

Report to Council

Report Title:	Walkerton Minor Hockey Storage Funding Request		
Prepared By:	Brad Thomson, Facilities and Parks Supervisor and Colleen Gillis, Director of Community Services		
Department:	Recreation		
Date:	March 10, 2026		
Report Number:	REC2026-07	File Number:	C11REC
Attachments:	Letter from Walkerton Minor Hockey – Rental Support Request		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number REC2026-07 – Walkerton Minor Hockey Storage Funding Request prepared by Brad Thomson, Facilities and Parks Supervisor and Colleen Gillis, Director of Community Services, and in doing so authorizes Option _____ in regards to request of financial assistance to purchase two sea cans to the amount of \$7,000.00 to store vital equipment for “Ice Palace” operations.

Report:

Background:

Staff received the attached letter from the Walkerton Minor Hockey Association seeking financial assistance to purchase storage sea cans at an estimated cost of \$7,000.

The PWU Centre—commonly known as the “Ice Palace” or “Horse Palace”—has historically been operated by dedicated community volunteers, with support from Brockton staff for ice flooding until the 2014–2015 season. In 2014–2015, the volunteer committee purchased Brockton’s older Zamboni, enabling volunteers to assume full responsibility for ice maintenance and day-to-day ice operations. Over time, volunteer capacity declined, creating operational challenges common to volunteer-driven models and limiting the committee’s ability to operate the facility consistently.

Council has considered several matters over the years that reflect the evolving partnership and municipal involvement in supporting capital improvements and operations connected to Walkerton Minor Hockey and related groups:

- **November 28, 2016:** Walkerton Minor Hockey presented a delegation regarding the formation of a fundraising committee to allow them to be able to apply for grant opportunities through the municipality. The purpose of the committee was to manage fundraising for major facility upgrades,

including a new ice compressor, refrigeration lines, and change room improvements. Council approved the establishment of the Walkerton Ice Pad Fundraising Committee (with members from Walkerton Minor Hockey, Twice the Ice, and the Walkerton Agricultural Society). The total capital investment associated with this initiative was \$170,800.

- **November 10, 2017:** Council passed By-Law 2017-083, authorizing an agreement with the Walkerton Agricultural Society and the Walkerton Ice Pad Fundraising Committee addressing facility usage, fundraising, grant applications, capital improvements/renovations, and clarifying responsibilities between the Committee, the Municipality, and the Agricultural Society. Stated within this agreement, the Municipality committed financial support through the NWMO Community Well-being Fund in the amount of \$29,000.
- **June 4, 2018:** Council passed By-Law 2018-044, authorizing an agreement with the Walkerton Ice Pad Fundraising Committee to formalize the \$48,870 equipment loan.
- **October 29, 2019:** Council passed By-Law 2019-135, authorizing an agreement with Walkerton Minor Hockey (Twice the Ice) regarding use of the Zamboni. A related report was also brought forward regarding donation of the Zamboni to Walkerton Minor Hockey.

The Municipality's direct contributions towards "Ice Palace" operations included:

- NWMO Community Well-being Fund Municipal Grant: \$29,000
- Donation of Zamboni, declared a surplus asset for Brockton
- November 26, 2019: Walkerton Minor Hockey requested reduced rates for ice time. Council approved offering a reduced school rate and provided a one-time donation of the rental fee for the Auditorium.
- Ice Palace operations ceased from 2020-2025, due to COVID-19 and challenges re-establishing a dedicated person/volunteer to maintain the operations of the ice surface.

More recently, in November 2025, Brockton staff and Walkerton Minor Hockey volunteers began collaborating to resume operations at the PWU Centre. This partnership has supported the facility operating to municipal operational standards and has restored a valuable second ice surface for the community. The renewed operations have helped alleviate pressure on existing arenas and increased access to ice time for local teams.

The facility provides approximately 25 hours of ice time per week, accommodating 20 to 25 practices. Community value of maintaining a second local ice surface. These opportunities within Brockton supports player development, reduces travel for families, strengthens community engagement, and contributes to the success and sustainability of youth in Brockton.

Analysis:

The PWU Centre maintains its ice surface through a refrigeration system that circulates coolant through a network of tubes laid directly on the concrete slab. At the conclusion of each ice season, these tubes must be removed by volunteers to allow the Agricultural Society full use of the facility for its range of community events. This process results in approximately 20 skids of tubing that require secure, weather-protected storage throughout the summer months.

In previous years, Walkerton Minor Hockey was able to store this equipment in commercial trailers through a private agreement. Unfortunately, that arrangement is no longer available, leaving the organization in immediate need of an alternative storage solution. To address this challenge, Walkerton Minor Hockey is seeking financial assistance to purchase storage sea cans at an estimated cost of \$7,000. They are also requesting approval to place these sea cans behind the PWU Centre on municipal property at no charge.

Ensuring appropriate off-season storage for this equipment is essential not only to protect the longevity of the refrigeration system but also to support the continued, reliable operation of the PWU Centre—an increasingly important community asset that helps meet the growing demand for local ice time.

Council may also wish to consider this request in the broader context of municipal support provided to the organization, including its reduced ice rate under By-Law 2025-069 2026 Fees and Charges, Municipality of Brockton Youth Minor Sports is charged \$129.00 plus HST per hour for prime time ice usage at the Walkerton Community Centre, compared to the standard prime time rate of \$160.00 plus HST per hour, representing a reduction of approximately 19.4%.

Option 1: Approve Walkerton Minor Hockey's full request of \$7,000 to purchase the storage sea cans, and grant permission to store the sea cans on municipal property behind the PWU Centre at no cost.

- Considerations: Ensures operational continuity and asset protection, requires tax-based municipal funding of \$7,000.00, sets precedent for other organizations seeking funding for facility-related storage needs.

Option 2: Provide partial financial support of *35% funding consistent with other reduced facility rates approved by council for similar not for profit local organizations*, toward the purchase of storage sea cans, and grant Walkerton Minor Hockey permission to store the sea cans on municipal property behind the PWU Centre at no cost.

- Considerations: Consistent with historical agreements made with Walkerton Minor Hockey Association to continue to support "Ice Palace" operations, partial funding align with approaches used for other community groups, requires tax-based municipal funding of \$2,450.00.

Option 3: Decline Walkerton Minor Hockey's request for \$7,000 in funding to purchase the storage sea cans but grant permission for the organization to store the sea cans on municipal property behind the PWU Centre at no cost.

- Considerations: No immediate \$7,000 municipal cost while still supporting a practical solution by permitting storage on-site, lack of municipal funding could delay, or risk ceased operations of "Ice Palace" for next season.

We Seek Council's direction related to this request.

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 Yes
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community Yes
- Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life Yes
- 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

Funding sources are limited. Staff recommend either Capital (\$100,483.19) or Tax Mitigation (balance \$882,202) Reserve.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Brad Thomson, Facilities and Parks Supervisor



Colleen Gillis, Director of Community Services

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer