



West Elgin Community Centre Board of Management

171 Graham Street, West Lorne ON N0L 2P0



July 9, 2020

Hon. Jeff Yurek
Minister of the Environment, Conservation & Parks
750 Talbot St, Suite 201
St Thomas ON N6P 1E2

Dear the Honorable Jeff Yurek:

The Municipalities of West Elgin and Dutton Dunwich jointly operate the West Elgin Community Centre, through a Shared Operating Agreement since 2004. This facility houses what is commonly known as the West Lorne Arena and is operated by a committee made up of members from each Council and representatives of the two main user groups, West Lorne Minor Hockey and West Lorne Figure Skating Club.

The West Elgin Community Centre Board of Management would like to request your assistance in receiving guidance from the Province of Ontario regarding the safe return of organized sports, such as minor hockey in our facility. Without clear guidance from the Province, groups such as Minor Hockey, are having a difficult time in planning for the 2020-2021 season, which in turn makes it hard for municipalities to plan for the use of their facilities, such as arenas.

Arenas are a vital community hub in rural Ontario. They provide a community gathering point, as well as the facility to play sports. The cost of operating such a facility is far more expensive than can be recouped through user fees, however municipalities fund these facilities to improve the quality of life for residents. However, without clear guidance from the Province for the main user groups of these facilities, municipalities must weigh the cost benefit of putting in the ice and operating such a facility against the risk of losing user groups and the revenue they provide. The loss of an arena would have a huge impact to our communities.

Sincerely,

Ken Loveland
Chair
West Elgin Community Centre Board of Management

Cc: Hon. Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport
Dutton Dunwich Council
West Elgin Council

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