

Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: February 24, 2025

Subject: REC 2025-03 Bruce Grey Bulls Ice Request

Report from: Carly Steinhoff, Park, Facilities and Recreation Manager

Attachments: Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Ice Allocation Policy

Recommendation

Be It Resolved that Council hereby approves Report REC-2025-04 - Bruce Grey Bulls Ice Request; and

That Council supports the Bruce Grey Bulls to begin the 2025/2026 ice season in Paisley on the same September date as Chesley Community Centre; AND

That Council supports the Bruce Grey Bulls request to be billed at the same rate as the Grey Bruce Highlanders/TCDMHA for the 2025/2026 ice season; AND

Further require an agreement between the Municipality and the Bruce Grey Bulls prior to the commencement of the 2025/2026 ice season.

Background

The Ontario Minor Hockey Association (OMHA) is the governing body to all minor hockey organizations in Ontario. Arran-Elderslie Minor Hockey Association (AEMHA) is part of the Western Ontario Athletic Association (WOAA). The OMHA announced upcoming changes in the 2025-2026 ice season, which would see existing minor hockey associations amalgamate for Representative hockey. This is a two (2) year pilot project, and OMHA and WOAA announced the zones in early 2025. The zones are as follows:

Zone 1: Tri-Centre Jr. Attack – Bruce Peninsula, Owen Sound, Shallow Lake

Zone 2: Bruce Grey Bulls – Arran-Elderslie, Saugeen Shores, Chatsworth

Zone 3: Midwest 49ers – Saugeen Valley, South Bruce, Walkerton

Zone 4: West Coast Whitecaps – Huron Bruce, Kincardine, Wingham

Zone 5: Southwest Admirals – Blyth-Brussels, Goderich, Mid-Huron, Mitchell, Zurich

Zone 6: Southeast Surge – Central Perth, Drayton, Howick, Listowel, Minto, Mount Forest, Wallace

The new Representative Zones will be classified at the A category in the Under 10-Under 18 divisions, as well as field B category teams at Under 11, Under 13, Under 15 and Under 18. Arran-Elderslie Minor Hockey Association will continue to offer their own house/local league programming, along with Under 9 and younger programs.

Additional to these changes, the Ontario Hockey Federation (OHF) announced an update with their player movement regulations. The OHF has stated that this specific change is designed to prioritize participants' ability to choose where they play, aligning with their individual needs and approach to enjoying the game. These changes are complemented by regulations that support the transition of Minor Hockey Associations from residency-based restrictions in competitive hockey to open borders, while promoting a cultural shift in team selection and managing the growth of competitive teams.

Analysis

Municipal staff were made aware of the pilot program in 2024 through a meeting with Arran-Elderslie Minor Hockey representatives. At the time of that meeting and additional conversations in 2025, AEMHA did not anticipate that this program will have a large impact on the number of participants and teams involved in their program. Try-outs for the Zone program will begin in Spring 2025, and AEMHA will have a clearer picture of the impact of this new program on their existing programs. Staff have also spoken to the Grey Bruce Highlanders (AAA) and they also do not believe that the pilot program will have an impact on their ice usage requirements.

Representatives from the Bruce Grey Bulls have begun working with Municipal staff for ice allocation during the upcoming season and delegated to Council with requests of the Municipality on March 24, 2025.

Staff are utilizing the Municipal ice allocation policy to determine appropriate allocation to existing organizations and groups and new requests. At the time of this report, the Bulls have secured twelve (13.5) hours per week during the regular ice season. The group would likely take more time if the times available were more desirable.

The Bruce Grey Bulls has requested that Arran-Elderslie consider beginning the ice season in Paisley earlier than its typical Thanksgiving start date. Staff are recommending that, if approved, the first skate day would be the same as

Chesley. The Bulls indicated that if early ice was available in Paisley, their organization would utilize 35-48 hours per week for practices and exhibition games. Should this be approved, there will be additional staff time required as park maintenance is typically a high priority until mid-fall, depending on weather. Staff would inform regular user groups if early ice is available to maximize ice usage. The Ice Allocation Policy will be utilized to determine priority.

The group has requested that the Municipality draft an agreement with their organization. The group has requested the same fees as Grey Bruce Highlanders/TCDMHA for the 2025-2026 ice season. The fees that are associated with ice rentals for the upcoming season are as follows:

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|--|-------------------|
| • Arran-Elderslie Minor Hockey Association | \$108.94 plus hst |
| • Grey Bruce Highlanders/TCDMHA | \$125.48 plus hst |
| • Out of Town Minor Sports | \$141.83 plus hst |
| • Prime Time Ice | \$153.88 plus hst |
| • Non-Prime Ice | \$90.74 plus hst |

Historically, Arran-Elderslie has had “early ice” rates which were applied to renters, excluding Arran-Elderslie Minor Hockey, Grey Bruce Highlanders and each of the figure skating clubs. These rates were removed from the 2025 Fees and Charges By-Law, because the rates were used infrequently. If Council approves September ice in Paisley, there is potential for more users aside from the organizations exempt from the early ice rates. Staff can bring a future report requesting an amendment to the Fees and Charges By-Law and add those early ice fees for the upcoming ice season.

Although some of the participants involved with the Grey Bruce Bulls will be from Arran-Elderslie, there will also be representation from Chatsworth and Saugeen Shores.

Link to Strategic/Master Plan

6.5 Engaging People and Partnerships

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding/Link to Procurement Policy

The financial implications are based on assumptions regarding ice time. The chart below illustrates the new revenue options that come from the Bulls utilizing Arran-Elderslie ice surfaces:

	Grey Bruce Highlanders/TCDMHA Rate (\$125.48)	Out of Town Minor Sports Rate (\$141.83)	Prime Time Rate (\$153.88)
Early Ice Time (35 hours per week from September 15 to October 12)	\$17,567.20	\$19,856.20	\$21,543.20
Early Ice Time (48 hours per week from September 15 to October 12)	\$24,092.16	\$27,231.36	\$29,544.96
Regular Season (13.5 hours per week from October 13 to March 22)	\$38,961.54	\$44,038.22	\$47,779.74

During the ice season, each community centre operates as revenue negative. Staff calculated four (4) months of the 2024 ice season for each facility (January, February, November, December). The average net of each facility is as follows:

Chesley Community Centre: -\$12,264.42

Paisley Community Centre: -\$11,227.14

Tara Community Centre: -\$4,427.70

It is not anticipated that having ice start four (4) weeks early will have a substantial impact on the overall budget.

Approved by: Emily Dance, Chief Administrative Officer