

Town of Milton looking at ways to boost revenues at its facilities

Staff planning new marketing concepts with goal of bringing in more money

By IRENE GENTLE
The Champion

Staff are hoping to bring bigger bucks into Town-run facilities through better business practices.

To that end, business plans for the Milton Seniors' Activity Centre, Milton Leisure Centre, John Tonelli Sports Centre and Milton Memorial Arena came under the microscope at the Town's social services committee meeting last week.

All three plans were received without comment at the March 6 meeting. But the ride may get rockier once the facilities apply for Town money during operating budget deliberations later this month.

Goal 10 per cent

Embracing marketing concepts and tracking demographics is one way the Leisure Centre hopes to rake in revenues in 2000 and beyond, said the centre's coordinator of aquatics and active living Patrick D'Almada.

The goal, he said, is to hike total revenue by 10 per cent over last year's take.

Wall advertising and an expanded merchandising program should help, so will targeting an aging population in the hopes of boosting membership, said Mr. D'Almada.

These measures should help the centre finish off 2000 in sound fiscal shape.

In 1999, total expenditures were \$469,000, with total revenues coming in at \$430,000. That resulted in an overall loss of \$38,000.

But 2000 is projected to have a \$43,000 surplus as projected revenues top out at \$543,000, while expenditures are estimated at \$500,000.

Last year, the centre reported a 6 per cent increase in annual visits, from 178,500 to 190,800.

Pool rentals added up to 1,427 hours, while facility rentals came in at 1,072 hours.

"A lot of this we think is attributed to the nice weather we've been having and the good economy," said Mr. D'Almada.

To keep attracting members, the leisure centre will have to keep a keen eye on shifting population needs, Mr. D'Almada said.

"Cultural needs will begin changing," he said. "And we'll see a change in the demographic again back to young children."

At budget time, staff ask for funds to expand the weight room and pump up cardio equipment.

Participation rose by 14 per cent at the seniors' centre last year, said its coordinator of community development, Joy Anderson.

"I think we're providing a wide variety of activities for our seniors," she said.

The centre boasts a core membership of about 200, but attracted 3,000 to a number of special events and day trips hosted by the centre.

About 10,000 drop-in visits were also recorded at the Childs Drive centre last year.

And those figures could be increased by another 10 per cent through an education drive aimed at letting seniors know what programs and services are available to

them, Ms Anderson said.

"If things continue, we'll be successful in realizing that," she said.

"We're well on our way."

Last year, revenues lagged behind expenditures so the Town ended up paying \$71,000 to the seniors' centre in 1999.

But that's more than \$10,000 less than the budget allotment of \$82,000.

"We didn't quite need all the money we budgeted for," Ms Anderson said.

This year, the centre will ask council for a budget of \$93,000.

Business booming

And business is booming at both the John Tonelli and Milton Memorial arenas, arenas supervisor Derrick Neelands told committee.

"The next few years will be a great opportunity for us," said Mr. Neelands.

We'd like to promote family values that seem to be lacking these days."

With a usage rate of 88 per cent and the annual participation of 180,000 adults, youth and children, the two arenas managed to pull in a combined profit of \$27,000 last year.

This year, that figure could be padded by the addition of an in-house arena board advertising program.

And money-saving measures for 2000 will include energy conservation and the streamlining of arena contracts.

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Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) of Halton Vacancies on the Board of Directors

If you are a resident of Halton looking for a challenging and rewarding volunteer opportunity, have a minimum of twelve to fifteen hours available a month, and feel you have some of the skills and experience required to govern a growing organization, the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) of Halton would like to hear from you. Residents of Halton are invited to submit an application to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors.

The CCAC is dedicated to providing ease of access to high quality consumer focused community, personal support and health care services. The Board is responsible for the overall management of a budget in excess of \$29 million annually. The CCAC provides access to a range of long-term care services including nursing, homemaking, rehabilitation, and placement into long-term care facilities. It also provides information about other related community services.

Your skills and experience in one or several of the following areas would be an asset:

- A user (or past user) of the service(s) as a client or family caregiver
- Prior experience as a board member, preferably of a non-profit organization
- Strategic planning experience
- An understanding of the health care system and issues affecting health care delivery today
- An interest in ensuring further development of health and social services
- Comfortable working with, and have empathy for individuals and community groups

Appointments are made for a term of three years. It is a Board of governance, not of management. The CEO is responsible for implementation within Board prescribed limitations. To avoid conflict of interest, people directly associated with agencies or organizations that have or hope to have service or supply contracts with the CCAC, and people who operate long-term care facilities, are **not** eligible to be Board Members of the CCAC.

The deadline for applications is April 30, 2000.

Letters of application, including a resume and a statement of why you are interested in becoming a Board Member should be sent to:

Mr. John Burkus, Chair, Nominations Committee
Community Care Access Centre of Halton
440 Elizabeth St., 4th Floor
Burlington ON L7R 2M1

For further information, please contact:

- John Burkus, Chair, Nominations Committee (905-844-1066) or
- Elaine Whitmore, Director of Planning and Development at (905-639-5228) (or toll free 1-800-810-0000) extension 8920.

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