



CORPORATE REPORT
The Corporation of the Town of Wasaga Beach
Meeting Date: 8/22/2024

DATE: 8/7/2024

SUBJECT: New Stars Arena Six-Month Bookings Update

CONTACT: Scott Bradley, Customer Service Coordinator
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REPORT NUMBER: 2024/08/22-08

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the report titled: New Stars Arena Six-Month Bookings Update, to the Council meeting of August 22, 2024, be received for information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Ice and Room booking stats have been recorded since the opening of the Stars Arena January 29th 2024, six months ago.
- Both ice and room bookings have increased from the same period in the old arena between February and July 2023. With TPL room rentals showing massive hours of use increases.
- Because Town run programming no longer pays facility rental fees revenue growth although positive and on budget is somewhat skewed year over year.
- Non-Prime ice has growth but in contrast the outlook for Prime ice bookings are steadily approaching capacity.

BACKGROUND:

Recreation and Facility staff were asked to develop a report to update Council on facility usage over the first six months since the new twin-pad arena facility was opened on January 29th 2024. Customer Service staff book and invoice halls, fields and ice in addition to registered programs for all Town facilities with a large variety of stakeholders including internal Town departments utilizing facilities for programs and meetings. Bookings, revenues and total hours can be tracked in the Town's BookKing software.

DISCUSSION:

Facility Traffic Statistics

The Wasaga Stars Arena now has traffic counters installed at both vestibules at both the east and west entrances along with a counter at the entrance to the Library. With this, we are now able to track all traffic. As of July 31st, the first 6 months have generated 168,410 visitors in total with an average daily total of 882 guests per day.

Revenues versus number of hours facilities are used

Invoicing for all internal bookings of all facility space charged in January 2024 with the new budget and all Town usage of facilities became no charge. Therefore comparing revenue numbers year over year will be somewhat skewed. 2024 records show zero revenue for all internal rentals compared to 2023 showing revenue for the internal rental portion. Therefore, accurate review of this report should weigh heavily on the hours of use to show real growth and differentials between the two facilities. With the opening of the new facility at the end of January of this year this report has clear numbers on the first six months of use from Feb 1 to July 31 in 2024 at the new facility with similar multi-purpose rooms (MPRs) and two ice pads versus the same six months from 2023 in the old arena with one ice pad. Generally, revenue numbers increased ten percent for ice and 1.5% for rooms from 2023 to 2024.

Facility Room rentals

Facility room rentals at the new facility quickly proved demand was far higher than old arena. Leading up to opening it was often considered that many user groups may migrate down from the RecPlex to utilize the new amenities at the Wasaga Stars Arena. 2024 RecPlex MPR usage is up 6.7% compared to 2023 (Feb – July) with 2783 hours of rental time this year compared to 2023 which had 2609 hours rented during the same period. Revenue is very different having decreased 49.9% compared to 2023 due to Town booking fees being reduced to \$0.00.

The new facility, which has almost exact square footage of MPR space as the former 425 River Road West arena has very different rental totals.

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Old Arena Auditorium | 2832 sq. ft. | New Facility ReMax Room | 3530 sq. ft. |
| Old Arena Rec Hall | 1770 sq. ft. | New Facility Rotary Room | 1100 sq. ft. |
| TOTAL: | 4602 sq. ft. | TOTAL: | 4630 sq. ft. |

425 River Rd. W. in 2023 had a total of 513 hours of rental time used at the end of July last year. 554 River Rd. W. by July 31 had a total of 1996 hours of rental time used which was up 289.1% over last year. Therefore, facility staff are managing three times the setups, teardowns, cleanup & overall wear on facility furnishings, fixtures and equipment and requiring consistent staff management and labour as well as customer service interactions related to bookings. The 2024 revenue for MPRs at the new Wasaga Stars is up 57.6% compared to the same period at 425 River. Rd.W in 2023.

Overall total facility room rentals (including RecPlex) are up year to date by 53.1%







2023 ROOM USE

| | Old Stars Arena | | RecPlex | | TOTAL | |
|----------|-----------------|-------------|---------|--------------|-------|--------------|
| | Hours | Revenue | Hours | Revenue | Hours | Revenue |
| FEBRUARY | 72 | \$ 897.20 | 489 | \$ 9,455.22 | 561 | \$ 10,352.42 |
| MARCH | 80 | \$ 1,621.50 | 506 | \$ 10,317.90 | 586 | \$ 11,939.40 |
| APRIL | 144 | \$ 2,654.80 | 478 | \$ 9,824.50 | 622 | \$ 12,479.30 |
| MAY | 67 | \$ 1,135.80 | 474 | \$ 9,390.80 | 541 | \$ 10,526.60 |
| JUNE | 106 | \$ 985.10 | 412 | \$ 6,811.30 | 518 | \$ 7,796.40 |
| JULY | 44 | \$ 903.80 | 250 | \$ 3,964.20 | 294 | \$ 4,868.00 |
| TOTAL | 513 | \$ 8,198.20 | 2609 | \$ 49,763.92 | 3122 | \$ 57,962.12 |

2024 ROOM USE

| | New Stars Arena | | RecPlex | | TOTAL | |
|----------|-----------------|-------------|---------|--------------|-------|--------------|
| | Hours | Revenue | Hours | Revenue | Hours | Revenue |
| FEBRUARY | 485 | \$ 794.58 | 546 | \$ 4,078.20 | 1031 | \$ 4,872.78 |
| MARCH | 221 | \$ 1,971.38 | 507 | \$ 4,692.60 | 728 | \$ 6,663.98 |
| APRIL | 319 | \$ 3,718.42 | 538 | \$ 7,210.64 | 857 | \$ 10,929.06 |
| MAY | 317 | \$ 2,710.82 | 524 | \$ 3,714.60 | 841 | \$ 6,425.42 |
| JUNE | 410 | \$ 2,879.50 | 393 | \$ 4,459.10 | 803 | \$ 7,338.60 |
| JULY | 244 | \$ 846.70 | 275 | \$ 777.00 | 519 | \$ 1,623.70 |
| TOTAL | 1996 | \$12,921.40 | 2783 | \$ 24,932.14 | 4779 | \$ 37,853.54 |

Comparisons for first six months of ROOM operation (feb - July):

| | Stars Arena | | RecPlex | | TOTAL | |
|----------|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| | Hours | Revenue | Hours | Revenue | Hours | Revenue |
| 2024 is: | 1483 | \$ 4,723.20 | 174 | \$ (24,831.78) | 1657 | \$ (20,108.58) |
| | UP | UP | UP | DOWN | UP | DOWN |
| 2024 is: | 289.1% | 57.6% | 6.7% | -49.9% | 53.1% | -34.7% |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Ice Booking Process Hours and Rates

There are very few discounts for ice rentals at the Town's arena although two key reasons ice is discounted relate to type of group and time of day. Minor Sport groups and Local Minor Sport groups (WB Minor Hockey and WB Figure Skating Club) get discounts on ice. Ice rates are officially set annually during the budget process but generally the Recreation and Facility department go to Council with a three year schedule to help user groups set the fees for future years. It should also be noted that Winter Prime rates increase each October and run through the traditional hockey and figure skating seasons until spring of the next year. Time of day rates command higher amounts during "Prime" hours and a lower rate during low traffic, "Non-Prime" periods of the day. The

definition of Non-Prime hours are those hours that are Monday to Friday from opening until 4pm. More generally known as the ice hours that fall during school hours of operation. These hours are always difficult for all arenas to fill because the bulk of arena users are pre-occupied with work and school daytime on weekdays. Prime hours are known by definition as weekday evenings from 4pm until close and all operating hours on weekends. Also of note, all summer hours are billed at Summer Prime rate when school out and kids more available to programming any day or time. The majority of hours rented will always be those of prime hours for all arena facilities.

| PRIME VS NON-PRIME TIMES | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------|
| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY | SCHOOL HOLIDAYS |
| 7:00 AM | 7:00 AM | 7:00 AM | 7:00 AM | 7:00 AM | 7:00 AM | 7:00 AM | 7:00 AM |
| 8:00 AM | 8:00 AM | 8:00 AM | 8:00 AM | 8:00 AM | 8:00 AM | 8:00 AM | 8:00 AM |
| 9:00 AM | 9:00 AM | 9:00 AM | 9:00 AM | 9:00 AM | 9:00 AM | 9:00 AM | 9:00 AM |
| 10:00 AM | 10:00 AM | 10:00 AM | 10:00 AM | 10:00 AM | 10:00 AM | 10:00 AM | 10:00 AM |
| 11:00 AM | 11:00 AM | 11:00 AM | 11:00 AM | 11:00 AM | 11:00 AM | 11:00 AM | 11:00 AM |
| 12:00 PM | 12:00 PM | 12:00 PM | 12:00 PM | 12:00 PM | 12:00 PM | 12:00 PM | 12:00 PM |
| 1:00 PM | 1:00 PM | 1:00 PM | 1:00 PM | 1:00 PM | 1:00 PM | 1:00 PM | 1:00 PM |
| 2:00 PM | 2:00 PM | 2:00 PM | 2:00 PM | 2:00 PM | 2:00 PM | 2:00 PM | 2:00 PM |
| 3:00 PM | 3:00 PM | 3:00 PM | 3:00 PM | 3:00 PM | 3:00 PM | 3:00 PM | 3:00 PM |
| 4:00 PM | 4:00 PM | 4:00 PM | 4:00 PM | 4:00 PM | 4:00 PM | 4:00 PM | 4:00 PM |
| 5:00 PM | 5:00 PM | 5:00 PM | 5:00 PM | 5:00 PM | 5:00 PM | 5:00 PM | 5:00 PM |
| 6:00 PM | 6:00 PM | 6:00 PM | 6:00 PM | 6:00 PM | 6:00 PM | 6:00 PM | 6:00 PM |
| 7:00 PM | 7:00 PM | 7:00 PM | 7:00 PM | 7:00 PM | 7:00 PM | 7:00 PM | 7:00 PM |
| 8:00 PM | 8:00 PM | 8:00 PM | 8:00 PM | 8:00 PM | 8:00 PM | 8:00 PM | 8:00 PM |
| 9:00 PM | 9:00 PM | 9:00 PM | 9:00 PM | 9:00 PM | 9:00 PM | 9:00 PM | 9:00 PM |
| 10:00 PM | 10:00 PM | 10:00 PM | 10:00 PM | 10:00 PM | 10:00 PM | 10:00 PM | 10:00 PM |
| 11:00 PM | 11:00 PM | 11:00 PM | 11:00 PM | 11:00 PM | 11:00 PM | 11:00 PM | 11:00 PM |



Summer and winter rates vary because there is historically a greater demand in the summer months for ice on all hours of the day. Therefore, the Town does not carry any Non-Prime hours through summer holidays and demand justifies the inflated rate through July and August.

Ice resurfacing management of two ice pads requires staff uphold set hours of operation for each ice pad. One rink operates with starting times beginning on the hour while the other pad starts 30 minutes after the hour. This helps in managing flood times so one person at back of house operating the ice resurfer has enough time to flood, dump the snow and refill the water tank

before getting back on the ice within 20 minutes to flood the other ice pad. Floods generally fall at 20 and 50 minutes after the hour. Ten minutes out of every hourly rental are needed for the flood itself.

2024 Ice Rentals

Ice rental growth in 2024 at the new Wasaga Stars Arena has been very positive over the first six months of operation. Significant growth came with a steep learning curve for old and many new staff in how best to manage and run the new facility. Ice use has seen a 58.8% increase over the same period in 2023. Increasing the total hours of use at 425 R.R.W. from 1,936 hours to 3,074 hours at the TPL. Revenue comparisons are very similar showing an increase of 51.8%. This moves ice revenue from what was \$239,509 in the first half of 2023 at the old arena to \$363,631 in 2024 YTD for the first six months of operation at the new twin-pad facility.

2023 ICE USE

| | Non- Prime hours | | Prime Hours | | TOTAL | |
|--------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| | Hours | Revenue | Hours | Revenue | Hours | Revenue |
| FEBRUARY | 74.5 | \$ 3,491.29 | 219.5 | \$ 23,114.26 | 294 | \$ 26,605.55 |
| MARCH | 116.5 | \$ 6,173.66 | 232.5 | \$ 25,632.75 | 349 | \$ 31,806.41 |
| APRIL | 108 | \$ 7,861.40 | 204 | \$ 27,064.30 | 312 | \$ 34,925.70 |
| MAY | 74.5 | \$ 7,816.97 | 230.5 | \$ 32,973.75 | 305 | \$ 40,790.72 |
| JUNE | 101.5 | \$ 6,851 | 214.5 | \$ 37,135.51 | 316 | \$ 43,986.55 |
| JULY | 157 | \$ 29,109.00 | 203 | \$ 32,285.88 | 360 | \$ 61,394.88 |
| TOTAL | 632 | \$ 61,303.36 | 1304 | \$ 178,206.45 | 1936 | \$ 239,509.81 |

2024 ICE USE

| | Non- Prime hours | | Prime Hours | | TOTAL | |
|--------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| | Hours | Revenue | Hours | Revenue | Hours | Revenue |
| FEBRUARY | 89.5 | \$ 6,357.00 | 503.5 | \$ 29,770.69 | 593 | \$ 36,127.69 |
| MARCH | 122.5 | \$13,976.00 | 391.5 | \$ 38,900.62 | 514 | \$ 52,876.62 |
| APRIL | 117 | \$ 9,384.00 | 362 | \$ 49,980.91 | 479 | \$ 59,364.91 |
| MAY | 89.5 | \$ 6,375.00 | 361.5 | \$ 55,566.75 | 451 | \$ 61,941.75 |
| JUNE | 93 | \$ 7,038.00 | 409 | \$ 56,697.10 | 502 | \$ 63,735.10 |
| JULY | 183.5 | \$34,337.50 | 351.5 | \$ 55,247.50 | 535 | \$ 89,585.00 |
| TOTAL | 695 | \$77,467.50 | 2379 | \$286,163.57 | 3074 | \$ 363,631.07 |

2024 TO 2023 COMPARISON

| | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 10.0% | 26.4% | 82.4% | 60.6% | 58.8% | 51.8% |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|



Comparisons for first six months of ICE operation (feb - July):

2024 is 109.97% of 2023 non-prime hours used

2024 is 160.58% of 2023 PRIME hours used

2024 is 151.82% of 2023 6 month revenue totals

Non-Prime hours of use has increased since moving into the new facility by 10% generating more than \$77,000 to date in revenue in non-Prime hours business alone.

Prime time ice use has increased an amazing 82.4% year over year. Even with this kind of growth in the first six months of operation at the new facility Council should keep a couple factors in mind. Because the exact opening date of the arena was a moving target throughout the fall of 2023 all regular league and pick-up hockey groups were fully established and scheduled by the time the new twin-pads became available. New allocation policy changes also eliminated consistent year over year populating of the schedule that may have discouraged some user groups into finding bookings elsewhere versus waiting for the Town's application process subject to priority access to ice. Lastly, more than half of February was monopolized with grand opening celebrations that reduced availability of rooms and ice for bookings.

With the opening of the new Twin Pad Arena. Ice demand has slowly and continuously increased. Because the facility opened in the middle of hockey season, most organizations had ice allotments allocated already for the entire season meaning most were unable to increase use during the last few weeks of hockey season if they had wished to. The town is now getting those calls from surrounding user groups looking to make Wasaga Stars Arena a part of their weekly/monthly ice schedules. The Town did not pre-emptively pursue new rental groups and opportunities that need time to pre-plan their bookings. Not knowing exactly when the twin-pad would open while onboarding the newly expanded staff team limited operations to essential requirements at this early stage.

The summer months are an entirely different operation for the first time in decades as the management and use of the camp cabins and rec hall are no longer part of the arena's summer business model. The ability to host over night summer hockey camps are no longer an option and thus the need to replace summer user hours with new day-camps and programs has quickly begun to evolve. New users and groups that were never able to consider summer programs due to the lack of ice times available have now started to grow new business opportunities.

Outlook for next 6 months...

The Recreation and Facility Department has seen a large number of requests for ice starting in September. The fall calendar reflects this, as there is already very little Prime ice time available through the fall and winter months. Staff expect to operate at near capacity on Prime hours daily for the foreseeable future. Many new organizations are now on the Regular Users list that were never accommodated before this year. Hockey is quickly evolving on a large scale with new leagues ready to compete with the Canadian Hockey Association and the local Ontario Minor Hockey Association for organized youth hockey programs. Recently, many new teams and governing bodies are now renting ice at the Town's new facility. The future of organized hockey will bring new summer leagues and summer camps as well making hockey officially a twelve month a year business.

A focus for the 2025 season will be to refine large tournaments, concerts and ice skating events. The Town has booked its very first Provincial Figure Skating event from Dec 5 – 8 this year. This competition will utilize both pads for four days. Minor Hockey has also been granted an increase for the number of teams they can register for the four annual Silver Stick tournaments. The traditional six team limit has been increased to eight and with Ontario wide "B" centres being flattened from all "C" and "D" centres across the province it is anticipated that North America wide

Silver Stick tournaments held in Wasaga Beach will eventually increase to twelve teams per age group weekend now that Wasaga has twin-pad capacity.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

Facility bookings (including ice and room rentals) are generating over \$60,000.00 revenue monthly. Operational costs need time to balance with revenue growth but net losses aligned with the former arena are not beyond the realm of possible considering the potential for annual concert revenues. Total monthly revenues will continue to grow and expectations to exceed \$100,000.00 monthly are not unrealistic.

CONCLUSION:

Demand for ice and program space throughout the province and locally in Wasaga Beach continues to grow. This provision of service to meet the demands of a rapidly growing Town with new and diverse user groups cannot be underestimated. The rapid expansion of girls hockey and recreational programs. The inability to fill demands for Prime ice in the upcoming fall and winter season more than justifies the extensive capital investment the Town has made in it's state of the art twin-pad arena.

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