

NDCC contention coming to a conclusion

In North Dufferin, contention over user fees for the North Dufferin Community Centre appears to have played out to a conclusion between the Township of Mulmur and Melancthon. Mulmur came to Melancthon Council in early spring asking for \$25,000 to offset the deficit at the Honeywood arena.

Although, the Mayor of Mulmur had "no comment," Darren White Mayor of Melancthon was very open about developments with the Free Press, "Mulmur visited us and asked for more money and suggested a flat fee, a user fee, and a blend of the two. I suggested to Council that we accept a non resident user fee in the amount of \$350 per person for Melancthon residents for figure skating and minor hockey. That amounts to an increase from \$7,500 to \$16,100."

White stated that Melancthon had been fully meeting their obligation under the agreement that they had with Mulmur. Melancthon Council asked Mulmur to provide user information such as numbers of Melancthon users and information about their future plans for the arena, so they would be able to discuss their "fair share."

Heather Boston, Mulmur's Treasurer reported that over 40 per cent of the users tracked through minor hockey and figure skating in the last three years came from Melancthon with the 2014/15 Season reflecting: Figure Skating: 5 from Mulmur, 13 from Melancthon; and Minor Hockey: 32 Mulmur, 36 Melancthon, 39 Other. Tracking the usage outside of those two groups would be difficult to monitor, according to Boston, and therefore Council's plan was to "increase the prime rate to compensate for the non-resident usage."

Mayor White says he suggested "working out an ongoing deal that would see us (Melancthon) contribute something towards the capital funding." He said, this "was not something that Mulmur had even asked for, so in effect we are offering more than what they had asked for in an attempt to pay our fair share." Moving forward, White says Melancthon "will require accurate information on who our users are of the facility. We have also asked for a voice at the table with regards to the arena, but that is something that Mulmur will have to decide based on their new recreation committee."

Mayor White noted, "Residents that are affected will not be out of pocket as the Township will cover the non resident fee based on the number of Melancthon residents who register for hockey and/or figure skating." This in total amounts to more than what Mulmur has asked for, and is now a closed matter from Melancthon Council's perspective."

By Marni Walsh