

Synopsis

Dog Park

On December 16, 2016 Council gave direction to staff to conduct a feasibility study on an off-leash dog park. On January 16, 2017, Council gave direction to get public input on the matter, which led to three public workshops held in August and September 2017. At the September 28, 2017 Committee of the Whole meeting, Council directed staff to “investigate the scope of work required to create, as a pilot project, an off-leash dog park within one of the ballfields of Robb’s Park”.

Staff feel that the pilot project as outlined in the attached report (which was presented to Council at the November 20, 2017 Committee of the Whole meeting) is a prudent way to gauge public demand for an off-leash dog park. This location provides relatively low cost, reversible opportunity to better determine if, how, and where such a facility might be provided on a more permanent basis. The Pilot project estimate is \$3,900, plus ongoing maintenance. Creation of an off-leash space in another location would cost roughly \$20,000 for the fencing alone.

MOTION :

That Council approve the creation of an off-leash dog park within the eastern-most baseball diamond (aka. Cecil Small Field) at the Robb Facility as a pilot project with a review of the facility’s use, location, features, and user feedback to take place in the fall of 2018



AMHERST TOWN COUNCIL

RFD# 2018045

Date: November 27, 2017

TO: Mayor Kogon and Members of Amherst Town Council

SUBMITTED BY: Bill Schurman, Director of Recreation

DATE: November 27, 2017

SUBJECT: Off-leash dog park – pilot project scope

ORIGIN:

2017/18 Capital Budget.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY:

Municipal Government Act (MGA) section 65 (ah) providing the power to spend money required by the municipality for, "...public grounds, squares, halls, museums, parks, and community centres".

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council approve the creation of an off-leash dog park within the eastern-most baseball diamond (aka. Cecil Small Field) at the Robb Facility as a pilot project with a review of the facility's use, location, features, and user feedback to take place in the fall of 2018

BACKGROUND:

On December 16, 2016 Council gave direction to staff to conduct a feasibility study on an off-leash dog park. On January 16, 2017, Council gave direction to get public input on the matter, which led to three public workshops held in August and September 2017. At the September 28, 2017 COW meeting, Council directed staff to "investigate the scope of work required to create, as a pilot project, an off-leash dog park within one of the ballfields of Robb's Park".

The enclosed site sketch shows the details and features of the off-leash space, and indicates the scope of work required. The existing fencing will be repaired and upgraded to prohibit dogs from exiting the space. The existing entries near the pavilion will be locked, and the main entrance will be located at the existing service entrance marked "Holding Area" on the sketch. At the entrance will be an intermediate area where dogs can be unleashed safely before entering the larger space. Signage will be posted at the entrance and inside the space, and will be augmented with additional signage as needed. Waste receptacles, and a portable bathroom will be located onsite. It is anticipated that the parking area and walkway to the entrance will be plowed when streets and sidewalks are done. The off-leash space will not be plowed. A water source will be seasonal.

The estimated materials and services cost to complete the above scope is as follows:



Entrance gates	\$1,000
Fence repairs and upgrades	\$1,500
Signage	\$500
Portable washroom rental	\$250
Contingency (20%)	\$650
Total Estimate	\$3,900

It is anticipated that Town staff will complete the labour in a timeframe of approximately two weeks, weather and unforeseen circumstances notwithstanding.

In response to the other public feedback related to dog walking, bag dispensers have been ordered and will be installed along the most heavily used routes when received. From the information gathered at the workshops, the most heavily used routes appear to be Victoria, Church, Willow, and Spring, but other locations will be considered to provide bags in other areas of Town.

DISCUSSION:

Staff feel that the pilot project as outlined above is a prudent way to gauge public demand for an off-leash dog park. This location provides relatively low cost, reversible opportunity to better determine if, how, and where such a facility might be provided on a more permanent basis. Alternatively, creation of an off-leash space in another location would cost roughly \$20,000 for the fencing alone.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

2017/18 Capital budget includes \$25,000 for an off-leash dog park. The Pilot project estimate is \$3,900, plus ongoing maintenance.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Advertised public workshops held August 8, 17, and September 7. Recently, announcements were made via media release and social media platforms to update the public on development of pilot project scope of work. Ongoing community engagement is recommended should a pilot project be implemented.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:

Dog waste and noise from barking are significant issues that must be monitored, and mitigated where possible.

ALTERNATIVES:

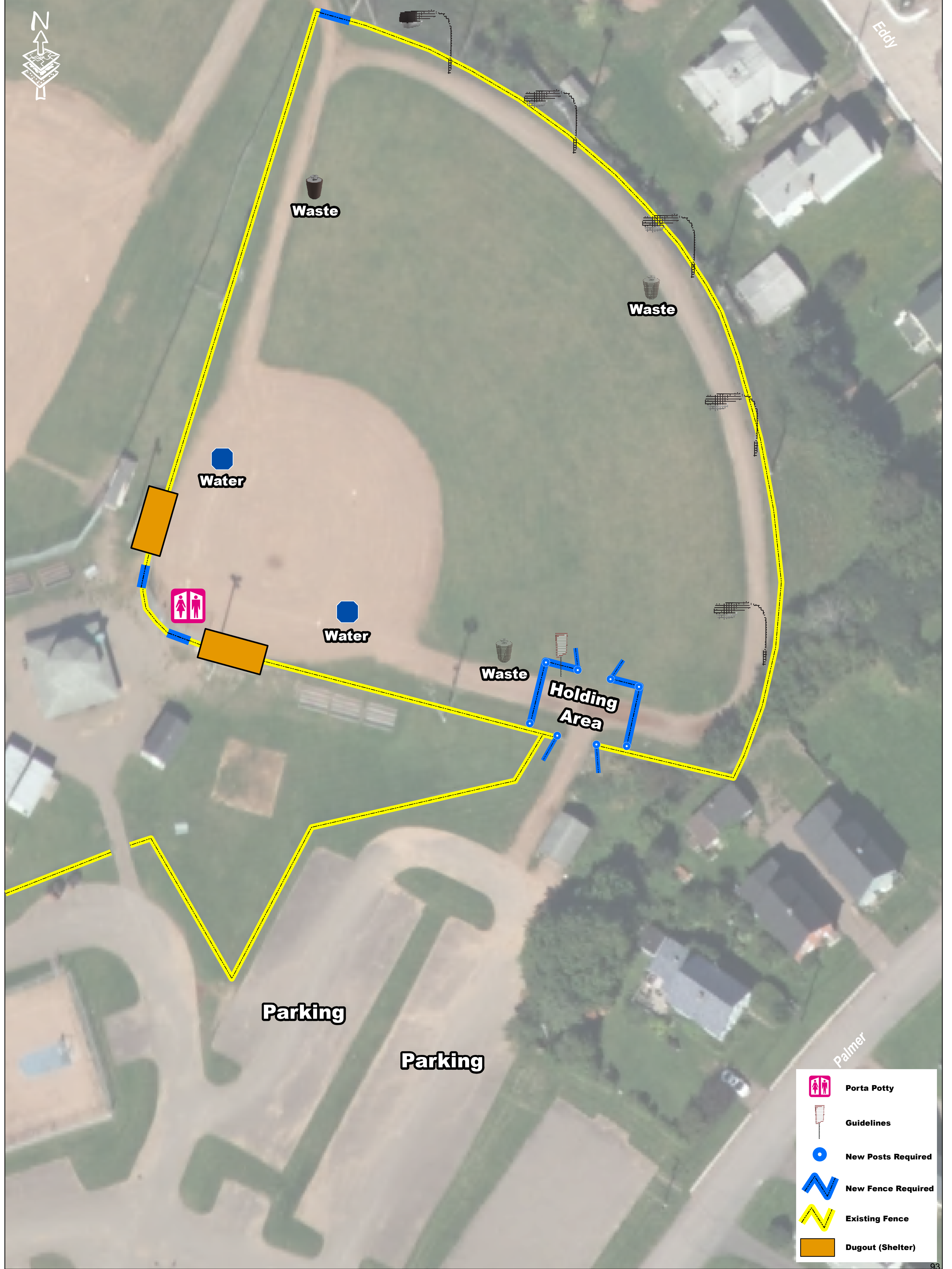
- 1) Do not pursue an off-leash dog park, and direct staff to take no further action.
- 2) Give direction to staff to implement the scope of work.
- 3) Give direction to investigate another location.

ATTACHMENTS:

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- 1) Off-leash dog park pilot project sketch
 - 2) Robb Complex Scheduling and Usage Report
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Report prepared by: A.Fisher

Report and Financial approved by:



Waste

Waste

Water

Water

Waste

Holding Area

Parking

Parking

-  **Porta Potty**
-  **Guidelines**
-  **New Posts Required**
-  **New Fence Required**
-  **Existing Fence**
-  **Dugout (Shelter)**

Robb Centennial Complex – Scheduling and Usage

Robb Centennial Complex has two regulation-size slo-pitch diamonds with overhead lights and one regulation-size baseball diamond. The complex has full canteen service capability, a basketball court, playground, picnic areas, equipment storage, and washrooms. The facility is generally available at no charge. Some fees apply based on Town of Amherst User Fee Policy #03470-03.

User Groups

Currently the complex is used by Senior slo-pitch, Men’s slo-pitch, Bantam baseball, and Midget baseball. In the spring and early fall, local schools also schedule use of the complex for slo-pitch and baseball.

Scheduled Usage

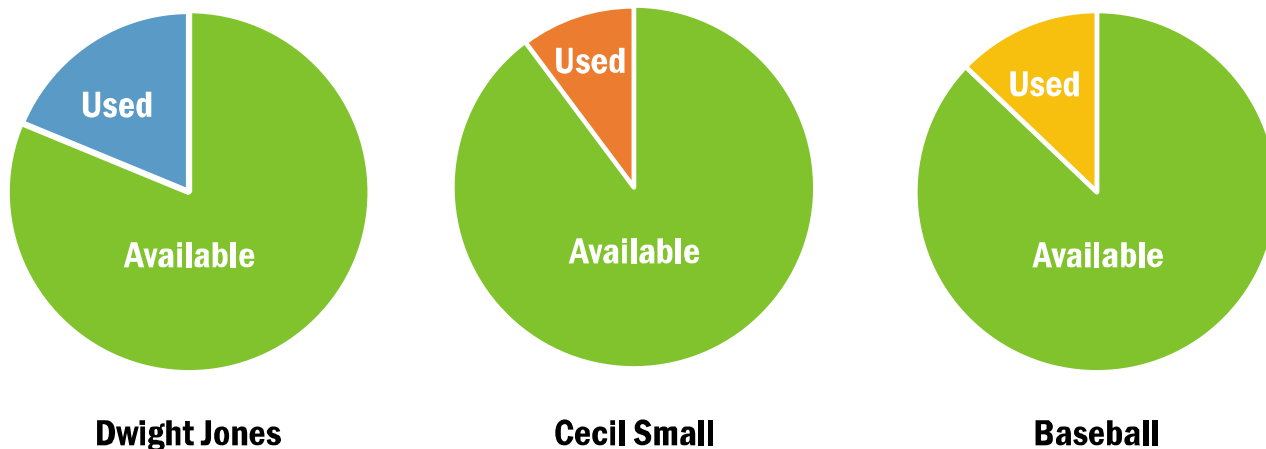
Dwight Jones and Cecil Small diamonds are equipped with lights and are available for scheduled use from Monday to Friday from 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. and on weekends from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

The baseball diamond is available from Monday to Friday from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. and on weekends from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

	Dwight Jones slo-pitch Mon-Fri 6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. Sat-Sun 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.				Cecil Small slo-pitch Mon-Fri 6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. Sat-Sun 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.				Baseball Mon-Fri 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Sat-Sun 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.			
	Available Hours			Used Hours	Available Hours			Used Hours	Available Hours			Used Hours
	M-F	S-S	Total		M-F	S-S	Total		M-F	S-S	Total	
May	80	72	152	39.75	80	72	172	2.5	48	72	120	21.25
June	110	96	206	68.25	110	96	196	52.25	66	96	162	34.75
July	105	120	225	54.5	105	120	225	23.5	63	120	183	36
August	115	96	211	65	115	96	211	36	69	96	165	9
September	105	108	213	5	105	108	213	0	63	108	171	17
Total	515	492	1,007	232.5	515	492	1,017	114.25	309	492	801	118

All fields are available from Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. for scheduled or pickup use. In 2017, the Senior slo-pitch league used Dwight Jones field for a total of 32 hours on weekday mornings.

Fig. 1: 2017 Availability and Usage

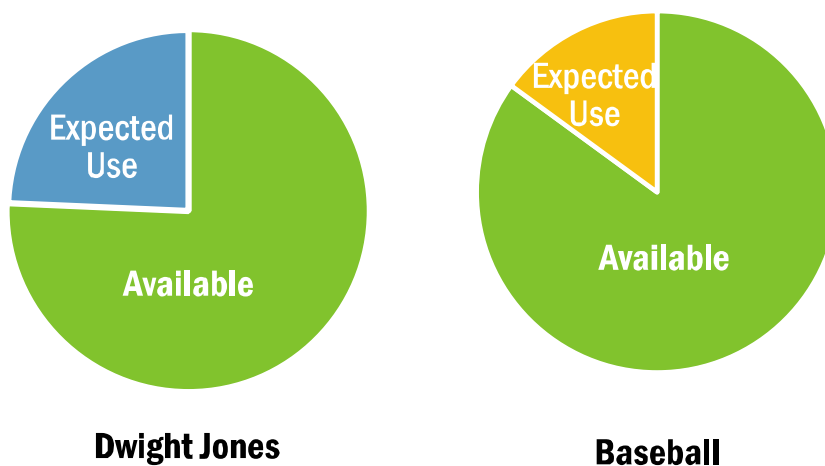


Two Field Scenario

Based on 2017, scheduled field use could be accommodated on two fields with collaboration and flexibility. There is also ample availability for additional use.

	Dwight Jones Mon-Fri 6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. Sat-Sun 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.				Baseball (Cecil Small) Mon-Fri 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Sat-Sun 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.			
	Available Hours			Expected Use	Available Hours			Expected Use
	M-F	S-S	Total		M-F	S-S	Total	
May	80	72	152	40.75	48	72	120	22.75
June	110	96	206	110.25	66	96	162	45
July	105	120	225	73.5	63	120	183	40.5
August	115	96	211	94	69	96	165	16
September	105	108	213	5	21	108	129	17
Total	515	492	1,007	323.5	267	492	759	141.25

Fig. 2: Two Field Scenario



About Robb Centennial Complex

During the prime season from Victoria Day to Labour Day, the complex is open seven days a week from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. It is attended by summer student staff, with support from full-time staff.

The staff maintain the park and provide a point of contact to people using the facility. Over the past few seasons, an increase in staffing has deterred disrespectful misuse of the park, and has supported the designation as a tobacco and alcohol-free facility. The park is locked overnight.

The complex is also available for use after Labour Day. However, it must be booked through the Town facility scheduler.

Facility scheduling procedures are published daily on Facebook and Twitter, as well as on the Town of Amherst website. An after-hours telephone line (staffed) is available for last-minute booking questions.

Table 1: Typical weekly schedule: Victoria Day to Labour Day

	2017			Two field scenario	
	Dwight Jones	Cecil Small	Baseball Field	Dwight Jones	Baseball Field (Cecil Small)
Monday	10:00 AM - NOON <i>Seniors slo-pitch</i> 6:30 PM - 8:45 PM <i>Men's slo-pitch</i> <i>(two games)</i>	6:30 PM - 8:45 PM <i>Men's slo-pitch</i> <i>(two games)</i>	<i>Open</i>	10:00 AM - NOON <i>Seniors slo-pitch</i> 6:00 PM - 11:00 PM <i>Men's slo-pitch</i>	6:00 PM - 9:00 PM <i>Bantam/Midget practice</i>
Tuesday	6:30 PM - 8:45 PM <i>Men's slo-pitch</i> <i>(two games)</i>	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM <i>Bantam practice</i>	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM <i>Midget practice</i>	6:00 PM - 11:00 PM <i>Men's slo-pitch</i>	6:00 PM - 9:00 PM <i>Bantam/Midget practice</i>
Wednesday	10:00 AM - NOON <i>Seniors slo-pitch</i> 6:30 PM - 8:45 PM <i>Men's slo-pitch</i> <i>(two games)</i>	6:30 PM - 8:45 PM <i>Men's slo-pitch</i> <i>(two games)</i>	<i>Open</i>	10:00 AM - NOON <i>Seniors slo-pitch</i> 6:00 PM - 11:00 PM <i>Men's slo-pitch</i>	6:00 PM - 9:00 PM <i>Bantam/Midget practice</i>
Thursday	6:30 PM - 8:45 PM <i>Men's slo-pitch</i> <i>(two games)</i>	6:00 PM - 8:00 PM <i>Bantam practice</i>	6:00 - 8:00 PM <i>Midget practice</i>	6:00 PM - 11:00 PM <i>Men's slo-pitch</i>	6:00 PM - 9:00 PM <i>Bantam/Midget practice</i>
Friday	<i>Open</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Open</i>	6:00 PM - 11:00 PM <i>Open</i>	6:00 PM - 9:00 PM <i>Open</i> <i>Bantam/Midget</i>
Saturday	<i>Open</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Open</i>	9:00 AM - 9:00 PM <i>Open</i> <i>Make-up games</i> <i>Tournaments</i>	9:00 AM - 9:00 PM <i>Open</i> <i>Bantam/Midget</i>
Sunday	<i>Open</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Open</i>	9:00 AM - 9:00 PM <i>Open</i> <i>Make-up games</i> <i>Tournaments</i>	9:00 AM - 9:00 PM <i>Open</i> <i>Bantam/Midget</i>