

Report to Council

Report Title: Winter Operations and Use of Cargill Community Centre
Prepared By: Colleen Gillis, Director of Community Services
Department: Recreation
Date: July 15, 2025
Report Number: REC2025-14 **File Number:** C11REC, R05

Attachments:

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number REC2025-14 - Winter Operations and Use of Cargill Community Centre, prepared by Colleen Gillis, Director of Community Services and in doing so directs staff to proceed with option _____ - as a path forward for Cargill Community Centre Winter Operational Hours.

Report:

Background:

The Cargill Community Centre Hall, constructed in 1999 by a team of volunteers led by a local builder, was designed to serve as a space for community and family gatherings, primarily for seasonal use. Over time, its utilization expanded to accommodate weddings, large-scale fundraising events, and recreational activities, leading to an increased demand for year-round operations.

Under CDCF, winter use was available until 2019 when concerns about snow removal costs led to an operational pause from January to March. The decision to close the Cargill Community Centre between January until March was met with opposition within the committee itself and community members.

Initially operated by the Cargill District Community Foundation (CDCF) on behalf of the Municipality of Brockton, the operational mandate shifted in 2022. This transition involved negotiation and development of a service agreement, after which management and operational responsibilities were assumed by the Municipality. Upon assuming control, the Municipality identified an opportunity to enhance revenue through year-round rentals, supported by community interest in indoor activities such as pickleball.

Minor leaks during the winters of 2023 and 2024 escalated in December 2024. Prompted by substantial leaks observed in February 2025, a contractor identified significant ice damming, impeding natural drainage and causing water damage. This situation prompted the filing of an insurance claim.

Technician and engineer evaluations revealed that the existing roof, equipped with approximately R-20 insulation and lacking essential ventilation, is prone to recurring ice damming. This condition results in inadequate management of heat loss and potential structural damage during heated winter operations. To mitigate ongoing issues, there's a necessity for reconsidering the roof's structural design to allow natural ventilation. Proper air circulation from the eaves to the roof peak is critical to preventing ice damming and ensuring sustainable operation during winter months.

Analysis:

Since the Municipality of Brockton began operating the Cargill Community Centre the change in operation includes staffing expenses, maintenance expenses, and snow removal. In addition to special events, the hall is used for recreational programs such as pickleball with potential expansion of programming to include indoor baseball, soccer, cornhole.

Positive Aspects of Continuing Winter Operations:

1. **Community Access Enhancement:** Maintaining operations ensures that community access to events and programs remains steady throughout the winter months, supporting community engagement and participation.
2. **Sustained Revenue Streams:** Operation during winter allows for ongoing revenue generation from rentals and recreational programs.
3. **Recreation Programming Expansion Opportunities:** The facility's year-round, climate-controlled environment offers opportunities for expanding recreation programming, which appeals to local sports organizations. Staff have identified a variety of potential recreational programming to be considered including indoor sports rentals (soccer, baseball, gymnastics), recreational tournaments or fundraising events (cornhole tournaments), youth programming (PD days, winter camp expansion), culinary education and events (cooking courses), youth drop-in programs (board games, creative arts, social hangouts).
4. **Facility Capacity Advantage:** Limited venues in Bruce County are capable of hosting up to 500 people year-round presents us as a unique provider for large events, enhancing our community's prestige.
5. **Accessibility:** Cargill Community Center is one of Brockton's only fully accessible community centres.

Challenges of Continuing Winter Operations:

1. **Current Roof Design Limitations:** The roof's current design introduces the risk of ice damming and potential water leakage. This presents potential infrastructural challenges and increased maintenance costs.
2. **Higher Operational Costs:** Winter operations incur significantly higher expenses, including heating, snow removal, and costs related to infrastructure damage mitigation.
3. **Community Impact and Facility Maintenance Concerns:** Closing the facility for winter operations can potentially lead to community dissatisfaction due to the reduced availability of programming and rental spaces, affecting popular programs like pickleball and the recently added senior crokinole and euchre activities. Additionally, a decrease in rental opportunities could impede events and activities crucial for fostering community spirit and engagement. Compounding this concern, the current

condition of the roof may lead to significant disruptions in programming and rentals because of continuous leaks.

Community Feedback:

Following consultations with the Cargill and District Community Foundation (CDCF) Liaison, Staff have identified significant concerns expressed regarding considerations related to the potential of a closure of the Cargill Community Centre from January to mid-March. The principal reasons for opposition being that Cargill Community Centre is one of the only facilities that has an occupancy of close to 500 during winter months within a far-reaching radius of Brockton. The fully accessible facility boasts of a state-of-the-art commercial grade kitchen, a newly constructed entrance, washrooms, bar area and meeting room with an ideal floor space for a wide variety of recreational activities. These features support a wide variety of recreational activities, making it an invaluable asset for the community. CDCF is committed to seeing the hall reach its full potential while acknowledging the necessity for continued investment to achieve this vision.

Winter (January- March) Operations Financial Considerations:

Expense Item	2023 Actuals	2024 Actuals	2025 Actuals
Wages	\$24,352.98	\$25,836.09	\$20,167.22
Propane	\$6,719.00	\$6,331.00	\$14,014.00
Hydro	\$2,151.00	\$2,685.00	\$2,825.00
Snow Removal	\$2,180.00	\$4,279.00	\$8,161.00
Total Operating Expenses	\$35,402.98	\$39,131.09	\$45,167.22

Winter (January- March) Rental Usage and Revenue Overview:

Revenue Item	2023 Rental Hrs + Revenue	2024 Rental Hrs + Revenue	2025 Rental Hrs + Revenue
Pickleball	90 hrs/ \$1,412.12	92 hrs/ \$1,221.23	65 hrs/ \$1,006.19
Stag n Does/ other	9 hrs/ \$325.00	30 hrs/ \$680.00	57.5 hrs/ \$1,985.00
CDCF Usage	40 hrs/ Service Agreement	0 hrs	41 hrs/ Service Agreement
Total Hrs Used	139	122	163.5
Total Revenue	\$1,737.12	\$1,901.23	\$2,991.19

***Note: 2025 Cargill Hall was closed starting mid-February**

As a result of all the information provided, we offer the following Options for Council's consideration:

Option 1: Close Cargill Community Centre from January to mid-March until roof conditions remedied.

- Mitigate risk of similar major incidents and lower operation expenses drastically including wages, utilities, snow removal
- Snow removal remains necessary for fire hydrant access. Unknown operational expense.
- Community Impact: Potential revenue decrease and risk of dissatisfaction among community members due to limited access.
- Substantial reduction in operational expenses including wages, utilities, and snow removal costs.

Option 2: Maintain current operations

- Community satisfaction and recreation program planning.
- Sustained use during the winter heating season will continue to result in moderate continued ice damming and water leakage damage due to the existing roof design and potential future financial implications.
- Maintain current budgetary impacts.

Option 3: Limited winter operations for the meeting room and kitchen use only. Close hall area.

- Requires comprehensive snow removal, heating, and staffing, despite limited utilization.
- Reduced rental space availability and limited recreational programming.

Strategic Action Plan Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Strategic Action Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance | N/A |

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective?
N/A

Winter (January- March) Operations Financial Impacts:

Average Winter Expenses= \$39,900.43

Average Winter Revenue= \$2,209.84

Average Operational Deficit = (\$37,690.59)

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Colleen Gillis, Director of Community Services

Reviewed By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sonya Watson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer