

## **A Community Center for Scarborough? Your voice matters**

By John Cloutier & Paul Johnson

The Scarborough Town Council has commissioned an advisory committee to evaluate one option for bringing a Community Center to our town. A critical first step in this process is to better understand the core components that Scarborough residents would like to see included and to gauge the public's willingness to pay for some of the more expensive amenities such as a swimming pool. Please add your voice to this process by completing a brief survey that can be found at various locations across town, including the Town Clerk's Office and Public Library, or online at <http://www.scarboroughmaine.org/ccsurvey>.

The option under review would incorporate a Community Center into a commercial recreational facility that is being planned by The Downs and Edge Sports Group (ESG). The Edge Facility is expected to include an Ice Rink with spectator seating, indoor and outdoor Turf Field, ProShop and concession area. All of these amenities are privately owned and would not be included in the town's community center; but, they could complement a potential community center as they would be under the same roof.

Last November, a Community Center was contemplated as a key component of the Scarborough Downs Credit Enhancement Agreement and this project could benefit from that work as it provides a potential mechanism for funding the Community Center if it is part of a leased facility. The Committee will compare the benefits and taxpayer impact of a partnership with The Downs and ESG against the alternative of financing the Community Center through a bond referendum with a town-owned facility on the Municipal Campus.

It is important to clarify that this work is being undertaken to allow the Town Council to make as informed of a decision as possible about the opportunity at hand. We hope that you will engage and share your thoughts with us as we move forward.

The Committee is under a tight deadline as The Downs/Edge group is already working through the planning phases of the facility. The Town Council is anticipating a report back from the Committee during their December 18th, 2019 meeting. We received strong interest from residents looking to participate on this citizen lead group, and we were very pleased to be able to assemble such a talented team for this important work.

Meetings are being held each Monday at 6:30pm and are open to the public. Please check the [Town Calendar](#) for more details. You can also follow along via a new section

of the Town's website devoted to the [Community Center Discussion](#) and you are welcome to share your feedback directly with the Committee using the group email:: [communitycenteradhoccommittee@scarboroughmaine.org](mailto:communitycenteradhoccommittee@scarboroughmaine.org).

We look forward to the work ahead, and keeping you informed along the way. It's an exciting opportunity that is worthy of this effort to explore further and your feedback and engagement will be critical to a decision that makes sense for Scarborough.