



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Negotiating a new agreement with the Toronto District School Board for City use of school pools

Date:	May 20, 2011
To:	Community Development and Recreation Committee
From:	General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	All
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SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the status of discussions now underway for a new agreement between the City of Toronto and the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) on the continued use of school pools by the City for aquatic programs. The report also describes recent efforts to enhance the community use of school pools.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact to this report.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of January 29 and 30, 2008, City Council approved a Letter of Understanding between the City of Toronto and the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) for the use of school pools by Parks, Forestry and Recreation for aquatic programs. The Letter of Understanding covered the period 2008–2011.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/cc/decisions/2008-01-29-cc16-dd.pdf>

The final Letter of Understanding was approved by the TDSB on October 29, 2008 and officially signed by TDSB Chair, John Campbell, on November 7, 2008 and by Mayor David Miller on November 30, 2008.

At its meeting on August 25, 2010, City Council authorized the General Manager of Parks Forestry and Recreation to enter into discussions with the TDSB regarding the continued use of School pools beyond the term of the current agreement.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2010.MM52.5>

On September 7, 2010, the TDSB authorized the Toronto Lands Corporation (TLC) to lead discussions with the City on a new agreement for its use of school pools.

At its meeting on April 28, 2011, the Community Development and Recreation Committee requested that the General Manager of Parks, Forestry, and Recreation report to the next meeting of the committee on the status of negotiations and discussions with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and the Toronto Lands Corporation (TLC) on the renewal of the school pools agreement.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2011.CD3.5>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Letter of Understanding (LOU) between the TDSB and the City set out the fees that the City would pay to the TDSB for the use of each of the school pools in which Parks, Forestry and Recreation would deliver community aquatics programs. Generally these pools were available for City use on evenings, weekends, and during the summer months. The City agreed to pay the pools' operating costs, while the TDSB was responsible for capital repair costs. Yearly fee increases geared to the consumer price index were built into the LOU. The respective responsibilities of the two parties were also described in the four-year agreement, which expires December 31, 2011. The LOU currently covers the 33 school pools being used by the City at a projected cost of \$6.1 million in 2011.

COMMENTS

City Use of School Pools

The development of a new agreement between the City and the TDSB is being guided by a steering committee chaired by the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation. Other members of the steering committee include the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and the Chair of the Toronto Lands Corporation, as well as the Chief Facilities Officer of the TDSB. A staff working group chaired by the CEO of the TLC has been meeting regularly since the beginning of the year.

In addition to taking the lead in negotiations on behalf of the TDSB, the TLC (which is a subsidiary of the TDSB) manages 31 school pools which recently faced closure. The TLC has been working to facilitate greater community use of the pools. It does not play a role in the management of the 33 school pools now used by the City.

At its first meeting in December 2010, the pools steering committee adopted a set of principles for negotiation. The committee agreed that negotiations would be an open and joint process that would remain at the staff level until proposals are formally tabled with respective governing bodies. The steering committee directed the staff working group to review the operating costs of all public pools — those owned by the City, those in schools used by the City, and those managed by the TLC — on a common basis. The objective of this work is to give all parties a full understanding on the comparative cost of pool operation and maintenance. This understanding will help determine the charges to

be paid by the City to the Board. The detailed review of operating cost is now nearing completion. City staff are also reviewing the utilization and geographic distribution of the TDSB pools covered by the LOU to determine which pools it wishes to include in a new agreement. Budget considerations will also be a factor in determining the appropriate number of contracted pools.

Although the formal negotiating process has not yet begun, the pools steering committee anticipates it will be able to recommend a new agreement to City Council and the School Board for consideration early this fall.

Community Use of School Pools

The Toronto Lands Corporation continues to work on behalf of the TDSB to increase community use of the 31 pools it manages. It has streamlined pool permitting procedures and will soon introduce a new website to further simplify permit applications.

In September 2010, the TDSB authorized TLC to establish a two-tier governance structure for the pools it manages. The structure includes the newly-formed Swim Toronto Committee, as well as a network of local pool captains. Chaired by a former TLC board member, the committee includes TDSB trustees and a representative of the Aquatics Working Group, the community group which has been active in building support for the use of school pools.

To foster greater community use of school pools, Toronto Sports Council has announced that it intends to convene an "aquatics summit" in June that will bring together the various sectors involved in pool operation and use. The objective of the summit would be to foster greater community use of school pools.

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SIGNATURE

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