




COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members City Council
DATE:	June 8, 2023
SUBJECT:	Wild Waterworks 2023 Operating Season (ES23009) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
SUBMITTED BY:	Cynthia Graham Director, Environmental Services Public Works Department
SIGNATURE:	

Hamilton Conservation Authority operates most of Confederation Beach Park which includes Wild Waterworks under a management agreement with the City of Hamilton (City). Under this agreement the Hamilton Conservation Authority is responsible for operating and maintaining the park, Wild Waterworks and to prepare an annual operating plan and budget. The Agreement requires Hamilton Conservation Authority to advise the City, as soon as it becomes aware, if the park faces a risk of running an operating deficit and to jointly, with the City, identify the reason and implement measures to mitigate the deficit.

In 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic was identified as a major impact to the operations at Wild Waterworks and Hamilton Conservation Authority made a formal recommendation that the waterpark remain closed for the 2020 and 2021 operating season; this recommendation was approved by Council and the waterpark did not operate. Provincial regulations ultimately did not permit the reopening of water or amusement parks in 2020 and in 2021 water or amusement parks were not permitted to open until mid-July with capacity restrictions.

In 2022, as a result of province-wide lifeguard staffing shortages and to ensure safety and consistent business operations, the waterpark operated a modified season. The park officially opened on Wednesday, June 29, 2022, was open five days a week (Wednesday through Sunday) and on the following holidays: August civic holiday, Monday, August 1, 2022 and Monday, September 5, 2022. The spray pad at Lakeland was open for use, however, Lakeland Pool was closed for the 2022 season due to the lifeguard staffing shortages.

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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– Page 2 of 2

Hamilton Conservation Authority is working diligently to prepare to open Wild Waterworks and Lakeland pool for the 2023 season as follows:

- Wild Waterworks to operate on a 5 day per week schedule if training and recruitment efforts fall short of required number of lifeguards to operate 7 days per week with a forecasted opening of Saturday, June 24 and open for holiday Monday's in August and September;
- The hourly rate for lifeguards has be increased from its current range of \$18.00 - \$18.75 to \$19.05 - \$19.80 effective June 5, 2023; and
- Lakeland Pool to operate 7 days per week with a forecasted opening of Saturday, June 17, with a backup date of June 24 should there be any complications related to preparations for opening.

Per the reserve policy and agreement for the operation of Wild Waterworks by the Hamilton Conservation Authority, the Waterpark Reserve (#112224) would be an appropriate funding strategy to mitigate any shortfalls in revenue, as the financial pressure directly relates to operating deficits realized by the Waterpark operators. At present, staff anticipate that there are sufficient funds in the reserve to cover the anticipated operating deficit created by a 5 day a week operation and increase in staff hourly wages.

Alternately, through the 2023 Year-End Variance reporting, Council, through the recommendations of the General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services Department, has the authority to fund any operating deficit through other available reserves or funding sources as appropriate.

Should you require further information, please contact Kara Bunn, Manager of Parks and Cemeteries, at extension 4334.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

N/A