

Curling club struggling to pay bill

By Carla Allen
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Just two months ago the Barrington Regional Curling Club delivered a positive report to the Municipality of Barrington. "Basically we're doing okay," said treasurer Bob Cushing of the 2009/2010 season.

That was before the electric bill arrived. A staggering invoice of \$6,732 now has the organization floundering for funds, having received a call from Nova Scotia Power that electricity will be shut off if at least a portion of the bill is not paid.

"All of the budget items kind of took a downturn," said Cushing at the April 19 Municipality of Barrington's committee of the whole meeting.

The loss of the Cam/Am Wheelers bicycle tour because of the cancellation of the Cat ferry means \$1,500 less in the curling clubs coffers.

The closing bonspiel, which usually

accounts for another \$1,500, didn't happen this year.

The electric bill surprise can be attributed to an estimate that was much lower than actual.

"We're expecting another power bill of about \$1,000 to cover to the end of the season," said Cushing.

Casual hours for a manager, a few more business costs and minor maintenance expenses have all contributed to a serious financial situation for the club.

"We really don't have a reliable source of income from now till the fall season," said Cushing.

The club is requesting short-term assistance from the municipality in the form of a non-repayable grant of \$6,000, for the municipality to assume the current power bill or for the council to arrange for a working capital loan of \$6,000 repayable by Dec. 31.

The curling club has borrowed money from the municipality on at least one oth-

er occasion in the past 10 years. It will be able to pay \$5,000 towards the current power bill, which will leave a balance of a few hundred.

Although membership is down to 127, Cushing says there are high hopes that new arrivals to the area will join.

The club is pursuing a project under the ice-rink energy program to install a low emissivity ceiling to cut energy costs and is adopting other energy-saving measures to help reduce operating costs in future.

A warm winter is typically good news for heating costs but bad news for cooling systems. The club spent approximately \$17,000 in power costs this season compared to \$15,500 for the season before.

The municipality has asked for a financial statement from the club and is recommending to council to wait until its budget meeting in late June for possible funding assistance unless expedition is warranted.



Barrington Regional Curling Club treasurer Bob Cushing says the organization will only have a few hundred left after paying a \$6,700 power bill. The club is hoping for financial aid from the municipality to help it over the hump until energy-saving measures begin taking effect.

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