

To: David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Brian Connors, Director of Parks & Recreation

Re: Fee Assistance In Recreation Policy Revision

AIM

To update Council Policy PR017 - Fee Assistance in Recreation (F.A.I.R.) to create an opportunity for more people to access the program.

BACKGROUND

The F.A.I.R. program is currently funded with \$35,000 allocated to Recreation and Culture Programs and \$60,000 to Transit Services. All of these funds are derived from slot machine revenues. These funds are designated for people and families who fall below the Low-Income Cut-Off (L.I.C.O.). Notably, all funds were completely distributed, however, only 41.5% of the allocated recreation and culture funds have been utilized.

Current practices mandate that funds are provided to individuals or families meeting the L.I.C.O. criteria. A credit is then applied to the relevant City Recreation account for use by the individual or family, valid for one calendar year, in any recreational or cultural program offered by the city. Should recipients fail to fully utilize or partially utilize the funds, if staff time permits, a call is made to the F.A.I.R. recipient. The recipient is asked whether they intend to apply the remaining balance to Fall programs or if they consent to the City reclaiming the funds for redistribution to another individual or family qualifying under L.I.C.O.

COMMENTS

To further increase the availability of funds for qualified individuals and families, the following modifications to the current allocation process are proposed:

1. On August 1, all small-value funds below the threshold of \$25.00 can be re-claimed for reallocation to other qualified users who may require them.
2. On August 1, all funds that are at their original starting balance can be re-claimed for reallocation to other qualified users who may need them.

These changes aim to optimize fund usage by reallocating them from inactive accounts to individuals on the F.A.I.R. waitlist more efficiently. Staff will make responsible attempts to contact fund holders before funds are reallocated.

ATTACHMENTS

Policy PR017 with highlighted recommended additions

RECOMMENDATION

That Woodstock City Council approve the amendments to Council Policy PR017 - Fee Assistance in Recreation.

Authored by: Brian Connors, Director of Parks & Recreation

Approved by: David Creery, P. Eng, MBA, Chief Administrative Officer