RECOMMENDATION

That the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Advisory Committee recommend to City Council that the Accessibility Support Policy attached hereto as Attachment 'A" and forming part of these minutes be approved.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Accessibility Support Policy is designed to increase inclusion and access to recreation programs and facilities for persons with a disability.

This report provides background information on the steps taken in drafting the policy and allows the Parks, Recreation & Facilities Advisory Committee to review and provide feedback on the current draft prior to submitting to City Council for final approval.

BACKGROUND

At the October 8, 2020 meeting of the Special Needs Advisory Committee, a request was made to the Parks and Recreation Department regarding free access to City operated facilities for Mentors/Support Staff accompanying individuals with disabilities. The Parks and Recreation Department indicated that work had commenced on creating a policy and that a draft policy would be provided to the Special Needs Advisory Committee for review and feedback at an upcoming meeting.

At the November 12, 2020 meeting of the Special Needs Advisory Committee, it was moved that the Special Needs Advisory Committee supports the Department of Parks and Recreation draft Accessibility Support Policy; and further that the report dated November 4, 2020 from the Department of Parks and Recreation regarding the Accessibility Support Policy be received and filed.

Admission policies exist within the Yara Centre, Kinsmen Sportsplex and Phyllis Dewar Outdoor Pool however no formal policy exists which waives the fees of a Support Person.
Due to the collaborated service model within Recreation Services, a policy has been drafted to provide consistent practices amongst all recreation programs. The policy will provide individuals and organizations with set guidelines related to recreation access support for a person with a disability.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has required the Department to change admission policies, reduce program capacity, and insure contact tracing for all programs. This policy will support those unique changes and reduce participation barriers.

It is essential to recognize the critical role that Parks and Recreation plays in the pandemic recovery of communities, as well as in support of the mental and physical wellbeing of all community members.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015 identifies inclusion and access as a goal in the Pathway to Wellness. Recreation has the ability to reach all citizens and to bring people together in a non-threatening, pleasurable atmosphere. Acting on inclusion and access requires policies and programs that ensure recreation environments are accessible and remove barriers to participation.

Prior to drafting the policy, a review of current Department practices and policies occurred along with review of other municipal policies and best practices. The Department also had to review how the new policy could integrate with its current recreation management software.

The policy was designed so that a Person with a Disability will continue to pay regular fees while Support Persons attends at no charge.

The new Accessibility Support Policy includes:

- Creation of an Accessibility Support Recreation Membership for Support Persons at no charge.
- Guidelines on assessing individuals that require a Support Person.
- Simple application form with Support Person acknowledgment of responsibilities.
- Flexibility in the creation of accounts and number of Support Persons to meet the various needs of Persons with Disabilities.

Approximately 60 Support Persons attend drop-in recreation programs each month. Most of this participation is school based programs along with other community groups such as Moose Jaw Family for Change.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are minimal costs associated with providing free access to Support Persons. It is expected that by removing this barrier for participation, more people will be able to engage in recreational activities which will offset the additional costs of the free membership.
COMMUNICATION PLAN

Feedback on the development of the Policy occurred with the Special Needs Advisory Committee and other members of the community. The Department also received information from other communities on related policies and practices.

The new policy will be directly communicated to impacted individuals and user groups once adopted.

STRATEGIC PLAN

This report supports the City of Moose Jaw strategic objective of Progressive Civic Administration as the City operates as one family and one community with the goal of making the community better and preparing it for the future.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

The report supports the Parks, Open Space and Community Recreation objective in the Official Community Plan of providing parks, open space and recreational program delivery at a level that aids in the attraction and retention of young families to the City.

PRESENTATION

Mr. Scott Osmachenko, Recreation Services Manager will provide a brief overview of this report.

ATTACHMENTS

A. New Accessibility Support Policy

B. Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015

REPORT APPROVAL

Written by: Scott Osmachenko, Recreation Services Manager
Reviewed by: Derek Blais, Director of Parks and Recreation
Approved by: Jim Puffalt, City Manager

To be completed by the Clerk's Department only.

Presented to Regular Council or Executive Committee on _______________________________.

No. _________________________ Resolution No. ________________________________
City of Moose Jaw
ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT POLICY

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1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the Policy is to:

a) Help ensure there are no unintended negative consequences to accessing City recreation facilities for persons with disabilities by providing complimentary access for Support Persons;

b) Prevent barriers by allowing individuals of all abilities to participate in City programs and recreational activities;

c) Provide clear direction for individuals who require support for participation.

2. Definitions

2.1 **Persons with a Disability**: means persons who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

2.2 **Support Person**: means individuals who actively participates with a person with a disability in recreation activities and provides support in the facilities. A Support Person can be paid staff or family members who provide ongoing support to a person with a disability Must be 16 years or older.

2.3 **Accessibility Support Recreation Membership**: means the City of Moose Jaw Recreation Membership that is issued to Support Persons which allows them to accompany Person with a Disability.

2.4 **PerfectMind**: means the City of Moose Jaw online recreation software used to manage memberships, registrations and programs.

3. Scope

3.1 The key principles that informed the development of the Policy include full participation, equality of opportunity, opportunity for independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. When assessing whether an individual requires a support person, the City will consider the following:
a) Is support also required at school and/or in the community?

b) Is support also required for basic care at home?

c) Does the individual qualify for local, provincial or federal disability benefits?

d) Is there an existing behavioural, physical, mental and/or developmental disability that requires support to address the safety and environment of the participants or other participants?

3.2 This policy applies to individuals of all ages who require a Support Person to access City of Moose Jaw Parks and Recreation Department Programs including but not limited to drop-in programs, registration programs and courses.

4. Guidelines

4.1 A Support Person accompanying Person(s) with a Disability must register for a complimentary Accessibility Support Recreation Membership which allows them to accompany anyone with a disability at no extra cost. Regular rates and fees apply to the Person with a Disability.

4.2 The Accessibility Support Recreation Membership is only valid to assist or actively participate with the Person with a Disability. It is not intended for a Support Person to participate in their own recreation activities.

4.3 The City’s Children’s Admission requirements of a maximum of 2 toddlers (0-3 yrs) per adult/guardian must still be adhered to under this Policy.

5. Procedure

5.1 A complimentary PerfectMind Account is required for all participants and can be completed online at www.moosejaw.ca or in person.

5.2 The Support Person must also complete the Accessibility Support Recreation Membership Request Form (Schedule A) by calling the Parks and Recreation Department or visiting the Kinsmen Sportsplex or Yara Centre. Registration forms will be approved immediately if any of the considerations in section 3.1 are demonstrated. If the considerations cannot be met, further information may be requested. An organization may create a generic account for multiple support persons.

5.3 Once the Accessibility Support Recreation Membership Request Form is completed, Parks and Recreation Staff can register a Support Person for the Accessibility Support Recreation Membership or for programs and courses. The Support Person or Persons with a Disability can also register for drop-in activities as per regular registration and admission procedures.
5.4 A Person with a Disability may have multiple Support Persons. A shared PerfectMind account can be created to support online registration and group activity administration.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 City Council is responsible for:

a) Approval of the policy and all amendments.

6.2 Parks and Recreation Frontline Staff are responsible for:

a) Assisting with PerfectMind account setups, membership activations, and activity or program registrations; and,

b) Approving and processing Accessibility Support Recreation Membership Request Forms which clearly demonstrate the considerations in section 3.1.

6.3 The Recreation Services Manager and/or designate are responsible for:

a) Approving Accessibility Support Recreation Membership Request Forms in which additional information has been requested; and,

b) Investigating complaints or inquiries related to misuse of the Accessibility Support Policy.

APPROVED
City Manager’s Signature:
Schedule A

City Moose Jaw

Accessibility Support Recreation Membership Request Form

Support Person

First Name: __________________________________________________________________

Last Name: __________________________________________________________________

Date of Birth: _______DD __________MM ___________YYYY

Primary phone: (_____) _____-_______

Street Address: _________________________________________________________________

City: _______________________ Country: ______________________________

Province: _______________________ Postal Code: ___________________________

E-mail: __________________________________________________________________

Gender: □ Male    □ Female    □ Other

Please share which individuals or organization you will provide support for:

This support is □ Ongoing   □ Ending on _____________

Is support also required at school and/or in the community? _____

Is support also required for basic care at home? _____

Does the individual qualify for local, provincial or federal disability benefits? _____

Is there an existing behavioural, physical, mental and/or developmental disability that requires support to address the safety and environment of the participants or other participants?
I understand that as a Support Person, I will assist the person with a disability and not participate in my own recreation activities. I also understand that I am required to actively participate in all recreation activities I am providing support for. Privilege can be revoked at any time should these guidelines not be followed.

__________________________________________  __________________________
Applicant Signature                          Date

To be completed by City of Moose Jaw staff:

Approved as Support Person:                  Comments:

Date Membership Form uploaded to PerfectMind Account: ____________________
A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015

**Vision**
Everyone engaged in meaningful, accessible recreation experiences, that foster:
- Individual Wellbeing
- Wellbeing of Natural & Built Environments
- Community Wellbeing

**Values**
- Public Good
- Inclusion & Equity
- Sustainability
- Lifelong Participation

**Principles of Operation**
- Outcome-Driven
- Quality & Relevance
- Evidence-Based
- Partnerships
- Innovation

**Goals**
- Active Living
  - Participation throughout the lifecourse
  - Physical literacy
  - Play
  - Reduce sedentary behaviours
- Inclusion & Access
  - Equitable participation for all, regardless of socioeconomic status, age, culture, race, Aboriginal status, gender, ability, sexual orientation or geographic location
- Connecting People & Nature
  - Natural spaces and places
  - Comprehensive system of parks
  - Public awareness and education
  - Minimize negative impacts
- Supportive Environments
  - Provide essential spaces and places
  - Use existing structures and spaces for multiple purposes
  - Renew infrastructure
  - Active transportation
  - Partnerships in social environment
  - Recreation education
  - Assessment tools
  - Align community initiatives
- Recreation Capacity
  - Collaborative system
  - Career development
  - Advanced education
  - Capacity development
  - Community leadership
  - Volunteers
  - Knowledge development