

March 3, 2023

Attention: Ward 1 Councillor Matt Garwood

Good Afternoon Councillor Garwood,

My name is John Seney and I am the current President of Elmvale Minor Hockey Association. On behalf of the EMHA Executive, I am writing you to express our concerns regarding the township’s decision to increase the user fee amounts for the Elmvale Arena usage. It has come to our attention that the minor prime and non-prime fees for the next hockey season are to be increased between 16-20% above current pricing.

As a major user group of the arena, these increase in ice costs would have a devasting affect on our association and its members. Based on current ice usage from our Association and its members, this significant increase would likely result in an additional $30,000 for the following year membership, funds that our association does not have as we continue to navigate a very tight budget. In addition, our registration fees would have to be increased between $100-$150 per registration just to cover ice cost increases, this after registration costs just increased this past year due to ice cost increases and insurance increases. EMHA prides itself on having every member involved in volunteering for events like the Fall Fair Dance, Golf Tournament, Lottery Ticket Sales, Bottle Drives and many other fund raising ventures so that hockey can be an inclusive sport to all members of this great community. This substantial increase would eliminate that opportunity as we would have to price registration costs (that are already higher than most associations) significantly higher. This would likely result in a significant decrease in registration numbers, force EMHA to look elsewhere for ice time rental and/or evaluate the future of EMHA.

It is important to note that with this expected increase, Springwater would be charging the highest user fee for minor hockey use in the area! This is certainly a major concern as it should also be noted that I have spoken to and filed complaints with Township employees Briana Dean and Paul Stephens over the last two years as we have seen a significant decrease in the quality of ice, significant safety concerns that have lead us to have to cancel ice time until repairs were made and we continue to see and hear of repairs required on the ice surface of which none were listed in this years budgets as capital projects that would come close to justifying such an increase in user fees.

Below is a template of the various municipalities in our area and the fees associated with minor hockey use. It is also important to note that some municipalities prices are for a full 60 min ice time, Springwater charges an hour for 50 mins.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Price Per Hour - Youth / Minor** | | |
|  |  |  |
|  | Prime | Non-Prime |
| Springwater | 216.50 | 173.98 |
| Barrie | 215.00 | 152.00 |
| Oro | 171.00 | 130.00 |
| Midland | 162.20 | 116.94 |
| Orillia | 161.77 | 92.34 |
| Wasaga | 153.00 | 112.00 |
| Penetang | 137.39 | 85.51 |
| Stayner | 129.08 | 115.54 |
| Collingwood | 125.00 | 122.00 |
| Coldwater | 110.17 | 67.05 |
|  |  |  |
| Mean | 151.62 | 110.38 |
| Median | 153.00 | 115.54 |
| 75th Percentile | 168.80 | 128.00 |
|  |  |  |
| Springwater Above Mean | 43% | 58% |
| Springwater Above 75th Percentile | 28% | 36% |

As you can see, Springwater has 43-58% percent higher fees than the sampled mean listed above and is significantly higher than the 75th percentile. This is not acceptable and certainly not feasible for any user group, especially EMHA as your main user group.

We are looking to you as the Ward 1 Councillor for guidance, direction and most importantly advocation to address this concern with council and appeal the decision to increase user fees for the Elmvale Arena.

Sincerely,

John Seney

EMHA President