



Agenda Recreation & Leisure Advisory Committee

April 24, 2024

5:30 pm

Municipal Operations Centre

408 James Street South, St. Marys

YouTube Link - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzuUpFqxcEI8OG-dOYKteFQ>

Pages

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**
3. **AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the April 24, 2024 Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee Agenda be accepted as presented.

4. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

3

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the March 27, 2024 Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee minutes be approved and signed and sealed by the Chair and Director of Community Services.

5. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**
6. **REPORTS**

- 6.1 **DCS 26-2024 Sports Wall of Fame Installation Update**

6

RECOMMENDATION

THAT DCS 26-2024 Sports Wall of Fame Installation Update be received for information.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT DCS 27-2024 Quarry Strategic Planning report be received as information.

7. UPCOMING MEETINGS

May 22, 2024 at 5:30 pm (Municipal Operations Centre - Boardroom)

8. ADJOURNMENT

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee adjourn at _____pm.



Minutes

Recreation & Leisure Advisory Committee

March 27, 2024

5:30 pm

Municipal Operations Centre

408 James Street South, St. Marys

YouTube Link - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzuUpFqxcEI8OG-dOYKteFQ>

Members Present	Rick Lyons, Chair Jeremy Brock Scott Crawford Rick Kennedy Councillor Pridham
Member Absent	Pam Zabel
Staff Present	Stephanie Ische, Director of Community Services Vanessa Bisschop, Community Services Coordinator Joannah Campbell, Recreation Manager Doug Lapointe, Manager of Recreation Operations and Chief Operator Morgan Dykstra, Deputy Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rick Lyons called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm and welcomed Rick Kennedy to the Committee.

3. AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved By Jeremy Brock

Seconded By Councillor Pridham

THAT the March 27, 2024 Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee Agenda be accepted as presented.

Carried

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None declared.

4. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Moved By Jeremy Brock

Seconded By Scott Crawford

THAT the January 24, 2024 Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee minutes be approved and signed and sealed by the Chair and Director of Community Services.

Carried

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None.

6. REPORTS

6.1 DCS 20-2024 Sports Wall of Fame Project Update (March)

Staff spoke to DCS 20-2024.

The Committee discussed the proposed design concept for the sports wall of fame, the nomination form, the number of anticipated nomination submissions, and how the nomination applications will be promoted.

Moved By Jeremy Brock

Seconded By Rick Kennedy

THAT DCS 20-2024 Sports Wall of Fame Project Update (March) be received; and

THAT the Committee recommends that the following information be used for program development:

- Revise the design concept of the sports wall of fame to consider physical acknowledgements, reduction in screens, annual acknowledgement, and future expansion.
- Add a note as part of the nominations form that all applications will require submission of supporting documentation and an image.

Carried

6.2 DCS 21-2024 St. Marys Recreation Fair

Joannah Campbell spoke to DCS 21-2024 and responded to questions from the Committee.

The Committee recommended that staff encourage having tangible activities at the fair to draw people into the event.

Moved By Scott Crawford

Seconded By Councillor Pridham

THAT DCS 21-2024 St. Marys Recreation Fair report be received as information.

Carried

7. UPCOMING MEETINGS

April 24, 2024 at 5:30pm (Municipal Operations Centre, Boardroom)

8. ADJOURNMENT

Moved By Councillor Pridham

Seconded By Jeremy Brock

THAT the Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee adjourn at 6:55 pm.

Carried

Rick Lyons, Chair

Stephanie Ische, Director of Community Services

FORMAL REPORT

To:	Chair and Members of the Advisory Committee
Prepared by:	Doug LaPointe, Recreation Operations Manager
Date of Meeting:	24 April 2024
Subject:	DCS 26-2024 Sports Wall of Fame Installation Update

PURPOSE

To update the advisory committee on the status of the physical wall space and its intended features.

RECOMMENDATION

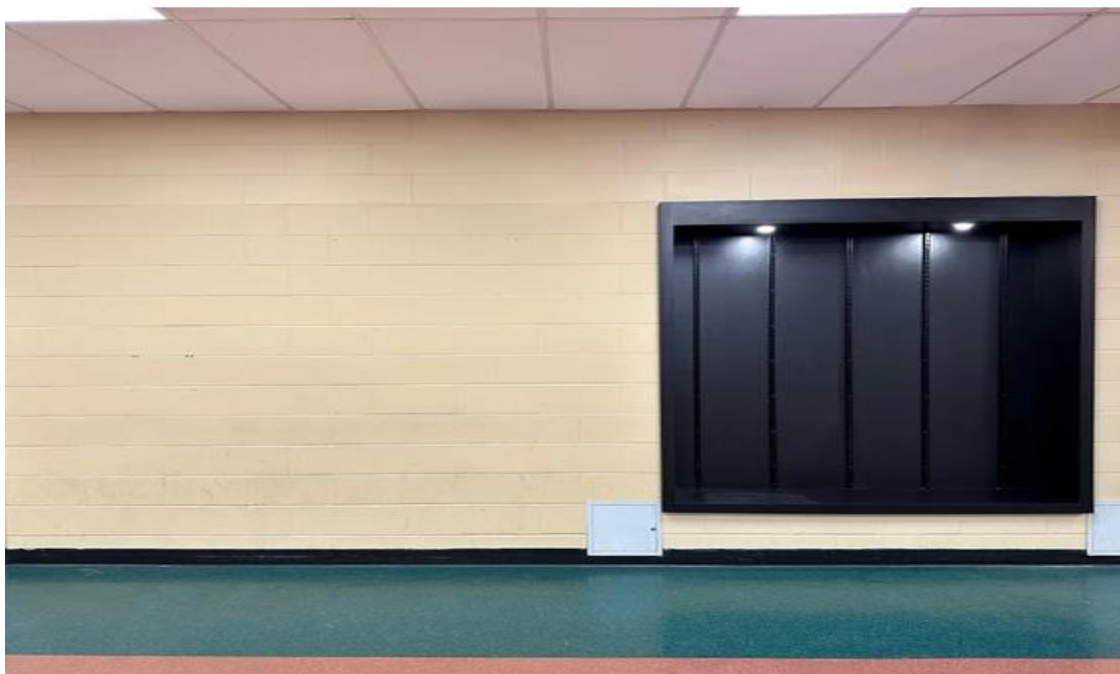
THAT DCS 26-2024 Sports Wall of Fame Installation Update be received for information.

BACKGROUND

At the previous meeting, an initial concept was reviewed by the Committee and feedback was provided. Staff have reviewed the feedback and made adjustments to the design.

REPORT

The items which were situated on the wall have been removed or relocated, and the display case has been refurbished to a more updated appearance, with glass shielding ordered which will protect and secure any items in the display which will be used to showcase/highlight the current year's inductees.



Pricing has been obtained from two contractors who will implement the wall background and electronic equipment and software which will be utilized to operate the wall of fame programming for profiles, promotional material, and website management by Town staff. Staff are still awaiting a third price to comply with the Town’s procurement policy and have followed up with two other contractors in order to hopefully expedite this process. Regarding the physical structure, the consultant has advised that if we reduce the TV screen sizing to accommodate physical plaques, it may impact the scope of software functionality depending on which software is implemented but they are confident it will meet the satisfaction of the application for the project.

Staff are also researching conceptual options for physical plaques to be produced as inductees are entered onto the Wall of Fame, which would begin to be mounted in a prominent location between the electronic screen and display case. Variations of plaques will be submitted to the committee for review and feedback.

Staff also reviewed feedback from the Committee regarding potential expansion of designated wall space over the long term for physical plaques to be mounted in other areas of the Pyramid Recreation Centre. At this time there are no plans to grant any expansion of space, thus staff wish to advise the Committee of this so they may factor this in when planning and organizing the functionality of the current space.

The project is still moving forward on the projected timeline.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Design and installation of the Sports Wall of Fame has been approved by Council through the 2024 budget process. A total of \$20,000 has been allocated and the design consultant has confirmed that this will be sufficient to meet the vision for the project as described. Staff will ensure that the procurement process is followed.

SUMMARY

The implementation of the physical wall is underway, with alterations to the design being made based on the committee’s feedback. Staff will be presenting plaque concepts to the committee for feedback at a future meeting. One factor when considering plaques is the current wall space designated for the Sports Wall of Fame is the only location currently envisioned for this endeavor.

STRATEGIC PLAN

☒ Not applicable to this report.

OTHERS CONSULTED

- Joannah Campbell, Manager of Recreation

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	DCS 26-2024 Wall of Fame Installation Update
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	April 19, 2024

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

Stephanie Ische

FORMAL REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Advisory Committee

Prepared by: Stephanie Ische, Director of Community Services

Date of Meeting: 24 April 2024

Subject: **DCS 27-2024 Quarry Strategic Planning**

PURPOSE

To update the Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee on discussion about the Quarry Strategic Planning at Council SPC meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT DCS 27-2024 Quarry Strategic Planning report be received as information.

BACKGROUND

During Council's priority setting session in 2023, the following was set as a top priority for the term:

- **Strategic Priority:** Strategic Vision – Quarry
 - **Tactic(s):**
 - Developing a strategic vision on how best to leverage the space at the facility to add new amenities.
 - Reviewing the opportunity to expand the facility's operating season in an effort to attract the class trip market.

The St. Marys swimming Quarry is a popular destination that draws visitors from all over. The Lind Sportsplex, surrounding green areas, fishing Quarry, and other features increase the potential of this site. Shuffleboard is played in the Lind Sportsplex building's downstairs/dry pad, facilitated by the Friendship Centre. Due to parking supply issues, this activity is conducted outside of the swimming attraction's regular operating hours.

Super Splash Inflatable Waterpark and the Town of St. Marys entered into an agreement in 2020 regarding the operation of the inflatable waterpark at this site. The original agreement has changed slightly and since then, a few modifications have been made to guarantee customers' flawless experience. The partnership also includes a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that permits the lifeguards to work jointly to supervise the swimming Quarry and inflatable waterpark. This change has worked exceptionally well and has allowed for a seamless service. The lifeguard team trains together on all features offered at the Quarry location.

The swimming Quarry has always experienced a lot of foot traffic, but when Super Splash Inflatable Waterpark launched, the number of visitors increased even further. In addition to Super Splash Inflatable waterpark, staff have continued to add new items to the swimming Quarry to improve existing services over the last two summers. This includes:

- An expanded parking lot (while this has helped with the volume it is still not sufficient to meet the current demands)
- Cross walk
- Partnerships with local businesses for food options (i.e., pizza sales in the canteen)
- Continued partnership with the Friendship Centre operating the summer shuffleboard program out of this location.
- Installed a visual wall wrap in a prominent area highlighting the beauty of the Downtown and included the website for more information.
- Added a brochure rack to the main entry and ensured it was stocked throughout the season.
- Added poster frames to the back of each bathroom stall door and inserted posters advertising events, dining, and shopping.
- Social media – added reels to the Town’s Instagram page and posted about the swimming Quarry throughout the season.
- Advertised in the summer fun guide, festival guide, explore Ontario and utilized one influencer to promote the swimming Quarry.

REPORT

Recreation offers a multitude of pathways to well-being for individuals, communities, and our built and natural environments. This location is not only a benefit to us individually but also contributes to the overall well-being of the community. From connecting people to nature, physical fitness to joy and fulfillment as participating in leisure pursuits brings joy and a sense of accomplishment contributing to a more enriched life.

Current and Future Vision of the Swimming Quarry

Although the swimming Quarry practically sells itself through word-of-mouth, it's still vital to review this service on a regular basis and perhaps consider additional activities for visitors to enjoy while in the community. Staff regularly assess the business, and given the current potential, the following will be added this summer:

- The Recreation team will host recreation summer camps upstairs with programming in the water. These camps are currently filled at approximately 60% capacity. They will be half-day programs with specific special-interest themes. The themes include Mindfulness, Cooking, and Sports. The Camp PRC team is excited to collaborate with local service providers to enhance the programming of these special offerings.
- Rental opportunities in the upstairs Lind Sportsplex for rentals for family gatherings.
- Partnership with Tourism London to offer the Ontario Summer games triathlon.
- Trial run Tourism kiosk program.
- More influencer promotions.
- Looking to invest in moving images to add more digital promotions and utilizing drone photography to show live excitement in the swimming Quarry and on the inflatable waterpark.
- Partnership with the local BIA

One potential change that Council had asked staff to consider was to expand the operating season, and to open earlier to make the swimming Quarry an attractive destination for school trips. This was discussed with the Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee. Staff learned that this is not a likely

source of increased business as school boards deem swim trips to be too much liability and are not booking these types of trips. As a result, staff have not pursued this idea further.

In addition to the above, the team is also still concentrating on longer-term opportunities for the summer of 2025 and beyond. At this point staff are simply investigating and brainstorming a few possibilities. Examples include:

- Opportunities for recreational programming on the dry pad at Lind Sportsplex. Apart from the Shuffleboard programs, this is a service that has not yet been utilized. Still, this vacant area might provide a great venue for events aimed at attracting quarry patrons. Laser tag is one type of activity that could be held here. The participant would have to pay for this service, which is offered by the recreation team.
- Expansion of the recreation summer camps. As this is an extremely popular activity that sells out quickly this is something that staff will explore expanding in the future.
- **A Treetop Adventure above the swimming Quarry** - the potential benefits of a business like this makes this a venture worth exploring. Imagine a thrilling treetop adventure nestled just above the swimming Quarry. This exciting program could extend its season beyond the Quarry operations, starting in May and continuing until the end of October. After discussions with a treetop company, it is estimated that development costs could reach \$800,000. However, staff believes that this unique attraction would further enhance the location's appeal. Exploring grant opportunities for future program development is an exciting possibility. This recreational tourism endeavor holds promise, although it necessitates meticulous planning and execution.
- Opportunities for stand-up paddleboards and kayaking (this could include lessons or rentals)

Future Potential of Fishing Quarry

The Town has made significant investments in the Water St. S area. Examples include the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum partnership, the swimming Quarry, the Lind Sportsplex, improvements to the racket sports courts and conversion of the Grand Trunk rail line into the Riverview Walkway. One area that has not be touched significantly over the years is the limestone quarry between Water St. S and the Riverview walkway, now referred to as the fishing Quarry.

The fishing Quarry, like the swimming quarry, was a previous industrial site, a source of crushed limestone which was exported by rail. Today the area is fenced with 3 defined openings for fishing access, the access paths are not AODA accessible and as such warning signage is displayed at the entrances.

As the area was previously an industrialised site, without significant upgrades, many remnants of the previous industrial use remain today. Legacy concrete supports and footings are visible and are accessible via internal "goat paths". Many of these legacy concrete structures are used as impromptu swim platforms as they are accessible via goat path trails that been cut through the brush. In addition, metal / iron cables and material are visible adjacent to the access paths. Swimming is restricted by by-law as rescue access is problematic at best, and no sonar survey of the water has been completed to identify unseen dangers.

Overall, usage is minimal and could be summarized into a small amount fishing and illegal swimming in the peak summer months. Staff have been advised the fishing Quarry is not large enough to support significant fish populations without an external food supply and support.

To understand the logistics of this location and its future potential to contribute to the attractions of Water St. S., staff members have contacted the Town's insurance provider. The Town's insurer says status quo is not acceptable and the town needs to manage it or close it.

Staff also note that the boundary fence has entered a point of disrepair, it cannot be significantly fixed as it is continually cut / vandalized to gain access to better fishing or swimming spots, this is localized

to the fence adjacent to the Riverview walkway. Public Works has been actively patching but is reluctant to spend significant capital on replacement as the vandalism is likely to remain ongoing.

Looking Forward

People travel from all around to visit the St. Marys swimming Quarry because it is regarded as a sports tourism destination. A successful sports tourism expansion requires collaboration, community engagement, and a long-term vision.

While staff have already made improvements to the swimming Quarry, there's still untapped potential, especially for the fishing Quarry. To make this location even more appealing, staff has been actively exploring additional amenities and discussed modifications that could take place. They've conducted research and engaged with various businesses to consider exciting new additions.

As previously mentioned, the swimming Quarry is a busy location with a large volume of participants. Staff believe there is much potential that needs to be explored. Staff put before the Strategic Priorities Committee a few questions that were considered to create a strategic vision for the fishing Quarry. Staff are sharing the same discussions with the Recreation Advisory Committee.

Discussion 1 – Status Quo – Quarry operations to remain as they are today with no further service expansions

An option exists where the space and service level may remain exactly as it is, and staff will carry on providing the services in the same manner. The question that was discussed was if Council satisfied with the current service profile of the site, thus preferring no further expansion.

This option was placed before the Strategic Priorities Committee as there has been feedback from the public, especially through the launch of the Super Splash Waterpark, that the Quarry should remain as it has historically been. Given this public sentiment staff wanted to give the Strategic Priorities Committee the opportunity to discuss if this should be the future direction of the site. There would be no costs to this option.

The alternative would be to give staff direction that the Town should consider how to maximize the recreational tourism potential of the swimming Quarry location. This would involve staff moving forward to further explore some of the future ideas charted out above, and then to implement them as the opportunity arises.

Strategic Priorities Committee was not supportive of this option.

Discussion 2 – Should the Town consider more of a groomed look around both quarries, particularly the fishing one?

With this option there would be no additional amenities added however there would be work put towards a focus on a groomed appearance for both locations. This could include the cleaning up of brush within the fishing quarry and the removal of the fence on the trail side. Making this area appealing to visit and fish. Given the comments from the Town's insurer, it is staff's recommendation that some work will need to be completed in the short term to reduce liabilities that exist at the fishing quarry.

Capital funds for 2025 could be included to create a landscape design plan to largely address the hidden hazards. It should be noted that the successes realized in the swimming Quarry are built on previous capital investments of the Town.

Strategic Priorities Committee liked this option.

Discussion 3- Should the Town consider offering another service in the fishing Quarry?

Staff view the location as a blank canvas, and if the Strategic Priorities Committee so desired, there are numerous activities that could be added. With this option it would also include cleaning up the fishing Quarry with a focus on the groomed appearance as well. A few of the concepts that staff members have investigated thus far are outlined below for the Committee's consideration. Both

activities below, which would involve a documented agreement and a space lease with a business, would function similarly to Super Splash Waterpark Inflatable. Some examples of this could include:

- Wake park
- Scuba diving

Following the discussion at the Strategic Priorities Committee on April 16, 2024, the following recommendations were put forward:

THAT DCS 17-2024 Quarry Strategic Planning report be received as information; and,

THAT Strategic Priorities Committee recommends to Council:

THAT staff be directed to develop a business plan for the Non-Swimming Quarry focusing on:

- A plan to clean it up, reduce liabilities, and create a groomed look
- A plan that focuses on increasing opportunities for passive and active public uses of the facility

THAT staff be directed to continue actively exploring additional amenities and modifications that could take place to maximize the recreational tourism potential of the Swimming Quarry location.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Discussion 1 – Status Quo – No cost

Discussion 2 – Cleaning up of the Quarries – There would be costs associated with staff time, signage for safety along with ongoing maintenance.

Discussion 3 – Partnership with a business to operate a service – There would be costs associated with staff time, signage for safety along with ongoing maintenance to keep things groomed. However, with this option there is revenue associated with it and the town would receive payment to lease the property to a business.

SUMMARY

Based on attendance history of the swimming Quarry, this location has grown and has become a popular destination and put the Town on the map. The partnership with Super Splash Inflatable Waterpark has exceeded expectations and staff believe additional enhancements at the swimming and fishing quarries will further meet Council's goals by fulfilling several initiatives within Council's Tourism Strategy.

STRATEGIC PLAN

☒ Within the St. Marys Culture & Tourism Strategy the following priorities, outcomes, and tactics support the following initiatives in the Plan.

- Pillar #1 Infrastructure
 - Partner with the Community Services Department and Public Works Department to move forward initiatives that overlap between the Culture & Tourism Strategy and the Recreation and Leisure Master Plan.
- Pillar # 3 Tourism
 - Strength the local economy, with a focus on businesses that can cater to tourism.
 - Leverage the local culinary, heritage, recreation and agriculture sectors as a key differentiator and driver for tourism visits.
- Pillar # 4 Enhance Cultural Offerings
 - Opportunities for visitors to interact with St. Marys residents should be encouraged.

OTHERS CONSULTED

Andrea Slade, Aquatics Manager
Kelly Deeks-Johnson, Tourism and Economic Development Manager
Jed Kelly, Director of Public Works
Jeff Wolfe, Infrastructure Services Manager
Joannah Campbell, Recreation Manager
Doug La Pointe, Recreation Operations Manager

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	DCS 27-2024 Quarry Strategic Planning
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	April 19, 2024

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

Stephanie Ische