



TOWNSHIP OF EDWARDSBURGH CARDINAL INFORMATION ITEM

Committee: Committee of the Whole – Community Development

Date: October 7, 2024

Department: Recreation

Topic: Aquatic Program Year End Report

Background:

The Township continues to deliver strong and engaging summer programming and experienced another successful summer of programming for 2024. This year's program attracted significant participation, reflecting the community's enthusiasm and the effectiveness of our offerings. The high attendance and participation rates are evident throughout the various activities, as outlined in this report.

The program included a wide range of activities catering to different age groups and interests. From swimming lessons, aquafit, swim team, Jr. Lifeguard program to lifeguarding courses and the public swim offerings. The commitment to programming was key to drawing families and ensuring that all community members could find appropriate times that suited their needs and preferences. Attendance across all programs was impressive, with many programs reaching or exceeding capacity. This high level of participation underscores the program's success and the community's desire for engaging summer activities.

Spring Courses

Course	Total Participants for 2024	TWPEC Staff Participants for 2024	Spring of 2023
Safeguard	16	9	14
Standard First Aid and CPR-C	7	3	9

Aquatic Managers NEW	6	1	Not offered
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Staff training and course offerings started in early spring; this is to ensure all courses can be taught. The Safeguard course, which is geared to Camp Counsellors and LIT's, focuses on supervision of campers while in the pool. This program was also marketed to any youth 12 years or older who may have a backyard pool or have an interest in working with kids who may be around water.

June Programming

The early opening of Johnstown Pool allowed the pool to extend its programming into the evenings, since the township was offering leadership programs to staff, the township was able to offer public swimming, aquafit and swimming lessons to the community.

June Lessons

June lessons were offered for the first time this year and ran simultaneously with the Lifeguarding courses. A total of 13 swimmers took advantage of this opportunity. This worked well with organization and teamwork of staff and zoning of the pool. This can only work if you have majority of college or university staff.

June Johnstown Only

Johnstown Pool	June 10 th to 30 th
Johnstown Weekend	The pool was opened for 4 weekends in June with an average of 19 swimmers using the pool. One of those days was the opening of the pool, which had 45 swimmers that day. If you removed that day the average was 15.7 swimmers per day.
Johnstown Evening Swim	The pool was open on June 10 th , and while lifeguarding courses were being taught public swimming was being offered and on average 10 swimmers participated per night.
Johnstown Aquafit (2 nights)	Offered 5 times in June with one night cancelled due to weather, and an average of 10 Aqua fitters.

School

The extended availability also enabled the township to form a valuable partnership with South Edwardsburg Public School. Through this collaboration, students, excluding junior and senior kindergarten, received three swimming lessons focused on basic skills such as putting their faces in the water, kicking, and beginning strokes, along with essential water safety training. Jr/ Sr Kindergarten students received one lesson, and received some instructions in water safety as well as getting in and out of the pool, wearing PFD's, floats etc. Students also enjoyed free swim time, making the overall experience highly positive. Both the school and staff worked hard to meet all safety ratios, which ensured we had a minimum of 6 to 8 staff depending on the group or number. This initiative gave children who might not have accessed swimming lessons to gain these critical life skills. It is hoped that this partnership can continue, and the program offering can continue to grow as it has proven to be highly beneficial for both the school and the students. It is important to note that this partnership worked because we had college and university students to support the program.

Leadership Program

The township continues to build on providing leadership courses for our own employees and to local municipalities. As you can see by the township offering these courses to our own staff, the township is also helping other local municipalities with current staffing shortages. The new course the township offered this June was the Examiners course. The Examiners course is the first step to allowing Candidates to evaluate and certify candidates in the Life Saving Society's training programs. We had 5 employees attend this course; two staff have completed their apprenticeship and can examine the Bronze Courses.

It is worth noting that ALL spring and June Leadership courses are taught and examined by the Aquatics Director.

Course	Number of Participants 2024	Current Staff	Summer of 2023
Lifesaving Assistant Instructor NEW	2	2	Not offered
Lifesaving Society Swim Instructors	17	12	16
Lifesaving Society Instructors	9	3	7
Aquatic Supervisor Course	0	0	8

Examiners NEW	7	5	0
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Bronze Program

Course	Number of Participants 2024	Current Staff	Summer of 2023
Bronze Star	1	0	2
Basic First Aid	0	0	2
Bronze Medallion	7	2	11
Emergency First Aid	6	1	9
Bronze Cross	7	4	6
Standard First Aid	13	8	7
National Lifeguarding Course	8	5	13
National Lifeguarding Recert	13	5	11

Aquatic Team

This year's aquatic team consisted of 23 different individuals working a variety of different hours to operate both pools with full programming this summer of approximately 60 hours per week.

Profile of The Aquatic Team

The community pools are operated by hard-working part-time team members with a variety of experiences and range of ages.

- First Year Lifeguard/Instructors 7 (15 years of age)
- First Year Lifeguard/Instructors 4 (16 and 17 years of age)
- First Year Lifeguard/Instructors 1 (18 years of age)

Second Year Lifeguard/Instructor	4 (16 and 17 years of age)
Second Year Lifeguard/Instructor	1 (18 years of age or older)
Third Year Lifeguard/Instructor	4 (18 years of age or older)
Adults	2 Adults

This summer, we added two additional staff members this season compared to last year, though there were four fewer adult participants. Additionally, we have twelve new staff, with an increase of five new lifeguards/instructors and exceeding last summer's numbers.

We provided approximately 20 hours of in-service training to staff during June and July. These sessions were not only led by the Aquatic's Director and Recreation Director but were also conducted in partnership with Chief Moore and the fire department. The Deck Supervisors also assisted in suggesting and delivering parts of the in-service training. They also ensured that staff participated fully and met the established expectations by modelling.

Hours of Operations

Programming	Number of Staff	Rational
Adult Lane Swim (2 days a week at each pool)	2 staff	
Morning Lessons 9:00am to 12:00pm	4 to 7 staff, and deck supervisor	Keeping our ratio down to an average of 1:4 ratio throughout most of our classes.
1:00pm to 3:00pm Public Swim	7 staff	To meet both the public swim ratios, as well as the camp ratio
3:00pm to 4:30pm Public Swim	Depending on the night it would be either 4 or 6 for Cardinal or 4 or 3 for Johnstown depending on lessons	

4:30pm to 5:30pm Swim Team	3 staff needed	2 coaching and 1 guarding (Cardinal) 2 guards (Johnstown, as the team is coached by a SERA volunteer)
5:30pm to 7:00pm Lessons Two nights a week	6 staff in cardinal and 4 staff in Johnstown	We need to add a deck supervisor to evening lessons
6:00pm to 7:00pm Aquafit	3 Staff	1 Instructing and 2 guarding through rotation
7:00pm to 8:00pm Public Swim	2 Staff	2 guards going through rotation

This summer, the hours of operation at each pool were reduced by 6.5 hours. These adjustments did not impact the overall programming at either location, evening lessons and public swimming were still available. The changes were implemented as follows:

Friday night: Reduced by 2.5hours, from 8:00am to 5:30pm.

Saturday and Sunday: Reduced by 1 hour each day, with new hours of 12:00pm to 4:00pm instead of 12:00pm to 5:00pm.

Evening public swim: Reduced by 2 hours, with the elimination of the 7:00pm to 8:00pm swim time at each pool.

Success

- 12 new staff members were mentored and had the opportunity to build confidence and skills and were able to deliver a successful summer program for children and families.
- The township met its ratios of 25:1 for public swimming and the daycare policy for ratio set out by the Ontario Regulations. The ratio is 2:1 for children 5 years and under (this ratio cannot be combined with any other ratio) 4:1 when campers cannot pass the swim test and are ages 6 to 9, 8:1 when campers can pass the swim test. Campers over the age of 10 who cannot pass the swim team must be in a 4:1 ratio. Both pools used pool staff to help with these ratios.

Challenges

- Every Lifeguard/Instructor took 7 to 10 days off in some fashion whether it be consecutively or in request for evening and/or weekends off, which were at an all-time high (for either sports or family time)
- Many of our student staff members struggled with taking direction. Where this is their first job, some are still working to build conflict resolution skills. It takes some extra time and clear communication to supervise this team

Swimming Lessons

Basic swimming ability is a fundamental requirement in any meaningful attempt to eliminate drowning in Canada. There are 5 modules in the Lifesaving Society Swim for Life Program

- Parent & Tot for 3 to 5 years of age
- Preschool for children 3 to 5 years of age
- Swimmer for children 5 years or older
- Adult lessons for people over 16 years
- Fitness Swimmer for people of any age who want to improve their overall physical fitness.

This summer we ran four of these programs along with the Swim Patrol Program. Our lessons were run at both pools, with the options of day or evening lessons. Saturday lessons were only offered in Johnstown.

	Overall Day Lessons 2023	Overall Day Lessons 2024	Evening Lessons 2023	Evening Lessons 2024	Saturday Lessons 2023	Saturday Lessons 2024	Total for 2024	Total for 2023
Cardinal	246	275	102	110	Not offered	Not Offered	385	348
Johnstown	225	242	63	50	16	20	312	304

From the table you can see an overall increase in our numbers this summer, this is mostly due to the day camp and the success of its programs. Evening lessons continue to be a success in Cardinal with the numbers increasing slightly.

Considerations for 2025 season

- Daily Morning lessons at both pools from 9:00am to 12:00pm
- Evening lessons to be taught ONLY at the Cardinal pool from 5:00pm to 7:00pm
- Saturday Lessons to be taught in Johnstown 10:00am to 12:00pm

The Township is excited to try these new changes for the 2025 swimming season. They will enable more effective programming and maximize the utilization of pool space. By implementing these adjustments, we can enhance the overall experience of participants and ensure a more efficient use of staff. These improvements will create a more engaging and well-organized swimming environment allowing everyone to benefit from more dynamic and enjoyable swimming lessons.

Deck Supervisor

As recommended by the Lifesaving Society, the Township implemented a full-time deck supervisor for all lesson blocks. The deck supervisor was responsible for ensuring lessons started and stopped on time, assisting parents when needed, supporting instructors (behaviors, injuries of swimmers, crying of swimmers). Deck supervisors are an integral part of a successful lesson block. Ensuring the lessons are taught within their zones and within the aquatic director's expectations are also important deck supervisor roles.

Pool Attendance

	2024 Total # Of Swimmers	2023 Total # of Swimmers	2022 Total # of Swimmer	2021 Total # of Swimmer
Cardinal Pool Public Swim/Lane Swim	3200	2673	2481	1859
Cardinal Aquafit (2 nights)	270	247	84	

Johnstown Pool Public Swim/Lane Swim	3140	2921	2935	2578
Johnstown Aquafit (2 nights)	210	160	55	

Observations of the usage of the two Facilities

- It is important to note that the Cardinal facility had an overall increased use of the wading pool this summer by young families.
- Cardinal afternoon public swims were well attended from 2:30pm to 4:30pm
- Johnstown pool had an increase of public swimmers during the evening public swim times, as opposed to the smaller group during the day 2:00pm to 4:30pm
- It is also important to note that because the ball diamonds in Johnstown were busier this summer, attendance increased during our Saturday Public swim times, having to add an extra staff member.

Aquafit

The aquafit program was ran four times a week over a seven-week period. Each pool had 2 evenings from 6:00pm to 7:00pm. This time slot is well liked by participants. Despite being canceled, on average, once a week due to weather, the sessions saw an average attendance of 18 participants with numbers reaching up to 35 on some occasions. Participation was highly weather-dependent, with fluctuations in attendance largely influenced by the day's condition. The instructor continues to build positive relationships with participants.

Swim Team

Swim team ran out of both pools this summer. Johnstown Bear Paws saw a registration of about 35 swimmers where Cardinal Sea Sharks saw a registration of about 8 swimmers. Johnstown attended all swim meets this summer where Cardinal only attended their own and Johnstown's meet where 4 swimmers attended and competed in individual events only.

Johnstown Bear Paws practiced from 4:30pm to 5:25pm Monday to Friday with a volunteer coach. Cardinal Swimmers practiced Monday to Friday 12:00pm to 1:00pm. In Cardinal, July practices were well attended by 8 swimmers, however, in August participation was extremely limited.

It is my recommendation based on numbers the last two years in Cardinal, that staff reallocate this pool time in Cardinal to private lessons and a NEW program called “Make a splash for All-Sensory Friendly Swimming” This program would meet the needs of some of our most vulnerable children.

Johnstown would become the home of a recreational swim team for the summer.

Jr. Lifeguard Club

Jr. Lifeguard club ran out of the Johnstown pool only this summer. It ran 2 times a week on Monday and Wednesday. This program saw 11 kids register for it, and some of the older campers took advantage of it. This program was instructed by two of our senior staff, who reinforced basic lifeguarding skills and made it fun. It is the hope that these individuals will keep their interest and participate in the bronze courses and gain a passion for the sport.

Conclusion

The 2024 Summer Program was a success, marked by high participation, diverse offerings, and positive community feedback. The strong attendance figures across all activities reflect the program's effectiveness in meeting the needs and interests of our residents. Moving forward, we aim to build on this success, addressing any challenges and continuing to offer enriching and engaging programming for our community.

It is recommended that program offerings become the driving force behind what is potentially offered at each pool rather than trying to offer the same programming at each facility. With Staffing allocation, it is recommended that evening lessons be offered only at one pool being Cardinal, and Johnstown be left open for public /lane swim.

Two NEW opportunities for the 2025 summer

Making a Splash for All- Sensory Friendly Swimming

This program would be a valuable addition to our offerings, specifically designed for children with sensory sensitivities, autism, and other neurological differences, making water safety accessible and more enjoyable for all. We understand that some children find regular lessons very overwhelming due to the number of participants, splashing, general noise and activity on the deck. This program will help develop water safety skills and foster a love for swimming in a more supportive environment. Our staff will receive specialize training by the Aquatic Director and an experienced educator who works directly with children with sensory sensitivities.

Private Swimming lessons

This summer, private lesson requests were made by numerous families throughout the township. Feedback from parents indicates a strong preference for private lessons, as they can be customized to meet their child's specific learning needs. Several reasons have been identified for this increased demand: Some swimmers may be behind their peers and prefer not to be placed in lessons with younger children and other swimmers may have had negative experiences in group settings and require additional support to build confidence and skills.

To address this demand, we recommend making private lessons more widely available to interested families. This would target a new group of swimmers while expanding the options within our program. These lessons could be offered concurrently with current lessons using a one-to-one instructor-to-student ratio or scheduled during less busy times, depending on the needs of the participants. By implementing these changes, we can better accommodate diverse learning needs, enhance the overall experience, and attract more participants to our swimming program.

Finally, this summer was a summer for change, growth and learning for all. Our programs overall saw growth and as a staff we continued to educate and bring drowning prevention awareness to our community.

Additional Recommendations for the 2025 Aquatic Season

- Maintain working relationship with South Edwardsburgh Public School and continue providing a swim program for the month of June.
- Host a Jr. Lifeguard competition day.
- Continue our work with drowning prevention with a greater focus on Drowning Prevention week.

Wish list for supplies.

- Fins, of different sizes.
- Pool noodles



Recreation Coordinator



Facility Manager