
Third Party Sponsorships and Naming Rights – Community Association-Owned and Operated Facilities

ISSUE

There is no formal approval process for sponsorship requests and naming rights for Community Association-owned and operated assets on civic property.

BACKGROUND

City Council, at its Regular Business Meeting held on April 26, 2021, resolved to direct the Administration to report back to the appropriate Committee of Council on:

- “(a) the explicit or implicit limitations or restrictions that City bylaws, policies or agreements have on third party sponsorships and naming rights on such facilities; and
- (b) an analysis of various options and potential recommendations that may enable community associations to sell sponsorships or naming rights, to private third parties on such facilities.”

The City of Saskatoon (City) periodically receives requests from neighbourhood community associations to allow sponsorship and/or naming recognition of community association assets, mostly outdoor rinks. The most recent request was received from the Rosewood Community Association for advertising and donation signage, as well as sponsorship and naming rights, for its outdoor rink located in Glen H. Penner Park.

CURRENT STATUS

Community association rinks are named after the neighborhood in which they are located. One exception currently exists within the Erindale-Arbor Creek neighborhood, where the community association has unofficially named their rink, the Quinn Stevenson Memorial Rink, after a young man in their neighborhood who lost his life in a motor vehicle accident in August of 2013. This rink is located on school property with permission for the signage granted by the Dr. John G. Egnatoff School.

Aside from that exception, there is no process within City Council or Administrative policies for approving the naming or sponsorship of community association-owned recreation amenities on City property or in neighborhood parks. The only community association-owned assets on civic property are outdoor rinks and two small skate-change buildings.

Conversely, there are processes that are sanctioned in bylaws and policies for sponsorship and naming of City-owned recreation assets in City-owned parks:

- 1) Bylaw No. 7767, Recreation and Facilities and Parks Usage Bylaw, 1998;
- 2) Bylaw No. 8770, Zoning Bylaw, 2009 (Zoning Bylaw) - Appendix A - Sign Regulations;
- 3) Policy No. C09-008, Naming of Civic Property and Development Areas;
- 4) Policy No C09-028, Sponsorship;

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- 5) Policy No. C10-010, Advertising in Recreation Facilities; and
- 6) Policy No. C09-027, Gifts and Memorial Program.

There are currently two Administrative reviews underway that could impact third-party sponsorships and naming rights. The first is a review of relevant Council policies related to advertising, sponsorship and naming rights to ensure they meet modern common practice and industry expectations. Secondly, Community Standards is undertaking a review of the Signage Regulations contained in Appendix A of the Zoning Bylaw. An outcome of providing sponsorship for and/or acquiring naming rights for a structure in a park is the resulting signage to reflect the name and/or sponsor. This review could provide analysis on the implications and options regarding signage for third party sponsorship and naming rights.

Most relevant to community association rinks is Bylaw No. 7767, The Recreation Facilities and Parks Usage Bylaw, 1998. Section 13 states:

- “(1) No person shall advertise in a Park or Recreation Facility unless written or verbal permission to do so has been received from the City.
- (2) The City shall allow advertising in a Park or Recreation Facility only if such advertising is done by a person who sponsors a festival, activity, or an event, and the advertisement is part of such festival, activity or event.
- (3) The City may allow a sponsor who provides resources to support capital projects to place a permanent advertising sign on the capital project that the sponsor is supporting.
- (4) Permanent advertising signs must be affixed to a building or other structure approved by the City. The sign content must be limited to the name, symbol or slogan of the sponsor or its product.
- (5) A sponsor who provides resources to support a program or special event may place temporary advertising signs, banners, posters and displays in a Park or Recreation Facility during that program or special event.
- (6) Freestanding advertising ground signs shall not be permitted in a park except during special events.”

With respect to naming of civic facilities in parks, one example of their application is the destination accessible play structure in Ernest Lindner park in Erindale. The Erindale-Arbour Creek Community Association partnered with the City in 2003, raising a considerable amount of money for the city’s first accessible playground. The community affixed a plaque to the play structure naming it “Everybody’s Playground” to honour its fully accessible features.

Other examples include the Orano Fun Zone play structure and the McDonald’s Natural Place to Play structure at the Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo. An example of a

third party-owned amenity with sponsorship on City property is the Meewasin Skating Rink in Kiwanis Park, sponsored by Cameco.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

In the past, regarding signage in or on community association rinks, and/or on other park amenities that community associations and donors have made a financial contribution towards, the Recreation and Community Development Department has given approval for community associations to:

- 1) Solicit advertising dollars toward a community rink in exchange for an advertising sign to be placed on the inside of the rink boards. Community associations work directly with the business to agree to the terms of this arrangement (a recent example is the Varsity View rink, located on Saskatoon Public School Division property at Brunskill School);
- 2) Solicit advertising dollars towards a rink warm-up shed (if one is not already provided by the City of Saskatoon) in exchange for an advertising sign to be placed inside the building. Community associations work directly with the business to agree to the terms of this arrangement (a recent example is the Willowgrove Community Association rink warm-up building in Wallace Park); and
- 3) Place donor recognition plaques on park play structures recognizing those that have contributed to fundraising campaigns. These structures are all City property and approved by the Recreation and Community Development Department.

The Recreation and Community Development Department believes that third party sponsorship and naming rights of community association-owned assets on civic property are a legitimate way to raise funds for such amenities. In the absence of formal policy guidance, approvals will be granted by the Recreation and Community Development Department as they arise. Guidelines will be prepared for Community Associations to follow regarding the valuation of assets and reasonable compensation for both sponsorship and naming rights, based on current industry practices.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no privacy, legal, or environmental implications.

As a new policy and process is developed, it will adhere to:

- 1) Bylaw No. 7767, The Recreation Facilities and Parks Usage Bylaw, 1998;
- 2) Bylaw No. 8770, Zoning Bylaw, 2009 - Appendix A- Sign Regulations;
- 3) Policy No. C09-008, Naming of Civic Property and Development Areas;
- 4) Policy No. C09-028, Sponsorship;
- 5) Policy No. C10-010, Advertising in Recreation Facilities; and
- 6) Policy No. C09-027 Gifts and Memorials Program.

NEXT STEPS

Following completion of Administration’s review of naming rights, sponsorship and advertising policies and practices and Community Standards review of signage regulations, if necessary, Administration will report back on the potential integration of this issue into a revised policy framework.

REPORT APPROVAL

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Reviewed by: Andrew Roberts, Director of Recreation and Community Development
Approved by: Lynne Lacroix, General Manager, Community Services

SP/2021/RCD/PDCS - Third Party Sponsorships and Naming Rights – Community Association-Owned and Operated Facilities/gs