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**REPORT TO SALT SPRING ISLAND LOCAL COMMUNITY COMMISSION
MEETING OF THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2026**

SUBJECT Salt Spring Island Hydro-Field Ongoing Operating and Management Costs

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide an update on the Hydro-Field upgrade project and required annual operating funding.

BACKGROUND

One of the priorities of the 2019 Salt Spring Island Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan is to “partner with School District 64 (SD64) to upgrade and utilize existing playing fields and to develop additional sports fields”. In alignment with this priority, Capital Regional District (CRD) staff have been working with SD64 to leverage a \$300,000 donation to upgrade the SD64 owned Hydro-Field to create a softball field to support girls fastpitch and other baseball groups.

The Hydro-Field is located at 160 Rainbow Road, adjacent to the SD64 works yard, the Salt Spring Island Multi Space (SIMS) and Salt Spring Elementary. The field is currently used by the school board for sports and physical education activities as well as by the community for youth/adult soccer and occasional special events. The current field does not have any formal baseball/softball infrastructure or any purpose-built drainage or facilities for spectators, athletes or coaches.

In December 2025, staff went to tender to select a contractor to construct a regulation sized softball field including fencing, spectator seating, players dug outs and purpose-built drainage. A contractor has been selected, and construction started at the beginning of April 2026 with a goal to be completed by the end of June 2026. A budget summary of the project, including funding sources, can be found in Appendix A.

In preparation for the re-opening of the Hydro-Field, staff have been in discussion with SD64 regarding the Operations and Maintenance Agreement for this new field. A summary of key terms is outlined below:

- SD64 will have access to the field during school instructional hours.
- The CRD will take over field bookings for the Hydro-Field softball field and soccer field and will manage bookings outside of school instructional hours.
- The CRD will receive all revenues from the bookings of the Hydro-Field.
- The CRD and SD64 will share the responsibility for mowing the field with SD64 taking this on from September to December and the CRD from January to August.
- The CRD is responsible for asset management and capital improvements related to the new baseball infrastructure as well as operational costs for lighting.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

Current operational budget plans do not include the additional costs anticipated for the ongoing maintenance of the new Hydro-Field. These expenses include shared mowing costs, line painting for soccer, ball field maintenance and garbage/sanitary costs. These costs are estimated at \$19,500 annually. It is estimated the additional revenue from field bookings will be \$2,500 per year, which will partially offset this expense. A summary of the estimated annual budget for operation of the Hydro-Field is in the chart below:

Revenue/ Expense	Budget
Field Rentals	\$(2,500)
Contract for Services (porta-potty)	\$1,800
Repair & Maintenance Engineered Structures	\$4,080
Field Maintenance	\$8,308
Signs	\$300
Electricity	\$700
Garbage Disposal	\$1,632
Supplies Janitorial	\$400
Supplies Operations Field	\$2,280
Total	\$17,000

Service Delivery Implications

Girls fastpitch is a sport that is growing in popularity and participation. The construction of the new Hydro-Field will provide the first regulation sized softball field on the island, increasing fastpitch capacity by adding to the two older fields in Fulford and will support fastpitch development with the availability of a regulation sized field. The two fields in Fulford are also used by the adult slow pitch community and this additional field will help ensure the growth and development for the girls fastpitch program and will reduce booking conflicts for these two user groups.

CONCLUSION

As a result of a partnership with School District 64, construction is underway on the Hydro-Field softball park project that will result in a regulation sized fastpitch field including fencing, bleachers and players dug outs. Once re-opened the Capital Regional District will take over the booking and maintenance of this new field as outlined in the Hydro-Field Maintenance and Operation Agreement with School District 64. There will be additional costs associated with the ongoing maintenance of this new field that will need to be included in the 2027-2031 Salt Spring Island Parks and Recreation Five-Year Financial Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommendation, this report is for information only.

Submitted by:	Kent Bittorf, BPhEd, Manager, SSI Parks and Recreation
Concurrence:	Dan Ovington, BBA, Senior Manager, Salt Spring Island Administration
Concurrence:	Stephen Henderson, MBA, P.G.Dip.Eng, BSc, General Manager, Electoral Area Services

ATTACHMENT

Appendix A: Hydrofield Upgrade Project Construction Budget