

## REPORT

### Council

Meeting Date: June 20, 2022

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**FROM:** Recreation and Culture

**DATE:** June 7, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Ontario Social Gaming Licence; Senior Services

**LOCATION:** N/A

**WARD:** Town-wide

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

That the report "Ontario Social Gaming Licence; Seniors Services" be received for information.

#### KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- In 2017, small stakes social gaming activities were discontinued in town Seniors Services programming and facility room rentals.
- In December 2021, through the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO), a new Social Gaming Licence was introduced.
- This Social Gaming Licence is intended to allow community groups to conduct small stakes social gaming activities such as euchre, bridge and mah-jong in public places including seniors' centres.
- Each centre's Seniors Services Advisory Committee may apply for a Social Gaming Licence to allow for small stakes social gaming activities to resume in select Seniors Services programs.
- Facility rental customers interested in hosting social gaming within the Licence parameters, will be permitted with a valid Social Gaming Licence.

## **BACKGROUND:**

In 2017, based on a complaint received by the ethics and efficiency hotline, small stakes social gaming activities were discontinued in town Seniors Services facilities and programs. At the time, there was a number of complaints received by the Mayor and Council as well as a large number of complaints received in the centres. One rental group stopped attending town facilities as a result and a number of Seniors Services members stopped participating in any programs.

On December 2, 2021, the Ontario Government launched a new Social Gaming Licence for casual social gaming activities. Social Gaming Licences are issued through the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) at no cost.

This Social Gaming Licence is intended to provide community groups, seniors' groups, social and service clubs with greater flexibility when conducting small stakes social gaming events taking place in public places such as Legions, Services Clubs and seniors' centres.

The types of activities permitted under the new social gaming licence will include games such as bingo, bridge, cribbage, euchre and mahjong. Casino games such as blackjack, poker, roulette and craps are not permitted. Under the new social gaming licence, bet limits on social games may not exceed \$2 per person and total cash prizes awarded for all gaming activities must not exceed \$500 per calendar day. These limits are prescribed by the *Criminal Code of Canada*. All fees collected by the organizing group must be paid out as prizes to the players, minus a nominal fee for the organizer to cover expenses. This licence may not be used as a source of revenue or fundraising for the group.

Each licence is valid for a period of 12 months and can be used to facilitate multiple events over the course of a year. Organizations are limited to one licence for social gaming at any time. Organizations may not hold multiple licences on any calendar day or at any location.

## **COMMENT/OPTIONS:**

Recreation and Culture Department staff have shared information about the new Social Gaming Licence with the town's Seniors Services Advisory Committees, representing the five Seniors Services sites. In discussions with the Operations Committees, there is interest to return social gaming to select Seniors Services programs.

In order to reintroduce social gaming in select town Seniors Services activities, each interested Seniors' Advisory Committee are eligible to obtain a Social Gaming

Licence to allow for wagering and monetary prizes. Staff will support the Advisory Committee at each location to apply for a site specific licence and support the Committee in overseeing the activities within the guidelines. Groups may begin hosting social games in town facilities as soon as they have secured a licence.

To allow for concurrent Social Gaming activities to occur at various locations, each centre's Advisory Board must hold a valid Social Gaming Licence.

Further limits on values permitted within the licence will be at the discretion of each participating Seniors Services Advisory Committee/location

Should an eligible group who is renting or leasing space in a town facility be conducting social gaming activities, they will be required to provide confirmation of a valid licence to town staff.

Recreation and Culture staff have consulted with the town Clerk and Legal departments to ensure the town programs and services are in compliance with the new Licence guidelines.

A number of neighbouring municipalities are planning to reintroduce small stakes social gaming in their seniors programming. The City of Toronto has already allowed groups to resume social gaming under this new legislation and most Peel and Halton Region municipalities are working on implementation.

Monitoring compliance with the Licence regulations is under the purview of the AGCO.

Additional information is available through Appendix A, AGCO Social Gaming Licence Terms and Conditions and Appendix B, AGCO Social Gaming Licence Guide.

#### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

**(A) PUBLIC**  
N/A

**(B) FINANCIAL**  
N/A

**(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS**  
N/A

**(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS**

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal(s) to:  
Engaged Community

**(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION**

N/A

**APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – AGCO Social Gaming Licence Terms and Conditions

Appendix B – AGCO Social Gaming Licence Guide

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