



# STAFF REPORT

**To:** Council

**From:** Adam Dedrick, Director of Recreation & Parks

**Approved by:** Trudy Payne, Chief Administrative Officer

**Date:** July 28, 2021

**Subject:** William G. Sperry Recreational Field Restoration

### Origin

An email was received from the president of the West Green Harbour Recreation Association seeking assistance for upgrades to the West Green Harbour ball field, also known as the William G. Sperry Recreational Field.

### Recommendation

THAT, Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne approve the Director of Recreation and Parks to explore a potential partnership with the West Green Harbour Recreation Association to restore the William G. Sperry Recreational Field for recreational purposes.

### Background

The land which the field is located on was donated to the Municipality from Martin Wambach in 1985. The donation included a Trust Agreement that outlined the use of the property, which was for general recreation purposes in the community of West Green Harbour. The property was developed into a ball field, which was utilized by the community and local ball leagues for many years. The general maintenance of the field has been maintained by the West Green Harbour Recreation Association (formerly the West Green Harbour Community Association) and community members.

Over the years the use of the field for baseball purposes decreased but it was still used by community members for recreational purposes such as families taking their kids to play or pet owners taking their dogs. The amenities started to deteriorate which included the dugout roofs rotting, bleachers losing stability, the infield becoming unlevel losing its grade, holes forming in the outfield, especially in the left side of the field and vegetation growing thick near the fence. The backstop and main fence have remained in great shape with no issues.

In July of 2020, the Municipality removed the roofs from the dugouts leaving the cinder blocks and renovated the two sets of bleachers into benches. There is a single use garbage bin on site as well.

### Discussion

On June 22, 2021, a meeting was held with two members of the West Green Harbour Recreation Association at the field. The site was assessed, and they provided a list of upgrades they would like to see take place to restore the field back into an operational ball field. This included new bleachers, new dugouts, the outfield holes filled, the infield graded, bases installed, a new recycling sorting bin and a field sign.

According to the two members, there are now more young families locally and they tend to be located in between Lockeport and Shelburne when it comes to their recreational opportunities. The field could be a place for the entire community to utilize, not just for baseball but for a variety of events and gatherings.

The members also indicated that their membership is small, which limits their capacity for fundraising and leading/coordinating projects. However, they were interested in exploring how the Municipality could assist or partner with them to restore the field.

Being that the field is owned by the Municipality and there is a trust agreement in place to maintain the field for recreational purposes, as well as the general history of the maintenance of the field by the community, it is recommended to explore a potential partnership with WGHRA to restore the field for recreational purposes.

It is also recommended to do a public consultation with the community to get further input on what they would like to see happen with the field. This is important as there may be interest in upgrades or uses for the field other than just baseball. It was already in the Recreation Department's plan to hold a public consultation in West Green Harbour for this reason, so it can proceed as planned.

#### **Budget Implications**

None at this time.

#### **Alternatives**

- a) Not pursue a partnership with WGHRA and not do a public consultation but rather the Municipality do any upgrades to the field on its own. This is not recommended as a partnership would be beneficial in utilizing resources, building relationships, creating community connections and doing any potential upgrades based on community input.

#### **Attachments**

-Pictures of West Green Harbour Ball field maintenance 2020

# West Green Harbour Ball Field

Before removal of dugout roofs and renovated bleachers



After removal of dugout roofs and renovated bleachers – July 2020

