

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE COMMISSION

FROM: DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION &
CULTURAL SERVICES

**SUBJECT: CONCERNS RE: SERVICES FOR SENIORS –
CORRESPONDENCE FROM MS. CAROLE CAMERON**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** this report be received for information purposes.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to Ms. Carole Cameron.

REPORT**BACKGROUND**

Ms. Cameron has corresponded with the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission regarding three areas of concern with services for seniors. These include single and multi-center seniors memberships; the design of the new Bonsor 55+ facility; and the Food Services Café/Seniors Lounge coffee bar at Bonsor Recreation Complex & 55+ facility. She also requested information on how to become involved in the decision making process at the Seniors Centers.

DISCUSSION**Seniors Memberships**

In 2012 the senior's membership structure for access to 55+ Services at the four City of Burnaby Seniors Centers was changed to provide an option to purchase a single center membership or a multi-center membership. Previous to 2012 a \$14.91 (+ tax) membership provided access to programs and services at all four sites which translated to \$3.72 (+ tax) per site. When a lower mainland market survey was conducted, it was determined that the median per site membership price was \$16.74 with the market ranging from \$11.60 to \$25.00 and that the City of Burnaby was valuing our facilities and services at well below market range.

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In September of 2012, single center memberships at \$16.07 (+ tax) per site were created which allowed members to renew their memberships at a similar price at the site that they frequent the most. A new multi-center membership allowing access to all four sites, was created at \$40.00 (+ tax). Although this was an increase for access to all sites, the membership value remained well below market at only \$10.00 per site. Both fees have increased yearly by the standard rate of inflation that is applied to all programs and services. The market research and proposed new membership structure was presented at each Seniors Society's Board of Directors meetings as well as at the Seniors Advisory Committee meeting. The feedback provided was that the new structure was reasonable. The current single site membership fee is \$16.70 (+ tax) and the multi-center membership fee is \$41.60 (+ tax). The current senior's single membership market range is \$16.70 to \$30.00.

For those who have difficulty affording a seniors membership, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Recreation Credit Program is available to City of Burnaby residents who qualify. Free Lifetime Memberships are also available to City of Burnaby residents who are 90 years old or better.

Bonsor 55+ Facility

In 2008 the City of Burnaby and Polygon Construction Management Ltd. entered into an agreement that in lieu of Density Bonus Funds, Polygon would build a new building dedicated to seniors. This would provide additional space for Seniors Services. Numerous information sharing activities took place such as displays provided by Polygon and sessions hosted in the Bonsor banquet hall and seniors lounge. The proposal was then brought forward to the Bonsor Seniors Society Annual General Meeting held on 2009 April 17. A ballot vote was taken at the AGM and it was determined that the majority agreed to proceed with construction of the new facility.

A "New Building Committee" was struck consisting of Bonsor Seniors Society Board of Directors representatives; general membership representatives, City Staff and Polygon/Architects. There was extensive consultation with members, activity group leaders, board members and staff as well as many information/feedback presentations at special events, general meetings and in the seniors lounge. Many of the regular seniors programs have moved into the new facility. Larger, active groups such as Line Dance, Fitness, Badminton and Special Events continue to be offered at the original Bonsor Complex. There was a period of transition as members adjusted to the new facility. It is currently a very busy site with ongoing requests for further growth.

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Food Services

A coffee bar service, very similar to that which was offered in the seniors lounge at the ‘old’ building is currently operating successfully at the new 55+ facility. It is currently a bright and busy social gathering spot offering hot drinks, cookies and muffins in the same manner as was in the original building. Currently, should you participate in a seniors activity that occurs at Bonsor, you have the choice of using the Food Services located in Bonsor Complex or the Seniors Centre Lounge in the Bonsor 55+ building. Recent statistics show that the new Bonsor 55+ facility coffee bar is busier than the old upper floor one at the original location.

The Bonsor café has been in operation since December 2010. It is run by City Staff from the City’s Food Services Division. The prices are set at market within the industry and there are some senior’s discounts available. Seating for patrons of the Bonsor Café is provided in the lobby directly across from the Kiosk. It has been noted that the lobby is very busy, and often seats are taken up by other facility patrons. Food service staff will monitor the seating available and determine if additional seating should be provided.

Renovations at Bonsor Complex

The space previously occupied by and dedicated to seniors at Bonsor, is planned to be renovated to create multipurpose, fitness and art space which will allow all of the rooms on the floor to be utilized more effectively. The original tender for work came in over budget and the plans are being revised. The City of Burnaby plans to complete this work this summer.

Decision affecting Seniors.

Members can contribute to future decision making processes through involvement at any of the four seniors centers (Bonsor, Cameron, Confederation and Edmonds). The decision making process at each seniors center is a collaborative process. Each site has an elected board which is supported by City of Burnaby staff.

SUMMARY

There are numerous opportunities at each Seniors Centers for individuals to volunteer and become involved with each Society’s Board of Directors, subcommittees and group activities and influence decisions. Information and feedback requests are posted on site bulletin boards, presented at special events, at various meetings and through displays in the centers and seniors lounges. Comment forms are also available at all sites. Large construction developments incorporate public input sessions which are promoted in local newspapers, newsletters, and in/around existing facilities.

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The Recreation Division endeavors to provide programs and services to the public at fair market value. The Recreation Service Program is available to City of Burnaby residents who require and qualify for financial assistance.

The new Bonsor 55+ facility was designed in consultation with Bonsor Seniors Society members and staff. There has been a period of adjustment and it is hoped that Ms. Cameron will soon feel comfortable at the new facility. Staff would be happy to help her become acquainted with the new space and introduce her to the members who frequent the facility.



DAVE ELLENWOOD
DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATIONS & CULTURAL SERVICES

CC:mg

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