

## RZone Policy enforces zero tolerance

Shelburne Town Council passed a motion to implement the RZone Policy after a delegation presented by Mike Fazackerley, the president of Shelburne Minor Hockey on April 7th. The R in the policy promotes an environment of respect and responsibility by discouraging any form of inappropriate behaviour at Town facilities or programs where Town staff is present.

The policy was requested by the Board of Management for the Centre Dufferin Recreation Complex (CDRC) in support of their staff and facility. Kim Fraser, Facility Administration Manager for the CDRC, says that since the renovations to the complex in 2010, she and Facility Maintenance Manager Rick Thompson have been concerned about respect for the beautiful facility in terms of both vandalism and a lack of parental supervision resulting in inappropriate behaviour.

Fraser credits Brian Besley, Chair of the CDRC Board of Management, with bringing the idea of the RZone to Shelburne. The municipal policy was first adopted by the Town of Oakville and is currently in place in towns across the province, including Grand Valley and Orangeville. It gives us policies to deal with issues when they come up, she said. We want to build respect for all the public spaces and facilities in the Town. This policy gives our staff, and the public, recourse when they witness an inappropriate incident or act of vandalism.

The policy enforces zero tolerance for any form of vandalism; aggressive, inciting or intimidating behaviour; violence or indecency, including lewd, illegal or offensive materials on Town properties or in Town facilities. In cases where an incident or inappropriate written or verbal communication has been witnessed by staff it will be reported to senior personnel immediately or within 24 hours of the incident if senior staff is not present. The individual in question will be advised to stop the inappropriate activity or asked to leave; if the individual does not co-operate, the police will be called. Under the policy, staff and the public are never encouraged to put themselves or others at risk. Town staff will receive training to support RZone procedures.

In all cases, RZone Incident Reports will be prepared within 48 hours and the identified individual will be notified of the actions to be taken by the Town within 14 days of the incident. Depending on the severity of the incident, consequences may include a Letter of Warning advising the individual of acceptable and appropriate behaviour, or a Letter of Trespass temporarily or permanently banning the individual from the facility, plus payment for repairs and administration costs if required.

If an individual wishes to appeal any action taken by the Town they may do so in writing to the Town's Chief Administrative Officer, but a \$200 fee will be required which will be non-refundable unless their appeal is upheld. It was decided at Monday's Council meeting that all appeals would be heard by a committee of three councillors. Although no date was given for implementation, the motion to adopt the policy was passed unanimously, supported by Brian Besley's remark that the RZone Policy would be a very positive step for the Town.

**By Marni Walsh**