

'What we Heard': High Level Notes from the February 6th Community Engagement Session at The JBRSEC

- NEMHA is the largest Minor Hockey Association in NL. With 60 plus teams and one ice surface, the Association is often critically short of ice time: as a result the Association uses at least 15 hours of ice time per week at other rinks. This time is more expensive, less desirable from both timing and location perspectives. The result is relatively high minor hockey fees, less than ideal programming, the inability to cope with the increased demand for ice time and the inability to offer an expanded program – one that is consistent with the goals and objectives of both HNL and Hockey Canada;
- These outside hours are negotiated yearly with no guarantees being given year over year;
- Many of the current rinks in the SJCMA are very old (70+ years) and the closure of one would put extraordinary pressure on rinks like the JBRSEC.
- The average useful life of a 'bare bones' arena/ice rink in Canada is 35 years. Using that metric puts at least five of the 14 rinks in the SJCMA in jeopardy of closing or being closed for a lengthy period while repairs are made;
- The increase in demand for additional ice time for minor hockey, coupled with the current schedules of many minor hockey parents, has resulted in a redistribution of ice time and has adversely affected those long-time users and supporters of the JBRSEC. Their slots have been moved back (and are now scheduled later in the evening, at less desirable times);
- It has been estimated that the NEMHA could use an additional 15 - 30 hours of ice time immediately, assuming this time was available at the JBRSEC (Note: to be confirmed in writing by the President of the NEMHA);
- The Figure Skating Club that operates at the JBRSEC could also use additional ice time and would enjoy the benefit of confirmed ice time for a predictable period of time – a luxury they don't presently have. The PWSC suggested that they could easily double their commitment for ice time at the JBRSEC – from a current level of 9.5 hours to 18-20 hours per week. They would also benefit greatly from the establishment of a small office (in the building) for their club;
- This suggests that there is presently a 'pent up' demand for between 25 and 40 hours of additional ice time per week from just two users of the JBRSEC;
- It was also suggested that there is a large demand for ice time for individuals who have recently moved on from minor hockey (i.e. those individual who are now between the ages of 18 & 30 and who really have no place to play hockey and no league to play in). This would include both males and females);
- It was also noted by the NEMHA bantam Coordinator that if the current situation with respect to ice time continues, program quality will deteriorate and people may leave the system – this would be unfortunate. At the present time, Development Teams are particularly disadvantaged;
- It was also noted that, as we progress with our plans, we should also look very closely at the cost side of construction, so as to ensure that all costs are reasonable and that all needs (such as the proper number, size and location of dressing rooms – for all ages – is considered);

- It was also noted that (as we move forward) we should consider the establishment of an 'extraordinary expense fund' so as to ensure that there is sufficient money available for extraordinary expenses such as problems with the refrigeration plant).