



## STAFF REPORT

**Title:** Policy No. 151-RC-13 - Arena and Athletic Field Use and Allocation Policy Amendments

**Meeting Date:** March 25, 2025

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### **Executive Summary:**

Administration had prepared a number of amendments to Policy 151 -RC-13, known as the Arena and Athletic Field Use and Allocation Policy, which were considered by Council's Corporate Priorities Committee at its March 11, 2025, meeting. The committee, in turn, recommended that Council consider the policy as presented.

The amendments are intended to bring the policy in line with current operational practices, mitigate several persistent issues that staff have with bookings, and maximize bookings that bring economic benefit to the community.

Administration's intent is to align the policy with current operational practices but also with the purpose of the Energy Centre and the amenities which Council has provided for the community over the years. Namely, to provide sports organizations with the facilities and opportunities needed for a first-class recreational experience, and capable of hosting events and tournaments that bring exciting entertainment and sporting options to the city while generating significant economic activity.

The changes also reflect a request from council to change the word "minor" to "youth" throughout the policy.

The material changes proposed for the policy are discussed in the background to this report.

### **Background:**

During the 2024/2025 hockey season, the City of Cold Lake made a decision regarding what it felt was in the best interest of the community relating to scheduling for its arenas. These decisions benefited the Lakeland Lightning Hockey Academy and left some hard feelings with Cold Lake Minor Hockey.

The decision was to allow PHL (Lakeland Lightning) to schedule four (4) showcase tournaments in Cold Lake, including two (2) dual ice-sheet tournaments and two (2) single ice-sheet tournaments. With that, it was decided to move any ice time scheduling requests from Cold Lake Minor Hockey to the Cold Lake North Arena. To the City of Cold Lake's knowledge, no Cold Lake Minor Hockey games were cancelled.



This decision was made with the consideration that these tournaments have a significant impact on the local economy for businesses such as restaurants, retail, hotels, fuel stations, and entertainment.

It was viewed by Cold Lake Minor Hockey that the City is taking away ice time from the organization, making it difficult to make schedules in advance. Under the NEAHL, firm schedules are not made until well into the season, after divisions are created. Furthermore, it continues to be challenging for the organization to provide updated schedules more than a week in advance.

For this season, the City strongly requested for Cold Lake Minor Hockey's set schedule once tiering was done. City staff received this on December 12, 2024. Cold Lake Minor Hockey, however, made it clear that it did not feel this should be required of the organization, as it is accustomed to receive block bookings for the entire facility, releasing unneeded ice times closer to the dates. With that, the City receives an updated schedule every Wednesday of each week for the upcoming week-end. This schedule is then provided to operations so that appropriate staffing levels can then be scheduled.

Cold Lake Minor Hockey further advised the City that the PHL should be limited to booking the Cold Lake North Arena. The Cold Lake North Arena is where the PHL currently schedules practices. It is clear that Cold Lake Minor Hockey is under the impression that it should have top priority for the Cold Lake Energy Centre in the creation of its schedules.

It was and is the City's view, that the Energy Centre was designed and built with the intent to host major events. Further, the PHL showcases were considered by administration to be "Special events," defined in the Policy as a public or private event that is not directly associated with regular season schedules and bookings (i.e. Charity Hockey Games).

With a tremendous amount of positive feedback from teams across the province regarding the facilities that Cold Lake offers, the PHL would like to host a significant number of tournaments and showcases in Cold Lake. For the 2025/2026 season, it hopes to host one showcase each month. In other words, expand from six days of booking for showcases to 12 days of booking for showcases per season. The PHL has advised that it would commit to a schedule early and be accountable for the bookings so that others can facilitate scheduling around these showcases.

It is appreciated that this will likely be very frustrating for Cold Lake Minor Hockey and, therefore, administration is seeking clarity in regard to the interpretation of the priority for bookings. Administration included the following amendments for discussion



purposes at the March 18, 2025 Corporate Priorities meeting, where it was recommended that Council consider the amendments as presented.

A definition for a “Large Event” has been added to assist with the facility’s cancellation policy. (See Section 5.9.2.)

- 4.10 “Large Event” means an event which books an amenity or facility under this policy for a half-day rate or more.

The definition of “Non-ice Use” in Section 4.14 has been amended to reflect operational realities.

- 4.14 “Non-ice Use” means the Indoor Arena playing surface ~~during the off season of May 1<sup>st</sup>—August 15<sup>th</sup> of each year~~ where the ice is either removed or covered.

The definition of “Sport Tournament” has been added as Section 4.23

- 4.23 “Sport Tournament” means a coordinated series of games which brings Non-Local Users to the City of Cold Lake to compete in multiple games, hosted over more than one day.

The definition of “Summer Ice” in Section 4.14 has been amended to better reflect operational realities.

- 4.24 “Summer Ice” means ice available to rent outside of regular season from June 1 to August 31.

In various places in Section 5.6 and its subsections, the word “Sport” has been inserted in front of the word “Tournament” to align with the proposed definition of “Sport Tournament.”

Section 5.9.2 has been amended to refer to regular practices, rentals and games, which fall outside of the definition of a “Large Event” and has reduced the requirement notice for cancellation to 7 days from 30 days in advance of the booking. This better reflects operational realities and customer expectations.

Section 5.9.3 maintains the 30 day notice period for cancellation of “Large Events.”

- 5.9.2 All user groups must provide the City written notice of cancellations ~~30~~ 7 days prior to the cancellation of regular practices, rentals and games. Cancellations made within ~~30~~ 7 days will be charged regular rental rates.



**5.9.3 All user groups must provide the City written notice of cancellations 30 days prior to the cancellation of Large Events and Sport Tournaments. Cancellations made within 30 days will be charged regular rental rates.**

Sections 5.10.1.5 and 5.10.1.6 have been removed to better reflect operational realities. Damage Deposits are not taken, but when damage occurs and can be tied to a user group that group is charged for the cost of the damages. A signed contract has been removed from the list of required documents required for a confirmed booking.

This is to reflect operational realities: Namely, that the current system issues a contract along with an invoice when a booking has been made. Regular user groups receive monthly statements, and have an account which can be monitored, while users who book individual events sign the contract and leave with their invoice after making a booking.

Changes to the Appendix reflect changes in facility names (Cenovus Energy Arena), new, operational realities in terms of some date changes and changes to Prime Time and Non-Prime-Time allocations due to shifts in demand for ice time.

## **8. Prime and Non-Prime Allocation**

Prime Time	Monday – Friday	4:00 PM – 12:00 AM
	Saturday & Sunday	<del>8</del> 7:00 AM – 12:00 AM
Non-Prime Time	Monday – Friday	<del>6</del> 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM
	<del>Saturday &amp; Sunday</del>	<del>6:00 AM – 8:00 AM</del>
Summer Ice	1 <sup>st</sup> of June – 31 <sup>st</sup> of August	<del>6</del> 7:00 AM – 12:00 AM

Changes to Schedule “A” prioritizes the newly defined “Sport Tournaments” along with “Special Events” in the second priority.

## **Schedule “A” – Facility Priority Rankings**

### **~~Event~~Energy Centre & North Arena**

First Priority: City of Cold Lake Programs  
Second Priority: Special Events **and Sport Tournaments**  
Third Priority: Junior Teams Games  
Fourth Priority: Local Minor Sport Organizations  
Fifth Priority: Junior Teams Practice  
Sixth Priority: Local Adult Sport Organizations



Seventh Priority: Local Other  
Eighth Priority: Non-Local Minor Sport Organizations  
Ninth Priority: Non-Local Adult Sport Organizations  
Tenth Priority: Non-Local Other

### **Athletic Fields**

First Priority: City of Cold Lake Programs  
Second Priority: School Users  
Third Priority: Local Minor Sport Organizations  
Fourth Priority: Local Adult Sport Organizations  
Fifth Priority: Local Other  
Sixth Priority: Non-Local Minor Sports Organizations  
Seventh Priority: Non-Local Non Profit Organizations  
Eighth Priority: Non-Local Other

### **Alternatives:**

- Council may pass or defeat a motion accepting the proposed changes to Policy 151-RC-13 Arena and Athletic Field Use and Allocation Policy, as presented.
- Council may pass or defeat a motion accepting the proposed changes to Policy 151-RC-13 Arena and Athletic Field Use and Allocation Policy, as amended.
- Council may decline to make changes to Policy 151-RC-13 Arena and Athletic Field Use and Allocation Policy, at this time.

### **Recommended Action:**

That Council pass a motion accepting amendments to Policy 151-RC-13, being the Arena and Athletic Field Use and Allocation Policy, as presented.

### **Budget Implications (Yes or No):**

No

### **Submitted by:**

Kevin Nagoya, Chief Administrative Officer