

District of Barriere  
**REPORT TO COUNCIL**

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| <b>Date:</b> October 18, 2021            | <b>File:</b> 530.20/Rpts  |
| <b>To:</b> Council                       | <b>From:</b> C. Matthews, Parks Manager &<br>T. Buchanan, CO & Bylaw Enf. |
| <b>Re: Multi-Use Court – Evening Use</b> |   |

**Background:** District of Barriere Parks Regulation Bylaw No. 0042 was adopted in the summer of 2009 and has been amended twice to date. Regarding park hours, Section 3.9 of the bylaw states:

3.9. *All parks in the District of Barriere shall be closed to the public and to all vehicles each day of the year from sundown until sunrise of the following day and all persons found therein shall be treated as being in the park unlawfully, except:*

3.9.1. *Where there is a special event, concert, or fireworks exhibition held with the valid written permission of Council or its appointed representative.*

3.9.2. *Where a person or group has contracted with the District to rent or to use the park(s).*

Due to a rash of recent vandalism in the community, including at the recently refreshed multi-use court, arrangements were made with a regular user group (of the court) to lock the gate in an effort to enforce the ‘sundown’ to ‘sunrise’ clause in the Bylaw.

This change has resulted in complaints by a few members of the public.

**Discussion:** The multi-use court has always been well used but even more so recently after the surface refresh to accommodate pickleball and other court sports.

Recent vandalism on the court has included broken glass, fires, and spray paint. The refresh was funded in part, by user groups and they naturally want to protect their investment as much as the District does. Therefore, as the District does not have any after-hours staff, it was arranged with the Pickleball user group to lock up the court at sundown and staff would unlock the court in the morning. Some of the complaints received about the locked gate, indicate that the court has been locked earlier than sundown. After a recent public post on Facebook where the upset poster stated that they were going to break the lock and a string of replies supporting such action, the lock was indeed broken and staff have not attempted to replace the lock.

The multi-use court is currently equipped with Halogen lighting which have not been used in the past due to electricity costs and due to instances of vandalism being rare. During recent conversations with Council, lighting of this facility (along with other park assets) was voiced as a priority and possibly funded by COVID relief funds. A previous estimate for retro-fitting the existing Halogen lights to a more cost-effective LED system, came in at approximately \$8,000.

As the District anxiously awaits the completion of the skate park, many of the community's youth have been using the multi-use court in the evenings. Other residents sometimes use the court in the early evenings as well and have also voiced the desire to be able to use the court after dark.

With the anticipated addition of lighting throughout District parks and facilities, the expectation that the lights are to facilitate and even promote evening use of the park, (rather than solely for security reasons) should be considered.

Should Council wish to pursue the consideration of an amendment to the District's Park Bylaw in order to permit evening use of the community's parks and the facilities located within them, some of the logistics to consider are as follows:

- Should the park/facilities have a closing time at all? (other municipalities that close their parks in the evening range from sundown to 11pm i.e. City of Kamloops parks close at 11pm)
- If an evening closing time is upheld (whether it be sundown or at a later time), are all parks and all facilities included (cemetery, bandshell, Oriole Park etc.)?
- Some facilities are closer to residential homes than others (i.e. the multi-use court is much closer than the future skate park or basketball court in Fadear). Could the promotion of after-dark, evening use generate a potential for noise complaints and if in such a case, how would that be handled?
- For facilities that have the potential to be locked such as the multi-use court, cemetery and washrooms, what staffing additions/changes will be required to accommodate evening lockups?
- Both the existing halogen lights already installed at the multi-use court as well as the potential new LED system, have the ability to be put on a timer.
- If the current closing time is removed from the bylaw, budget accommodations could be considered to cover additional annual lighting costs and funds set aside to remediate any vandalism damages that may occur from time to time.

**Recommendation: That Council consider potential amendments to park closure hours outlined in Section 3.9 of the Parks Bylaw.**

Prepared by: C. Matthews, Parks & Roads Manager &  
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Reviewed by: B. Payette, CAO