



## Staff Report

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**Report To:** Council Meeting

**From:** Lee Gosnell, Manager of Operations & Community Services

**Date:** 2020-10-22

**Subject:** W.L. Community Complex Meeting Room

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### **Recommendation:**

That West Elgin Council hereby receives the report from Lee Gosnell, Manager of Operations & Community Services regarding usage of the W.L. Community Complex Meeting Room; and

That West Elgin Council provide direction to staff on how, and by whom, this meeting space should be utilized moving forward.

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to provide staff direction in regards to booking the meeting room located at the West Lorne Community Complex.

### **Background:**

Housed within the West Lorne Community Complex is a large meeting room and kitchen facility. This space has been used, free of charge, by local service clubs and organizations over the past years. There was no rental fee for this facility in West Elgin's fees and charges by-law, and bookings were made through staff at the Employment Services office, which is also located within the Complex. With facilities being made available to the public again, municipal staff have received calls from some traditional users, as well as some non-traditional users. Before agreeing to additional usage, or initiating a new rental fee under the 2021 fees and charges by-law, staff are seeking Council's input on how they feel this particular facility should be utilized.

Upon review of pre-COVID schedules, staff have compiled a listing (shown below) which represents a typical months' schedule at this meeting space.

- Community Living Elgin 2.5hrs
- West Lorne Horticultural Society 6hrs
- West Lorne Optimist Club 4hrs
- Kiwanis Club 8hrs
- Women's Institute 2.5hrs
- Tops Organization 10hrs

Additional users not listed above include the WECHC, Quad County Support Services and various other community groups who utilized the space on a less scheduled basis. Over the second half of 2019, the Complex meeting room was used an average of 40 hours/per month, with no revenue generated. While staff understand the important role all of these groups play within the community, Council also needs to be aware that there are operational costs such as heat, hydro, cleaning,

kitchen supplies, and janitorial items that are required in order to provide this service. There have also been recent inquiries from residents about the possibility of renting this space for private functions.

Considering the above, staff would like direction on two questions –

1. Will this space remain dedicated for use by local service clubs and special interest groups or should it be made available to any person wishing to rent it?
2. Should there be new fees included in the 2021 fees and charges by-law which cover use of this facility?

Operationally, all bookings for this room are now being handled through the municipal office. Users are required to sign a facility rental agreement, provide proof of insurance and agree to all COVID related requirements. There is no rental fee at this time and staff have limited bookings to traditional users. Gathering limits do restrict some groups, and staff do not see these being relaxed in the near term.

### **Financial Implications:**

Based on a \$20.00 per hour rental fee and an average usage of 40 hours per month, this would equate to \$800.00 per month (\$9600 per year) in revenue. This would definitely need to be implemented if Council wishes to expand the facility usage. As for the current 'community group' users, Council has multiple options to look at –

1. Continue to allow facility usage at no charge.
2. Apply a 'per hour' charge consistent with other municipal buildings.
3. Create a new 'meeting charge' for service and special interest groups
4. Allow these users to apply for a reduced rate under the community grant program.

Any decision Council makes which includes a fee for the use of this space will be included in the 2021 fees and charges by-law and will take effect in the new year.

## Report Approval Details

Document Title:	W.L. Community Complex Meeting Room - 2020-18-Operations Community Services.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Oct 20, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Jana Nethercott