

NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**BUSINESS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING**

INFORMATION SHEET

DATE: January 12th, 2022
TO: Business Committee
FROM: Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer
Pete Sabo, Executive Director Planning & Operations
SUBJECT: Rentals Update

Background

March 17, 2020: Rental groups notified that all facility rentals were suspended until further notice.

Rental Income – Community Use of Schools History*:

- 2017-18: \$323,750.58
- 2018-19: \$316,079.16
- 2019-20: \$258,058.15 (lower due to Covid impact for part of a year)
- 2020-21: \$155,854 (full year of Covid impact)
- 2021-22: \$92,475 (as of Dec. 15 /21)

*Surplus space rentals, licenses and leases are not included (these proceeding largely unaffected – see attached summary).

It is of note that the value of childcare (consisting mainly of before and after school care) contracts for the 2021/22 school year are currently estimated at \$133,500 annually.

Childcare providers operating out of SD68 facilities were given the option to reopen after Spring Break (March 30, 2020). Schools remained closed but childcare providers were given accommodation to help families who are unable to work from home and rely on childcare.

A gradual resumption of approved indoor rentals began July 2020 for school partner groups such as Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship Centre, Nanaimo Science (NS3), and Community School Programs. CSP programs running during Spring and Summer break included babysitting courses, reading camps, Art in the Park, Kids Get Cooking, and various sports camps. Whenever possible, these programs were moved outside to reduce potential Covid transmission.

Gabriola Recreation Society was given approval to restart operations at GES and were permitted to use their leased office space and the soccer fields during the summer.

As of July 2020, all approved rental groups & Community School Programs were to provide a Covid Exposure Safety Plan which aligned to PHO and NLPS plans, prior to contract approval. This ensured that rental groups had a Covid plan in place that aligned with that of the District and minimized possible disruption to school operations. All District policies are to be followed by all who are in a District facility. The instructions were to share the plans with the parents of those attending the program.

All community rentals (indoor and outdoor) remained under review for the duration of Summer 2020. In September 2020, outdoor rentals were re-allowed permitting approval, however no access to buildings was available.

In Summer 2021, staff began tentatively booking in groups on Rollover List from 2020 who were put on hold due to Covid. Mid-September start date (as usual) with intent to adjust date if indoor rentals were not yet approved by the date on contract. Those on the Rollover List book weekly re-occurring sessions on a yearly basis at the same school(s), at the same time(s), on the same day(s) of the week. To be clear, due to uncertain application of PHO protocols, focusing on basic school operations and lack of clarity on a process for approving rentals, none of the tentative bookings proceeded.

Operations:

- High touch points are disinfected daily, down from twice daily in 2020-2021.
- SD68 is now using Chlorox Anywhere for most disinfection, a more benign chemical (0.014% hypochlorous acid) which allows for more access into school areas during times when spray is applied.
- Clorox Anywhere application take is applied by school-based custodian or the temporary work assignments for spraying, typically no earlier than 6pm. Adjustments to spraying for rentals would be on a case-by-case basis and would need to be accommodated operationally to allow the rental to occur. Some might be easy to accommodate, while other rental requests might have significant challenges.

In December 2021, a Covid Exposure Safety Plan is no longer required, and NLPS have adjusted to a Communicable Disease Plan that follows a very similar format.

Discussion:

The accommodation of miscellaneous indoor rentals continues to be complicated due to the needs to support school operations, and the seemingly everchanging PHO guidelines affecting various rentals and types of events. With multiple definitions of “inside event” it means different rules in place for each type of event (Indoor Sitting Events vs Indoor Standing Events, events with 50+ people vs events with -50 people, youth activities, adult sports, worship services).

Consideration for gradual return to Community rentals and how it impacts on the work of the Operations department is also considered – key items include the timing of event, additional cleaning required (or not) and more recently, consideration of availability of staff.

As indoor community rentals do return, it is expected to proceed in the following order (subject to PHO and the desire of the rental groups):

- Youth-based programs on rollover list & Community School Programs
- Adult-based programs on rollover list
- New requests on waitlist - processed on a first come first served basis, based on request date

Process to return rentals to schools is under development:

- Staff have been working with Operations and OH&S staff on a Covid Safety form, which is now being piloted. This form will be sent out to the tentatively booked rental groups for completion. Community School Coordinators will also be provided with the various Covid forms so they can begin working with their partners to reintroduce Community School Programs back into schools.
- As a pilot, on December 17, 2021 staff provided Gabriola Recreation Society with a Covid Communicable Disease Plan to complete and will work on finalizing the contract once returned.
 - GRS was chosen as a pilot as limited recreation opportunities may be available on the island and within the Gabriola community.
- Recent Covid restrictions implemented on December 20th limit indoor adult exercise and fitness activities, including participating in low or high intensity group exercise or fitness classes or adult dance classes. These restrictions are in effect until January 18th, 2022.
 - This does not apply to programs specifically for children and youth. That being said, Rentals have had hesitation from a few program organizers and principals regarding the Omicron variant and their preference would be to hold off on proceeding with indoor rentals.

Conclusion:

Staff continue to endeavor to have miscellaneous after hours space rentals return while ensuring the integrity of the schools operations, meeting the changing PHO protocols and other operational constraints. It has been a slow process, one which staff believe they are accommodating as quickly and safely as fluctuating circumstances allow.

Appendix A: Historic Financial Summary of Facility Use