



TOWNSHIP OF EDWARDSBURGH CARDINAL INFORMATION ITEM

Committee: Public Works, Environmental Services and Facilities

Date: September 20, 2021

Department: Parks & Recreation

Topic: Summer Program Year End Review

Background: The 2021 summer program season was challenging, and successful. Staffing, preparing programming, implementing Covid protocols and getting the pools ready for the summer posed unique challenges. A highly successful summer was achieved with over 170 different families using the Cardinal pool, and about 200 families using the Johnstown pool throughout the day either for lessons, leadership courses, day camp or public swimming.

POOL STAFFING

Staff struggled with hiring enough lifeguards and instructors. All but one lifeguard required training in some capacity. Staff organized several training programs over a 2.5 week span at the end of June. This was accomplished by hiring a qualified trainer to conduct the training within a short timeline.

The following 10 different courses were provided to staff in that short period of time:

- Bronze Cross Re-cert (4-6 hr.) 1 lifeguard
- NLS Re-cert (4-6 hr.) 4 lifeguards
- Swim to Survive Royal Life Instructor Course (25-hour course) 7 lifeguards
- NLS Course (40-hour course) 7 lifeguards
- Lifesaving Instructors Re-cert. 2 lifeguards
- Emergency First Aid Instructors Re-cert. 1 lifeguard
- Royal life Examiner 1 lifeguard
- Standard First Aid Courses (4 hours) 2 lifeguards
- Standard First Aid Re-cert. (2-day course) 2 lifeguards

This summer both pools were adequately staffed. Due to an incredibly young and brand-new staff, a significant amount of time was spent mentoring these first-time lifeguards. Senior staff worked through guard rotation, daily routines of the pool (pool testing, preparing pool for opening), the expectations of staff during public swim, administering swim test and how to properly evaluate the swimmer, and working

through additional challenges during swimming lessons. Some examples of the mentoring that took place during these challenging times were:

Swimming lessons

Senior staff spent time with each swim instructor during lessons (session 1) to go over a variety of teaching techniques, the must-see requirements of each level, and development of more rounded lesson plans. Some Instructors adapted quickly and were able to make the necessary changes with the covid requirements. Senior staff taught in both session 2 and 3 in Cardinal of the Swimmer 1-6 program. This allowed newer instructors to see how a lesson can progress and incorporate appropriate drills that meet the needs of the swimmer rather than the level. It also showed how games can be implemented into the learning process. Staff also worked through how to complete a proper report card for swimmers and parents. Although current instructors did show great improvement over the course of the summer in the caliber of teaching and lifeguarding ability, continued support of the lifeguards by adult mentors will ensure that the standards implemented this year are maintained and improved upon.

Public Swimming

A past lifeguard employee was hired, who worked in Cardinal 3 days a week in the evenings to assist with mentoring new lifeguards during public swim time.

Staff also spent time with lifeguards working through the public swimming swim test and ensuring all Covid protocols were followed.

Two additional full staff training days were conducted; one prior to the pools' openings which was 6 hours, and one after the first two weeks of lessons which was 2 hours. This provided the staff a chance to work together and develop consistent protocols for both pools (i.e., diving board rules). It also provided time for self-reflection and opportunity to access lifeguarding skills. Staff also met daily with lifeguards staff to go over any issues or questions which allowed for open dialogue about progress and if additional support was needed for that day or in the coming days.

Swim Programming

A total of 250 free swimming lessons were offered this summer between the two pools. Special thanks to both Greenfield Global Inc. and Ingredion Canada Corporation for the generous donations. These lessons were utilized by mostly township families, however there were a few non-township families from South Dundas, Augusta and Prescott that also were able to be accommodated by this generous donation.

Royal Life Swim Programs were offered at both pools, the Rookie/Ranger/Star at the Johnstown pool, and the Leadership courses at both pools. The implementation of these programs went well while maintaining Covid restrictions. In the swim program that was offered at both pools, the Pre-school level 1-5 program and Swimmer 1 and 2 programs, all candidates had to be accompanied by a competent swimmer from the same household, meaning they had to pass the swim test. This requirement did pose a challenge for some families and hindered our overall registration for these levels only. This occurred because some parents did not want to get into the pool with their child, or

they had two children and they were not able to watch one and be in the water with the other, or in some cases, the parent did not qualify themselves as a competent swimmer, therefore, through no fault of their own, their child could not participate in lessons. This did cause some last-minute swimmers to drop out of lessons as they could not meet the covid restrictions. We tried to accommodate in cases where staff was available to offer the one to one and the lifeguard could act as the competent swimmer. This happened on two occasions. Also, when space became available, we did our best to fill the spot or to accommodate other family requests. For example, to be with a certain child, as they were part of their bubble rather than be with other swimmers.

Swimmer 3 to Swimmer 6 classes were well attended at both pools. With the same number of swimmers per class. The Rookie/Ranger/Star program was also well attended at Johnstown, with some swimmers from Cardinal taking advantage of it as well. The Rookie/Ranger/Star program was not offered at the Cardinal Pool as there wasn't a qualified instructor available. Due to Covid restrictions all lessons had to have a smaller number of swimmers per lesson and meeting our overall pool capacity number 25. Therefore, lessons were capped at 4 swimmers per class to ensure all these restrictions were met. Even with these restrictions, the Township was able to be flexible and accommodating to most individuals this summer who wanted lessons. There may have been 5 or 6 spots not filled in the end.

Cardinal Pool Lessons: 146 in total

Johnstown Pool Lessons: 104 in total

Leadership courses ran out of both pools this summer, which were highly successful and well attended.

Bronze Star ran out of Johnstown with 9 swimmers.

Bronze Medallion ran a week at both pools with a total of 20 candidates.

Bronze Cross ran out of Johnstown one week 7 candidates.

Staff was are excited that during these times we were able offer some new programming this summer. We were able to offer a line of first aid courses, that went along with the leadership courses:

- Basic First Aid, Johnstown pool: 9 candidates
- Emergency First Aid: 20 candidates
- Standard First Aid: 7 candidates

Public Swimming

The Township continued to offer free public swimming this summer.

Location	2019 Total # of Swimmers	2021 Total # of Swimmers
Cardinal Pool	3393	1859
Cardinal Baby Pool		73
Johnstown Pool	4295	2578

Numbers were much lower this summer than past summers. This reduction could be a result of the pandemic restrictions and that a new swim test was required by the Health Unit, stating that a participant must swim one length of the pool, then tread water for 30 seconds comfortably to pass. If the swimmer can complete the test, they receive a green band from the lifeguard and can swim anywhere. If they are 12 and under and are not able to complete the swim test, they must have a competent swimmer accompany them in the shallow end only. If they are 13, they can stay but only in the shallow end. Some youth were turned away as their parents did not want to act as a competent swimmer.

During public swimming time this year, the Township offered lane swimming, which was very popular in Johnstown, and should be encouraged in future years.

Aqua fit was offered at each pool, one night a week and was very well attended in Cardinal ranging from 6 to 10 participants each night. In Johnstown, the numbers were not as positive, on average only 2 each night.

COVID Screeners/Cleaners

This summer, due to Covid restrictions the use of 6 Covid screeners/cleaners was required between the two pools. These employees were an integral part of the success of our summer program. Their main responsibilities were to ensure each swimmer was checked in prior to lessons, ensure that all the equipment was wiped down between lessons, wipe down all the high touch points, i.e., ladder and diving board, and ensure that bathrooms were kept clean and fogged every 2 hours. These individuals worked very hard and helped keep us safe all summer.

2022 Recommendations

1. Lessons return for evenings (Monday/Wednesday/Friday at one pool and Tuesday/Thursday/Friday at the other) and Saturday at both pools
2. Provide Adult lessons in the evening, there was a noticeable need this past summer

3. Offer Public swim from 2 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
4. Johnstown swim team requested to move to weekdays 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. each night
5. Aquafit return to two nights a week at each pool
6. Day camp lessons be separate when possible (1-2 each day)
7. Ensure ALL lifeguards have their Royal Life Instructors (will allow Instructors to teach Rookie/Ranger/Star, and Bronze Star, Bronze Medallion, Bronze Cross). This may require bringing someone in to teach this course prior to opening.
8. Sending out hiring information at the beginning of the year (i.e., January) rather than waiting until spring to ensure the proper qualifications are obtained.
9. Recommend running National Life Saving (NLS) Re-cert at the end of the summer to ensure staff is certified for the following summer.

Johnstown Day Camp

The Johnstown Day Camp was offered throughout the summer, Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 pm. with early drop-off starting at 8:00 a.m. and late pick-up at 5:00 p.m. The camp was open for children aged 5-12 at the Johnstown Community Centre. There are three summer students hired each year for the position of camp counsellors. Each session had 20 campers in attendance.

The number of participants allowed are lower due to Covid restrictions. The Township had a very successful registration this summer with over 160 applications looking for one or more camps. This oversubscription did create some challenges but the Township was able to offer 60 different campers from our township a wonderful two-week experience.

Covid Protocol for Camp

In order to maintain proper COVID-19 requirements in the day camp we needed to introduce many new protocols to keep both campers and staff safe. Here are some of the protocols that were utilized:

- Drop off and pick up of campers took place outside of the camp room at a picnic table to limit the space coming into contact with others.
- Upon entering the camp room, campers were required to sanitize their hands.
- Mask use was maintained within the camp room in order to protect staff and other children.
- Each table was divided in half with 1 child at each end, keeping the campers at a proper distance. The children then engaged in “free play.” with the other kids at camp using their own imagination and the toys provided.
- The toys were cleaned after every play period totaling 3 times a day.

- Proper hand washing was required by every child before eating,
- Each table was cleaned in the morning, before snack, before crafts, before lunch, and at the end of the day.
- Children were required to wear a mask when 2-metres distance could not be maintained which posed a challenge not only to the younger campers but the older campers as well.

Day Camp

This year three (3), two-week theme sessions were offered (Superhero, Olympics, Celebrating Summer) which were enjoyed by all participants. All crafts and games for these two weeks ran around the theme and ended with a PJ's, popcorn and movie celebration. Some of the favourite activities the campers liked were the following:

- Superhero Bingo
- Building rescue boats
- Melting Beads
- Outdoor games
- Water games (sprinklers, slip and slide)

Day Camp Swimming Lessons

This year camp swimming lessons provided some challenges. Camp lessons are usually offered simultaneously with other non-camp lessons in the mornings.

This year these lessons were offered in their own time slot from 12:15 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. to allow staff to ensure a competent swimmer was available. As stated above, Preschool 1-5 and Swimmer 1 and 2 must have a competent swimmer with them. To overcome this hurdle, Covid screeners or camp counsellors who had their bronze medallion/bronze cross were utilized to act as competent swimmers. For the third session of camp where the kids were younger and weaker swimmers, an additional step was required to use a lifeguard from Cardinal and a volunteer who had their Bronze Cross to assist in this round of lessons to follow the Covid protocols. The teamwork and the perseverance of all staff led to a very successful lessons and kids having a lot of fun. Another challenge for counsellors was that campers were required to wear a mask to the pool, on the pool deck, and from the pool. To aid in this process the use of shower curtain clips with campers' names taped on them to help identify masks and ensure everyone was wearing them properly. These clips were also used during free swim.

Day Camp Public Swimming

The campers were able to swim each day, divided into groups of 25 and allowed a swimming time of about 30 minutes for each group. Additional staffing of an additional lifeguard to maintain the Covid guidelines and the competent swimmer rules were also needed during the public swim time to assist the camp counsellors who were also in the

water. In the last session a Covid screener was used to act as an assistant lifeguard who had completed their Bronze Cross, a volunteer who had also completed their Bronze Cross, and the camp counsellors all to act as competent swimmers. Staff will continue to be creative and think outside the box when it comes to the competent swimmer rules and day camp.

Recommendations

1. With the high response in registrations this year, offering a second camp in Cardinal for the month of July is recommended
2. Eliminate the before and after care and incorporate into camp fees.
3. Maintain the current staff-to-camper ratio around 3:20 or 3:25.
4. Offer Public swim time on their own for 1 hour.



Facilities Manager