financial plan that represents the operation of each service from one budget year to the next.

Staff have been forecasting the asset management needs to ensure key infrastructure items can be replaced within the financial plan. However, due to the age of the facilities, it has been difficult to maintain plants/equipment at the highest standards in order to safely operate the facilities. In 2018 Arena 2 condenser (\$80,000) and Arena 2 brine pump (\$30,000) are being replaced as part of the current asset management plan.

An asset management plan review for the CVRD Sports and Aquatic Centre facilities' will take place in 2018. A report will come forward to the Commission upon the completion of the assessment. The report will provide direction on the future of the two facilities and give recommendations of the financial support that this function will need. A lift in the annual requisition may need to be considered effective 2019 in order to address recommendations and priorities coming out of the report.

The 2017 budget for function 645-649 personnel costs, was \$3,457,535. Due to the changes in regulations required by the Lifesaving Society, actuals to date for 2017 are \$3,645,883, an overage of \$188,348. This overage resulted from an increase in pool staff levels due to the Lifesaving Society's initial patron head count per pool regulation change prior to the three-year implementation plan being granted.

In 2018, further pool staffing levels will need to change/increase to meet safety regulations and ensure patron/staff safety at all times. The 2018 proposed budget shows an increase in staffing costs to meet the Lifesaving Society aquatic safety audit/review and new ammonia plant regulations as reflected in the line item personnel costs of \$273,991.

To maintain an unchanged requisition staff levels and personnel costs have been reduced by \$176,730 as per appendix A.

Through discussions with the directors, staff and users the following suggestions were provided and researched as ways to assist in keeping increased personnel costs to a minimum:

- 1) Reduce the maximum bather load in each pool during the open swims;
- 2) Reduce the amount of programming scheduled at the same time block;
- 3) Close wave pool during the day for an hour or two;
- 4) Utilize and adjust the lifeguard chair locations to provide better sight lines;
- 5) Put up more mirrors to assist with guarding;
- 6) Utilize a closed video camera circuit to assist with guarding;
- 7) Utilize/move programming to the sports centre pool;
- 8) Research for a motion detection system that could monitor certain activities/movements of a swimmer in distress.

Operations staff levels have to increase to provide coverage from 2:00 -6:00 am. This is to ensure 24/7 monitoring and safety checks of the ammonia refrigeration plants to ensure public/staff safety at all times. The additional staffing will also provide the facilities the ability to work on aging infrastructure issues/upkeep to extend the facilities lifespan. The increase in staffing costs to meet the new regulatory changes is reflected in the line item personnel costs of this proposed budget. 2018 capital costs of \$40,000 are budgeted to meet the ammonia refrigeration plant regulation changes. The Arena 1 vestibule will host all emergency shut off controls for the ammonia refrigeration plants and meet the emergency WorkSafeBC requirements of the safety equipment storage (masks, gloves, boots, aprons and a shower and eye wash station).

Staff continue to work closely with the regulatory branches (Lifesaving Society and Technical Safety BC) to ensure any further upcoming regulatory changes are addressed immediately as they are announced by these governing agencies. There could still be further regulatory changes in 2018 regarding ammonia plant operations that may impact personnel and capital costs.

Table 1 summarizes the 2018 proposed budget as compared to the 2017 adopted budget. Significant variances from 2017 adopted budget will be discussed in the financial plan highlights section below.

Table 1: Financial Plan Highlights

2018 Proposed Budget	#645 Comox Valley Recreation Complexes					
Operating	20	17 Budget	20	18 Proposed Budget		Increase (Decrease)
Revenue						,,
Grants In Lieu Requisition Sale Services User Fees Other Revenue/Recoveries Prior Years Surplus	\$	76,987 4,520,251 1,716,700 55,255 612,545 <b>6,981,738</b>	\$	133,500 4,520,251 1,767,700 57,255 <b>6,478,706</b>	\$	56,513 - 51,000 2,000 (612,545) (503,032)
Expenditures						
Personnel Costs Directors Remuneration Operating Transfer to Capital Contribution to Reserve Debt Charges	\$	3,457,535 11,925 2,049,977 110,721 125,559 1,226,021 <b>6,981,738</b>	\$	3,731,526 11,925 2,053,883 494,662 186,710 <b>6,478,706</b>	\$	273,991 - 3,906 (110,721) 369,103 (1,039,311) (503,032)
Capital						
Funding Sources						
Other Revenue/Recoveries Long Term Debt Proceeds Transfer from Reserve Transfer from Operating	\$	179,799 1,221,570 398,338 110,721 <b>1,910,428</b>	\$	150,000 <b>150,000</b>	\$	(179,799) (1,221,570) (248,338) (110,721) (1,760,428)
Funding Applied						
Capital Projects & Equip Debt Expense Short Term Debt Paydown	\$	688,858 12,216 1,209,354 <b>1,910,428</b>	•	150,000 <b>150,000</b>	\$	(538,858) (12,216) (1,209,354) (1,760,428)

The entire 2018 - 2022 proposed five year financial plan for the Comox Valley Recreation Complexes Service, including the requisition summary and the operating and capital budgets, is available through the online budget binder at <a href="http://www.comoxvallevrd.ca/proposedfinancialplan.html">http://www.comoxvallevrd.ca/proposedfinancialplan.html</a>.

An overview of the 2018–2022 work plan and financial plan for functions 645 – 649 include:

- Due to some issues with the new recreation software program abilities to provide balanced cash and financial reports, facility booking conflicts and unable to print membership cards and other concerns our launch date has been deferred from 2017 and carried forward into 2018 with a cost of \$112,658;
- Addressing impacts of the changes in safety regulations;
- Increased personnel costs to support regulation changes and United Steel Workers Union employee contract increases from 2017 to 2018 of \$273,991;
- Professional fees includes an allowance for the 2018 collective agreement bargaining;
- Staff have been forecasting the asset management needs to ensure key infrastructure items can be replaced within the financial plan. An asset management plan review for the CVRD sports and aquatic centre facilities' will take place in 2018. The report will provide direction on the future of the two facilities and give recommendations of the financial support that this function will need;
- Debt retirement of Municipal Finance Authority (MFA) No. 65 in 2017; \$306,611 enables increased reserve contributions.
- Replacing Arena 1 and 2 lighting to strive to decrease consumption of energy by eight per cent.

#### Revenue Sources

The main source of revenue for the Comox Valley Recreation Complexes Service is the tax requisition (70 per cent) which remains unchanged for 2018 at \$4,520,251. Table 2 shows the apportionment of the 2018 requisition as compared to 2017, demonstrating the impact of the changes in property assessments.

Table 2 – Requisition 2017 Actual vs 2018 Proposed

Participating Area	Requisition 2017	Proposed 2018
Part Area A Baynes Sound	\$ 440,798	\$ 427,601
Area B	528,120	516,338
Area C	677,667	679,887
Comox	848,126	856,254
Courtenay	1,826,336	1,831,550
Cumberland	199,204	208,621
Total Requisition	\$4,520,251	\$4,520,251

Sales of services and user fees for 2018 are estimated at \$1,767,700 (27.3 per cent) of the 2018 revenue. Staff continually strive to find new programs and ways to increase the participation at the facilities. For example, some of the new 2018 initiatives include; take a ride on the Zamboni, weekly fun pool and skate events, beginner hockey league, and restructuring/ increasing program class sizes if this can be done safely.

On recommendation by the Commission, CVRD staff are looking for ways to increase revenues to help offset costs. Staff will be bringing a report in April on increases to user fees effective September 1, 2018. It has been recognized that the CVRD facilities have not had an in depth cost review for some time. Operating and staff costs have increased greatly over time; however

fees and charges have only had slight adjustments. Staff will complete a cost comparison of pools on Vancouver Island, as well as a cost analogy of facility operating and staff costs. Increases to user fees are required to help offset the rising operating costs of delivering recreation programs and maintaining facilities. Areas targeted for increased fees include registered programs, drop in rates and skate rentals. As well an introduction/addition of some new categories for rehabilitation professionals. The current financial plan does not include extra revenue relating to fee increases which are anticipated to increase between five and eight per cent.

# As an example:

- An adult drop-in swim currently costs \$5.80. A five per cent increase would mean a cost of an additional \$0.29 cents increasing the drop-in fee to \$6.09.
- A swim lesson set of 10 classes currently costs \$54.00. An eight per cent increase would mean an additional cost of \$4.32 resulting in a cost of \$58.32.

In the past year, recreation has noted an increase in the revenue of some areas such as aquatic swim lessons and leadership courses. One area is the school swim lesson rental program. With the school districts increasing struggles to provide busing for children to CVRD recreation facilities, staff have been working with swimming agencies such as the Red Cross to access swim lesson grant money to assist the schools in providing transportation to offer school age children the opportunity to learn a most important life skill of water safety.

#### Personnel

The personnel budget for 2018 is proposed to increase by \$273,991 to reflect in 2017, aquatic safety review/audit changes that came forward from the Canadian Lifesaving Society and ammonia plant regulations from Technical Safety BC. Staff and the facilities were to adopt and implement in order for the CVRD to remain compliant with safety standards while maintaining service levels. In order to meet these regulatory modifications, staffing levels in 2017 had to increase substantially.

The 2017 budget for function 645-649 personnel costs, was \$3,457,535. Due to the changes in regulations, actuals to date for 2017 are \$3,645,883, an overage of \$188,348. There may still be further impacts to personnel costs and other budget line items as a direct result of scheduled facility inspections and follow ups from Technical Safety BC throughout 2018 regarding ammonia plant operations items.

In addition, as we move forward working with Technical Safety BC in 2018 recreation personnel needs may continue to be impacted by these regulatory modifications and the operating conditions of the facilities.

Public and staff safety is the CVRD's priority and staff will continue to be proactive to remain compliant with safety standards.

The proposed budget includes a provision for the annual maintenance that is done on the buildings and equipment, for the most part during the shutdown periods scheduled from April-August of each year. Employees who are not involved in the annual maintenance program or the reduced pool/arena operating schedules will receive reduced hours returning to work upon regular operating schedules.

To maintain an unchanged requisition staff levels and personnel costs have been reduced by \$176,730 as per Appendix A.

As well January 31, 2018 sees the current collective agreement expiring. A new term will be determined through the upcoming bargaining process.

#### **Operations**

Overall operations costs for the facilities is proposed to increase modestly for 2018 by \$3,906. The proposed budget includes a provision for the annual maintenance that is done on the buildings and equipment, for the most part during the shutdown periods scheduled from April-August of each year. Employees who are not involved in the annual maintenance program or the reduced pool/arena operating schedules will receive reduced hours returning to work upon regular operating schedules.

In addition to the regular maintenance, there were four big projects on the operating side at the sports and aquatic centre pools in 2017. The Aquatic Centre pool filtration sand was replaced for all three pools and all the water features/spray bars received new pressure pump systems. At the Sports Centre the pool area and Arena 1 lobby lighting system was replaced with new ballasts and bulbs, and a new heater was installed for the hot tub.

2018 minor capital projects scheduled for Arena 1 are the washroom and lobby flooring. The total cost for this is \$10,000.

The repayment of reserve funds used for the heat reclamation project commencing in year 2019; cost savings through reduced energy consumption estimated at \$50,000 per year will be returned to the reserves in the form of reserve contributions. The current financial plan does not reflect any cost savings. Through 2018 staff will be monitoring our operations costs and provide an updated cost savings plan in the 2019-2023 financial plan.

Debt charges will decrease by \$1,039,311 in 2018 to reflect that in 2017, one of the original debt issues relating to the sports centre was retired and a surplus of \$184,739 was received from the MFA. The other main debt issue is for the Arena 2 ice surface construction which will be retired in December 2021. The savings from the reduction in debt servicing costs following the retirement of the debt in 2017 will be used to increase reserve contributions and fund capital/operational projects. The remaining loan is interim financing for the curling centre renovation project which will be converted to long term debt by 2020.

#### Capital

As per Bylaw No. 510 being the "Comox Valley Regional District Delegation of Purchasing Authority Bylaw No. 510, 2018." The board hereby delegates to the CVRD's officers and employees the powers, duties and function of the Board to enter into transactions relating to the CVRD's activities, works or services, subject to the approved financial plan and the limitations on that delegated authority set out in this bylaw and the Procurement Policy adopted by the Board.

The capital equipment, building improvements and IT Infrastructure scheduled for 2018 are:

- Install registration/facility booking/POS software (\$112,658);
- Arena 2 condenser (\$80,000) as part of asset management plan.
- Arena 2 brine pump (\$30,000) as part of asset management plan.
- Arena 1 vestibule (\$40,000) to meet regulatory modifications.

Due to issues with the software being unable to provide the proper reporting at this time, our launch date has been delayed and carried forward into 2018.

There are a significant number of capital projects identified in the asset management plan and are scheduled for replacement in future years. Approximately 40 projects are scheduled for completion in the next eight years. Table 3 indicates the projects included in the proposed capital plan for 2019-2022.

Table 3 – Capital Projects 2019-2022

Year	Project	Amount
2019	HVAC system, air handling units 1 and 2	\$150,000
2020	Arena 2 ice resurfacer	120,000
2020	Aquatic Centre pool air handling unit3	40,000
2020	Aquatic Centre pool main, PH1	25,000
2021	Aquatic Centre roof assessment	150,000
2021	Arena 2 board system	140,000
2022	Arena 2 roof upgrades	100,000
2022	Arena Scoreboard	25,000

## Reserves

The retirement of a debt issue in 2017 has enabled increased contributions to the two existing reserve funds across the 2018-2022 financial plan to support the capital works plan and potential asset management items. Annual contributions of \$100,000 each year to the future expenditure reserve are included in the plan as well as contributions to the capital reserve as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Estimated Capital Works Reserve Status

Capital Reserve	Estimated balance Dec 31/17	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Opening Balance	\$220,912	\$185,250	\$379,912	\$565,852	\$714,919	\$761,382
Contributions	125,559	394,662	335,940	334,067	336,463	260,471
Withdrawals	(161,221)	(200,000	(150,000)	(185,000)	(290,000)	(125,000)
Closing balance	\$185,250	\$379,912	\$565,852	\$714,919	\$761,382	\$896,853

# **Legal Factors**

In November 2017 staff presented a report to the Commission regarding the aquatics safety review, British Columbia facility ammonia plant tragedy and new regulations that are being placed upon recreation facilities. Due to these new regulations, CVRD staff were proactive in partnership with the province to implement these changes immediately in order for the CVRD to remain compliant with safety standards.

# **Intergovernmental Factors**

1. The Lifesaving Society is recognized as a leader in developing standards for activities in, on and around water. Through its Safety Standards Commission, the Society sets national aquatic environment standards and clarifies existing provincial/territorial regulations.

Lifesaving Society Canada's National Safety Standards do not replace or supersede local, provincial/territorial or federal legislation or regulations, but they are considered the standard to which aquatic facility operators should work towards in order to enhance safety within their operations and to prevent drowning and aquatic-related injury.

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- 2. Technical Safety BC is an independent, self-funded organization mandated to oversee the safe installation and operation of technical systems and equipment. In addition to issuing permits, licences and certificates, Technical Safety BC works with industry to reduce safety risks through assessment, education and outreach, enforcement, and research.
- 3. WorkSafeBC administers the *Workers Compensation Act* for the British Columbia Ministry of Labour. WorkSafeBC has the legal authority to set and enforce occupational health and safety standards, assist injured or disabled workers, and assess employers and collect funds to operate WorkSafeBC

By law, all those businesses in BC who hire full-time, part-time, casual or contract workers must register with WorkSafeBC (WSBC).

### Citizen/Public Relations

The 2018 requisition is unchanged from 2017 at \$4,520,251, based on a tax levy of \$0.2919 per \$1,000 of assessed value. For a property assessed at \$400,000, the tax levy at the proposed budget would be \$116.76 which is a slight decrease from the previous year.

During 2017, swimming pool regulatory changes came forward from the Canadian Lifesaving Society and from Technical Safety BC on ammonia plant regulations. Staff have implemented these changes in order for the CVRD to remain compliant with safety standards while maintaining service levels. During the implementation process staff have done the following to keep the community, users and USW workers apprised of any changes:

#### Internal communications:

- All staff meetings held in December 2018 and scheduled for April 2018;
- Managers are scheduled to meet with their departments February 2018;
- Managers are meeting face to face with their staff on a daily/weekly basis;
- Managers have met with USW 1-1973 chair;
- Ongoing information posted on internal website and staff bulletin boards.

#### External communications:

- Report to the Sports Commission November 2017;
- User group information meetings December 2017;
- Scheduled drop in patron information sessions in February and March 2018;
- CVRD website, social media, public notices post sports commission meeting February 2018.

Increased and further communications will be provided to better inform and update staff, users and the public about the state of the facilities and regulatory/procedural changes.

The public will also be notified of any impacts to program/service levels, fees and charges and tax requisition changes.

Attachments: Appendix A – Proposed Program and Service Reductions

# Appendix A – Proposed Program and Service Reductions 2018, Comox Valley Recreation Complexes

	Facility	Current Schedule	Proposed Program/Service Reductions Effective April 1, 2018	Potential Savings
1	Sports Centre	Open 7:00 AM	Tues/Thurs open 7:30 AM	\$4,139
2	Sports Centre	Open until 8:00 PM	Close 6:30 PM Tues/Thurs	\$3,449
3	Sports Centre	Normally 2 Guards	1 Guard for user groups during exclusive use times only	\$4,139
4	Aquatic Centre	Open 3:00 to 6:00 PM	Close Heat Zone 3:00:-6:00 PM, Mon- Thurs	\$8,272
5	Wellness Centre	Supervised Mon-Thur 6:00 to 8:00 PM Sat/Sun 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM	Cancel Weekend/Evening supervised hours	\$13,789
6	Aquatic Centre	Open 6:00 AM	Open 6:30 AM	\$4,558
7	Aquatic Centre	Open til 9:00 PM	Close 7:30 PM Tues/Thurs cancel adult swim/fitness class	\$6,553
8	Aquatic Centre	Open 9:00 PM Sat And 5:00 PM Sun	Close 4:00 PM	\$16,433
9	Aquatic Centre	Open 2:00 to 4:00 PM	Close 25 metre Lane Pool from 2:00-4:00 PM No lane swimming Mon - Thurs	\$5,519
10	Aquatic Centre	Lessons 9:00 to 10:30 AM	Cancel Sunday Lessons	\$9,978
11	Aquatic Centre	Lessons 6:00 to 8:00 PM	Cancel Tues/Thurs PM lessons	\$4,139
12	Sports Centre	Open 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM Mon-Fri	Close Christmas Holidays	\$5,051
13	Sports Centre	Open 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM Mon-Fri	Close Spring Break	\$5,765
14	Sports Centre (Aquatic Centre closed July/August)	Aquatic Center 6:00 AM-8:00 PM Mon-Fri July-Aug 12 Sports Centre open Aug 13 for the season 7:00 AM-8:00 PM, Mon-Fri	Summer open 6:30-2:00 PM only (plus 2:00-3:00PM for programs)	\$84,946
		Total Proposed Program and Scheo	\$176,730	