



**The Corporation of the Municipality of Wawa
Staff Monthly Report**

Office of Community Services and Tourism

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| Prepared For: Corporate Planning Cte. | Report No.: AP 2022-03 |
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Preamble

This report details the activities of the Department of Community Services and Tourism in the months of January and February 2022.

General

The continued provincial shutdowns in January as well as staffing shortages due to the pandemic in February made operations for the department challenging over the past 2 months. Staff worked to reopen the facility at the end of January and to continue operations in February working around staffing shortages, and cancellations from many user groups.

Capital Projects

Nothing to report.

MMCC

MMCC Reopening January & Loosening Restrictions

At the end of January, the Department was able to reopen the MMCC to the community, using many of the same rules as before the Christmas shutdown. Within the first week, several staff were unable to attend the facility due to isolation requirements, and the next 2 weeks saw many cancellations of bookings while our community dealt with a wave of illness that affected approx. 30% of our bookings over those two weeks. The situation stabilized in mid-February and both bookings and staffing have remained consistent since. The province has also loosened the restrictions on recreation facilities, and the MMCC has followed these rule changes. This culminated in the March 1 changes, where only a mask and passive screening is required to enter the facility, making the Ice Fishing Derby substantially easier to operate.

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| Respectfully Submitted By:  | Prepared By: Alex Patterson, Director, Community Services and Tourism |
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Arena and Curling

Curling Ice Maintenance through the Shutdown

It may sound counterintuitive, but the curling ice is much more difficult to maintain after a period of no use. To save on expenses during the shutdown, heat and dehumidification was reduced to a minimum and ice temperatures were adjusted to ensure that the least amount of energy was used. When we were notified that the MMCC would be able to reopen, staff spent more than a week working on the ice to return it to good playing condition. This involved multiple hose floods as the airflow along the surface evaporated the ice very unevenly. Staff also took some additional time to sharpen the rocks, reset the hacks after flooding, and re-season the ice with multiple rounds of pebbling and scraping. Overall, the ice took approx. 50 hours of staff time to return to good condition. We did receive many compliments upon the return of the curling clubs, making the additional effort well worth the time.

Parks and Trails

Vallee Park Update

Over the winter, staff met with the Voyageur Trail Association (VTA) as well as the *Friends of the Park* group to discuss the future of the Vallee Park Trail. There is willingness on behalf of both groups to adopt the Vallee Park Trail into the VTA – which will address many of the issues identified by staff. We will continue to work with both groups to develop this resource for the community using volunteers.

Community Events and Recreation

Family Day Weekend Activities

Department staff worked to provide the community with several opportunities for outdoor recreation in our community over the family day weekend, as a traditional carnival was not possible. These included a poker walk, worble, a trails scavenger hunt, all of which had good reception by families of our community.

Tourism

Tourism Coordinator – Contract Position

Staff have developed a job description and work plan for 2022's tourism activities. Key to this work plan is returning our staff capacity to pre-pandemic plans and the hiring of a tourism coordinator to oversee the reopening of the TIC. This position was advertised through February and will begin in April to focus on restarting the facility and other tourism activities that have not occurred since 2020.

Other Projects

Nothing to Report.

Funding and Grants**MMCC Funding Application**

Staff worked with Tulloch and MET Engineering to develop a report recommending key upgrades to the MMCC. This report was significantly delayed due to the effects of the pandemic on staffing, both from the engineering firms as well as within the Department. We received the draft report late February and are currently reviewing and refining it with the intent to apply to ICIP for 80% of the project cost in March.

NOHFC Internship Application – Tourism Marketing Intern

Staff developed a position description, work plan, and made an application to the NOHFC for a tourism marketing intern to further bolster our tourism capacity. This position will be focused on modernizing our marketing, with key goals to develop our social media strategy as well as revive several programs that have been paused since 2020. We hope to hear from the NOHFC regarding this application before the summer.

SEP Student Applications

Staff also applied to the Summer Experience Program for 4 summer students to assist in our programming for the summer season. These include 2 Travel Ambassadors, a program that was started last year and will be refined and continued in 2022. Also included is a recreation programmer to work with our recreation coordinator to provide youth with recreation opportunities throughout the summer. Finally, staff applied for a new position: Goose Nest Programmer, a student who will assist the department with the nest, and other special events centred around that facility throughout the summer. We hope to find out if we are successful on these applications in April.

Next Month's Outlook

In March and April, staff look forward to the conclusion of the ice season and hosting several tournaments and bonspiels. Key activities include:

- Hosting Bonspiels and Tournaments, including TOC's for U13
- Removal of arena and curling ice and preparation for the summer season
- Planning and preparation for summer tourism and recreation activities
- Start of a new "hybrid" fitness class model

End of Report.