

# Memo



**Date:** April 6, 2010  
**File:** 1853-20  
**To:** City Manager  
**From:** Director, Recreation & Cultural Services  
**Subject:** Funding Support for the Kelowna Lawn Bowling Club

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council approves a one-time grant of \$10,000 to the Lawn Bowling Society for a turf rehab program as outlined in the report from the Director, Recreation & Cultural Services dated April 6, 2010;

AND THAT the 2010 Financial Plan be amended to provide for the \$10,000 grant with funding from the Major Facilities Reserve;

AND THAT staff submit a \$5,000 one-time operating grant for the Kelowna Lawn Bowling Club as part of the 2011 Provisional Budget;

AND FURTHER THAT staff report back by September 2010 the results of the operational review of the Kelowna Lawn Bowling Club as outlined in the report from the Director, Recreation & Cultural Services, dated April 6, 2010.

## **Purpose:**

The Kelowna Lawn Bowling Club submitted the attached letter regarding their financial situation and are seeking financial assistance from the City. The greens are in extremely poor condition and are having a negative effect on membership numbers and ability to host events. The Club does not have the financial means to properly repair the greens to an acceptable playing standard and have requested financial assistance.

## **Background:**

The Kelowna Lawn Bowling Club has been a local club since 1909, celebrating their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2009. The Club has been located at its present location since 1940 with the clubhouse added in 1976. The current lease expired in 2007 and has been in over holding under the same terms and conditions as contained in the initial lease.

The Club is facing significant financial challenges with the real potential of not operating in 2010. While in past years the membership has exceeded 100, the current membership is at 43. The facility is centrally located in City Park and provides a unique positive feature within the park for both participants and casual park users. Given the positive long term history of the Club and

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prominent location in City Park, staff recommends a short term strategy to support the Club while an operational review is conducted to determine a long term strategy.

Kelowna Lawn Bowling Club related budget information includes:

- 2009 budget has revenues of \$18,504 and expenses of \$22,958
  - Membership fees are \$5,300
  - 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary grant from the City of \$4,500
  - GIC of \$4,100 cashed to support operations
  - Greens maintenance was \$9,410
  - Operational deficit covered from previous years operations and reserves
- 2010 budget estimates has revenues of \$9,540 and expenses of \$23,000. If the turf rehab program is complete in 2010 the Club will be reworking their operating budget to reflect a partial season closure.

The Club faces two significant operational challenges in moving forward:

#### Condition of the Bowling Greens

The greens are in poor condition and are having a negative impact on attracting and maintaining membership and ability to host events; which all affects their operating budget and ability to maintain and manage the facility. As described by the Club, the problem in turf maintenance stems from:

- The turf winters poorly
- Lack of knowledgeable help and advise in maintaining the greens
- Lack of manpower
- Lack of appropriate equipment
- Lack of financial resources to provide all of the above

The one-time grant of \$10,000 would provide sufficient funds to rehab the turf and bring back to an acceptable playing standard. A rehab program would include aerate, top dress, overseed and fertilize. For the rehab to be effective the playing surface would need to be closed and likely not reopen until later in the season. The rehab program would be complete with input from the City's Parks Department. Given current resources, the Parks Department would only be able to provide advice regarding a maintenance program on a limited basis with the ongoing responsibility remaining with the Lawn Bowling Club.

#### Sustainable Operational Plan

A renewed operating plan needs to be developed that reviews the current operating practices and future strategies. In providing a grant to rehab the turf, it would be an expectation of the Club to develop a plan that describes the steps they will take to be successful long term. Staff from the Recreation & Cultural Services Department will provide support towards the development of a plan with the approach that the Club takes ownership as they will be required to implement outcomes.

Considerations while developing a plan will include items such as:

- Review of revenue streams, such as membership fees, strategies for increasing membership numbers, new program development and sponsorship programs
- Analyze expenses for efficiency and potential cost savings

In reviewing the documentation provided from the Club there appears to be significant challenges for the Club given current trends and participation patterns. However recognizing their long history and presence of the venue in City Park, staff believes that the Club should be given a reasonable opportunity to reestablish itself as a viable entity.

Renovating and improving City Park and the all the Downtown Waterfront Parks is a priority for the City. Infrastructure Planning will be developing plans and designs for these important public places. Understanding the future of the Kelowna Lawn Bowling Club is important. Should the Club not be viable long term, the interior of City Park will require substantial renovations in order to redevelop the area to attract positive family activity.

**Internal Circulation:** General Manager, Community Services; Director, Community & Media Relations; Director, Financial Services; Parks Planning Manager; Parks, Beaches & Sportsfield Supervisor

**Financial/Budgetary Considerations:** Funding source for the \$10,000 turf rehab would be from the Major Facilities Reserve with an additional \$5,000 included in the 2011 Provisional Budget for Council's consideration. The intent of the additional \$5,000 is to provide a one-time financial support through the implementation stage of a renewed operating plan.

**Personnel Implications:** Direct support from Recreation & Cultural Services through the review and development of existing and future operations plan. The Parks Department will provide advice regarding a rehab program and ongoing maintenance.

**External Agency/Public Comments:** In discussions with Club executives, they recognize the challenge ahead of them but are also eager to improve their current situation.

**Considerations not applicable to this report:**

Legal/Statutory Authority

Legal/statutory Procedural Requirements

Existing Policy

Technical Requirements

Alternate Recommendation

Communications Considerations

Submitted by:



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J. Gabriel, Director, Recreation & Cultural Services

Approved for inclusion:



John Vos, General Manager, Community Services

CC: General Manager, Community Services  
Director, Infrastructure Planning  
Director, Civic Operations  
Director, Financial Services  
Director, Community & Media Relations

Attachment: Lawn Bowling Club-Request for Financial Assistance

**KELOWNA LAWN BOWLING CLUB**  
Orchard Park Post Office Box 21004  
Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 9N8  
Phone: 250.762-5911

**CITY OF KELOWNA**  
FEB - 3 2010  
**ADMINISTRATION  
DEPARTMENT**

February 1, 2010

Original to:  Communications  
Copied:  Mayor  
 City Manager  
Councillors

Office of the Mayor – City of Kelowna  
1435 Water St.  
Kelowna, B. C.

File Number: 0205-01  
Initials: *jm* Date: Feb 3/10

Attention: Mayor Shepherd

Dear Sharon,

Reference: Request for Financial Assistance

This is a request for support from the city of Kelowna for the Kelowna Lawn Bowling Club.

As you know we celebrated our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary last season. And as you inevitably noticed not only was our green not green it was in unplayable condition with abundant holes and lumps.....so that is the focus of our request.

The bowling green has always been a problem to maintain for many reasons:

- It winters poorly
- Lack of knowledgeable help and advice
- Lack of manpower
- Lack of appropriate equipment
- Most importantly lack of financial resources to provide all of the above

The effect this has had is circular. The poor green is not attractive to new bowlers/members and is a serious deterrent to keeping current bowlers/members. Additionally, the reputation spreads throughout the valley to other clubs so no one attends tournaments. These activities are fund raising in nature - so – no funds, no green, no members or tournaments, no funds, etc. As all volunteer, not-for-profit clubs know the gaming grant requests have also been denied.

This committee has polled other interior clubs for information on support provided by the cities and we have attached a spread sheet for your perusal.

We are open for suggestions, but offer the following for consideration. The city takes responsibility for:

- Rehabilitating and maintaining the present green
- Replacing the green with
  - a) new natural grass and maintaining it until the club becomes financially stable
  - b) an artificial surface. While this is a more costly undertaking, it is also more environmentally friendly. It also means a shorter down time, a longer playing season, consistent green performance and therefore an expansion of membership and subsequent operating funds
- Move the club to another site – i.e. possibly in conjunction with the Senior's Center move. One of the clubs in the valley has this sort of arrangement and it is working very well.

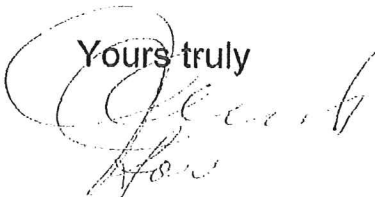
This club is a living part of Kelowna's history and heritage. It has been in Kelowna since 1909, moving to the present site in 1940. The present clubhouse was built in 1976. Both normally sighted and sight impaired bowlers have enjoyed the facility over the years. Enclosed is a letter of support from the coordinator of the Visually Impaired lawn bowlers and the Canadian Champion, Al Hanet.

We are members in good standing of the Interior Lawn Bowling Association, Bowls B.C. and Bowls Canada/Boulingrin. In the past lawn bowling has been considered a sport of seniors and while there is still a preponderance of seniors, all clubs are now attracting all ages of bowlers. Kelowna boasts the youngest member at 14.

The worst situation is that the club ceases to exist as this would leave Kelowna – the biggest city in the interior – the only one without a club.

We would like to meet with city officials to discuss our plight and seek a possible solution.

Yours truly



Greens Committee for the Kelowna Lawn Bowling Club