

Municipality of Chatham-Kent
Infrastructure and Engineering Services
Parks, Fleet and Facilities

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Ian Clark, Manager, Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries
Date: December 9, 2024
Subject: Old Czech Hall Operating Agreement

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

1. The Mayor and Clerk be authorized to enter into an agreement, satisfactory to the General Manager, Infrastructure and Engineering Services and Director, Legal Services, with the Old Czech Hall Committee and the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority for the Committee's operation of the Old Czech Hall, located on lands owned by the Authority and leased to the Municipality, with such agreement to include the following terms:
 - a. Continued operation of the building as a community hall.
 - b. Payment of all building operations, utilities, applicable taxes, duties, and assessment charges by the Committee.
 - c. Expiring May 31, 2028, automatically renewable with one-year terms unless terminated by a party.

Background

The Old Czech Hall, a public recreational facility, has been a fixture in the community of Dresden for several decades. In 1992, it was purchased by the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority ("SCRCA") as part of the Dresden Floodplain Acquisition Program. At that time, it was determined the building would be demolished due to the vulnerability of potential flooding. Following a request from members of the public the SCRCA leased the property to the former Town of Dresden, who sublet the building to the Old Czech Hall Committee ("Committee") to maintain and operate.

The most recent agreement between the Committee and the Municipality of Chatham-Kent expired in 2007. The Committee has continued to operate the building as a community hall serving the local population since that time.

In May 2023, Council authorized administration to renew its agreement with the SCRCA for the continued lease and management of several land parcels serving as recreational properties within Dresden, including the property of the Old Czech Hall.

Comments

The Old Czech Hall is a fully equipped community space accommodating up to 250 people. Revenue is generated through the rental of space for weddings, showers, receptions, and other community events. The Committee also fundraises to cover the balance of operating costs and any improvements to the facility.





Since the building is owned by the SCRCA, taxes are levied and will be the responsibility of the Committee. Required repairs to the building, where necessary, will also be the financial responsibility of the Committee.

It is recommended an agreement be entered into with both the SCRCA and the Old Czech Hall Committee to ensure responsibilities are agreed and so the building can continue to serve as a community hall for the benefit of residents.

It is understood between all parties that following termination of the agreement, and where the Committee no longer wishes to operate the premises as a community hall, the building will be demolished and the site restored as originally proposed under the Dresden Floodplain Acquisition Program.

Council Term Priorities

This report supports the following Council Term Priorities:

			
Deliver Excellent Service	Promote Safety & Well-Being	Grow Our Community	Ensure Environmental Sustainability
	6b		

Consultation

Legal Services, the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority, and the Old Czech Hall Committee were consulted in preparation of this report.

Communication

The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority and the Old Czech Hall Committee will be contacted to execute the agreement following approval of the recommendation.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ)

Under terms of the agreement the Old Czech Hall must be available to the public without discrimination because of race, creed, colour, sex, marital status, or religion.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendation. The Committee will be responsible for all operating costs associated with the Old Czech Hall.

Prepared by: Ian Clark, Manager, Parks, Recreation & Cemeteries

Reviewed by:

Robert Pollock, H.B. Comm. SPAD, CIT., Director, Parks, Fleet and Facilities

Edward Soldo, P.Eng., General Manager, Infrastructure and Engineering Services

Consulted and confirmed the content of the consultation section of the report by:

Dave Taylor, Director, Legal Services

Attachment: None