

Friends of Sandy Lake AIS Committee

September 3, 2018 Update

The Friends of Sandy Lake AIS Committee (now “Sandy Lake Water Protection Working Group Inc.”) needs your help to encourage the Council of Harrison Park to move forward with a “Special Area Service Plan”.

The Municipality has supported us with their motion 143/2017 “The Municipality of Harrison Park support all interested parties in the Municipality, in preventing the spread of zebra mussels into the Municipality, through **education, signage, and voluntary inspections.**” This happened after some of our members lobbied council.

Over the past two months, Council has allowed us to locate a Watercraft Inspection Office at the main Street Dock and to install lockable gates at three areas that the Municipality has jurisdiction over. We started lobbying Council for these things 11 months ago. On June 26th we arrived at their council meeting with a large group of supporters and a petition with more than 300 signatures supporting our requests. As a result of that meeting we were able to get permission to put these protective measures in place.

Now, we need you to send an email to Council indicating that you support (or do not support) the “Special Area Service Plan” that has been proposed by Friends of Sandy Lake.

This plan is similar to the plan that has been put in place by Gull Lake (on highway 59 near grand beach). The Plan will apply to properties in and around Sandy Lake and add about \$50 to your property taxes. The money will be used to protect Sandy Lake as follows:

- Operating costs to inspect watercraft at the Main Street boat launch.
- Operating costs to decontaminate watercraft (for future seasons).
- Operating costs for other water protection measures such as improving water quality.

We believe this plan is necessary because is impossible for a community the size of Sandy Lake to support continued fund raising for operating costs of a project with this magnitude and importance.

Please send an email as follows:

To: Admin@HarrisonPark.ca
CC: Admin@FriendsOfSandyLake.com
Subject: Special Service Area Plan (to protect Sandy Lake from AIS)

Your name,
Your property address at Sandy Lake,
An indication of your support for the plan (or the reason you do not support it.)

Thanks for your help with this matter.

Daryl Kines, Victor Kowall, Mark Wahoski, Doug Wotton, Brian Judd & Bill Gardham

For more Information visit: <https://www.friendsofsandylake.com/news>

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What is a “Special Service Charge”?

When residents of a particular neighbourhood request services beyond what is normal in the municipality, the RM must create something called a special service charge to ensure only people in that neighbourhood pay for it. The cost for a service is calculated for a particular area and then spread amongst properties identified within the special service area.

How does a special service charge work?

1. The Sandy Lake Water Protection Working Group (SL-WPWG) has made a request to Council asking them to proceed with a fee to be collected as part of your property taxes.
2. The Municipality makes a plan to charge rate payers in the area receiving the service an appropriate amount each year the service is provided.
3. Public feedback at a public hearing will determine whether the Municipality proceeds with the Special Service charge
4. The plan is sent to the Municipal Board for approval
5. They will approve, make conditions, or reject the plan and may or may not require a public hearing.

What is the proposed “Special Service Area Plan”?

In order to fund the ongoing operating expenses of the Watercraft Inspection Office, the Sandy Lake Water Protection Working Group requests Council proceed with a “Special Service Rate”.

The annual costs to be covered by the Special Service Rate are expected to be \$28,000 and will include:

- Local AIS Inspectors (3 summer students) \$ 24,000
- Contingency \$ 4,000

The Special Service Rate is expected to add \$45.00 to \$50.00 annually to the average tax bill.

Have any other funding options been explored?

Yes, the following funding options have been explored:

1. The Friends of Sandy Lake AIS Committee applied to the Municipality for a \$10,000 grant in February 2018. The Municipality did not fund this request.
2. As part of the watercraft inspections that were carried out at the Main Street Boat Launch, owners of watercraft there were asked if it was reasonable for them to pay a fee of \$5 to \$10 dollars to launch. This was not a problem for them.
The fee would have to be done by the Municipality. One could argue the money collected should be put towards a number of things that would improve the dock area and protect the lake. The fee could be difficult to implement as we do not want to handle cash.
3. Apply for wage contributions under the Canada Summer Jobs Initiative.
The Friends of Sandy Lake AIS Committee could not apply to this program without support from the Municipality because it was not registered as a not-for-profit. The Municipality would not support us with our application. They felt it was a liability issue for them.
In order to be able to apply for funding and hire summer students, the Friends of Sandy Lake AIS Committee formed a not-for-profit entity named “Sandy Lake Water Protection Working Group”. We will apply for federal and provincial funding starting in 2019.
4. Apply to the Fish & Wildlife Enhancement Fund for operating costs.

For more Information visit: <https://www.friendsofsandylake.com/news>

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What is the history of the “Special Service Area Plan”?

1. **October 31, 2017**, the Friends of Sandy Lake AIS Committee made a presentation to Council of Harrison Park for:
 - a. A Watercraft Inspection Office at the Main Street Boat Launch.
 - b. Permission to restrict locations where trailered watercraft could launch to the Main Street Boat Launch.
 - c. A Special Service rate to be collected from the area in and around Sandy Lake to cover the annual operating costs of the Watercraft Inspections.

The presentation materials are available online at:

<https://www.friendsofsandylake.com/request-for-ais-inspectors>

2. **October 31, 2017**, the following motion was passed to initiate a Special Services Area Plan:
Motion 266/2017: Craig Atkinson – Lloyd Ewashko
RESOLVED THAT administration be instructed develop a special services area plan for aquatic invasive species, specifically for the properties in and around Sandy Lake. **CARRIED.**
3. **December 12, 2017**, Council passed the following resolution tabling the Special Service Area Plan as follows:
Motion 301/2017: Lloyd Ewashko – Craig Atkinson
Whereas administration has begun to prepare a special service area plan for AIS specifically for the properties in and around Sandy Lake;
AND WHEREAS council has reviewed the information prepared to date;
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the special service area plan for the AIS, specifically for the properties in and around Sandy Lake be tabled until such time as the Province of Manitoba commits to an effective AIS prevention strategy for western Manitoba. **CARRIED.**
4. **August 28, 2019**, Sandy Lake Water Protection Working Group made a presentation to Council asking them to restart the Special Services Area Plan.
Council discussed this request at their meeting and have not yet made a decision to proceed. After talking privately with some councilors, it seems council is not sure if they should restart the process because some rate payers they have talked with are opposed to the plan. We think the rate payers in and around Sandy Lake should have a chance to voice their support or dissent on this matter in a public forum as is required by the process.

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What has been achieved so far?

The Friends of Sandy Lake AIS Committee has formed a company named "Sandy Lake Water Protection Working Group Inc." in order to apply for funding and hire employees.

Sandy Lake Water Protection Working Group Inc. (SL-WPWG) has:

- Constructed a watercraft inspection office and with the assistance of the LUD and permission from Council, has located the small building at the Main Street Boat Launch.
- Inspected watercraft at the boat launch. So far, 4 high risk watercraft were sent to Riding Mountain National Park (RNMP) to be decontaminated. (This year, RMNP has allowed us to send them high risk watercraft for decontamination.)
- Installed 10 "Can I launch here?" signs at lakes identified by the Municipality. 10 signs arrived on August 31 and 5 have been installed at Sandy Lake and three other nearby lakes. The other 5 will be installed in September.
- Purchased lockable gates and installed them at 3 locations as specified by Council.
- Installed 10 hubs to prevent trailered watercraft from going around the lockable gates. The hubs are 6" x 6" posts (supplied by the Municipality).

The capital costs for this project were covered as follows:

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. Friends of Sandy Lake | \$ 8,000 |
| 2. Heritage Coop | \$ 1,000 |
| 3. In-kind donations of material | \$ 5,800 |
| 4. The work to construct the office, place the signs and install the hubs was done by volunteers. | |
| 5. On weekends, watercraft inspections are being done by a summer student that was hired and paid for by Riding Mountain Biosphere Reserve. | |
| 6. Watercraft inspections are also performed by volunteers trained by the Province of Manitoba. | |

Trailered watercraft are now directed to launch at the Main Street Boat Launch where they can be inspected.

The Community of Sandy Lake and visitors are very supportive of these initiatives.

Everything is now in place for success with one exception, annual operating costs.

For more Information visit: <https://www.friendsofsandylake.com/news>

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Watercraft Inspection Office (WIO)



Lockable gate at the end of the Lagoon Road



Lockable gate at West Bend Dock



Lockable gate at end of West Bend Road

For more Information visit: <https://www.friendsofsandylake.com/news>

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Request to Council

In order to fund the ongoing operating expenses of the Watercraft Inspection Office (WIO), the **Sandy Lake Water Protection Working Group requests Council proceed with a "Special Service Rate"**. The annual costs to be covered by the Special Service Rate are expected to be \$28,000 and will include:

- Local AIS Inspectors (3 summer students) \$ 24,000
- Contingency \$ 4,000

The Special Service Rate is expected to add \$45.00 to \$50.00 annually to the average tax bill.

This levy would be applied to the following property owners (see Figure 1):

- The Local Urban District (L.U.D.) of Sandy Lake
- The Sandy Lake Golf Course,
- Cottage owners on Serenuk Drive and to the north of the L.U.D. of Sandy Lake.

The SL-WPWG will be applying for Federal and Provincial grants to hire summer students. Funds received from these grants would offset the funds collected as a result of the Special Service Rate, therefore, in the second and subsequent years of operation, the Special Service Rate would be reduced to reflect funding from these two sources.



Figure 1 (Proposed area for the AIS Special Service Levy)