

Staff Report

Community Services Department



www.kitchener.ca

REPORT TO: Committee of the Whole

DATE OF MEETING: December 13, 2021

SUBMITTED BY: Jennifer Trommelen-Jones, Assistant City Solicitor (Corporate)
519-741- 2200 ext. 7264
Steve Roth, Manager, Community Centres
519-741- 2200 ext. 7077

PREPARED BY: Jennifer Trommelen-Jones, Assistant City Solicitor (Corporate)
519-741- 2200 ext. 7264

WARD(S) INVOLVED: All

DATE OF REPORT: December 8, 2021

REPORT NO.: CSD-2021-18

SUBJECT: Execution of Facility Rental Agreements

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Manager, Community Centres be authorized to execute one or more agreements with Strong Start Charitable Organization to rent space in one or more City Community Centre for the “Get Ready for School Program”, said agreement(s) to be to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor; and further,

That the Manager, Community Centres or the Director, Neighbourhood Programs and Services be authorized to execute routine agreements for the short-term rental of space at community centres, said agreements to be developed to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- The purpose of this report is to address a gap in signing authority, whereby community partners and individuals wish to rent space at community centres and it is in the best interest of the City to ensure that written agreements are entered into.
- A charitable organization, Strong Start, wants to partner with the City to provide a program for children to “get ready for school” and has a form of agreement that they wish for the City to sign.
- The key finding of this report is that these types of agreements are routine, and support a vibrant and engaged community, and that delegated authority is appropriate and necessary in order to ensure that programs can be accommodated and offered in a timely fashion.
- There are no financial implications. Either the City will receive payment for the rental, or, in cases where the rental is at no charge to the renter, the City will not be required to pay.

*** This information is available in accessible formats upon request. ***
Please call 519-741-2345 or TTY 1-866-969-9994 for assistance.

- This report supports the delivery of core services.

BACKGROUND:

Community centres offer spaces for residents and community partners to engage in public activities. In addition to direct City programming, the City supports and encourages the use of community centres to provide additional services and programs to City residents.

Traditionally, the use of City space has been accommodated by our facility booking system, Active Net; by delegated authority for specific agreements; or, under alternate delegated authority or City policies/by-laws (in the case, for instance, of agreements with the federal or provincial government).

However, the City often works with individuals or community partners where the standard Active Net form of rental contract is not able to accommodate the specific needs of the renter. In these cases, staff would be required to obtain approval from Council prior to permitting the rental. This is the case here, for the Strong Start program.

REPORT:

City staff have reviewed existing authority, policies and by-laws and have identified a gap, whereby routine rental agreements are unable to be signed without Council approval. These are typically short-term rentals, and may even be for one day, where the renter is asking to provide a community service out of City space. These agreements represent little risk to the City, as the use will be compatible with City-direct programming uses, and they represent a substantial benefit, as they support a vibrant and engaged community.

For example, and the request that prompted this investigation, Strong Start is a charitable organization that offers a “Get Ready for School Program” to assist children with early literacy, and to help parents and caregivers learn how to support their children’s learning at home. It is a free program, and is particularly beneficial for children who have the challenges of English as a second language or for children from low to middle-income families. In this case, Strong Start wants to use space at various community centres for approximately 6 months, for 44 2-hour classes, to offer the Get Ready for School Program. The proposed community centres are Victoria Hills, Downtown, Williamsburg, Victoria Hills, Kingsdale, Chandler Mowat, Bridgeport, Forest Heights, Country Hills, Centreville, and, Stanley Park. The City would offer the space at no cost to Strong Start, and would also provide chairs, tables and toys to accommodate the Programs needs. Strong Start has a standard-form contract that they use for these Programs, and it includes these and other additional components that are not present in the City’s Active Net rental contract.

The recommendation contained in this report would clearly establish the authorized signing representatives for documentation required for the day-to-day business between the City and the renters of community centre spaces. Delegated authority is appropriate and necessary in order to ensure that programs can be accommodated and offered in a timely fashion. Council has already delegated authority to specific roles within the City to facilitate City business, such as authority to the Manager, Parking Enterprise for short-term parking agreements; and the Executive Director, Economic Development for temporary art contracts valued at less than \$10,000 – in each case, the delegated authority includes the requirement that the agreement be to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Capital Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Capital Budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendation has no impact on the Operating Budget.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City’s website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

There are no previous reports/authorities related to this matter.

APPROVED BY: Michael May, Deputy CAO and General Manager, Community Services Department