



# ORONO ICE ARENA RENOVATION PROJECT

## frequently asked questions

### **Q: Who owns the rink?**

The Orono Ice Arena is owned and operated by Orono Ice Arena, Inc., a community based Minnesota non-profit (501c3) corporation. The rink was originally built with funds raised by the Orono Hockey Boosters, Inc. and the school agreed to lease the land to the rink at a reduced rate. A volunteer board of five (5) directors manages the arena. Three (3) of the members are appointed by the Board of Directors of the Hockey Boosters, Inc. One (1) member is appointed by Orono Independent School District (278), and one (1) member is appointed by the City of Orono. Orono Ice Arena is not owned by or part of the Orono School District facilities.

### **Q: Who runs the rink?**

A volunteer board of five (5) directors manages the arena. Three (3) of the members are appointed by the Board of Directors of the Hockey Boosters, Inc., the organization best known today as Orono Youth Hockey Association. One (1) member is appointed by Orono Independent School District (278), and one (1) member is appointed by the City of Orono. The Orono Ice Arena Board provides oversight to the Orono Ice Arena manager for the day to day operations of the rink.

### **Q: What happens if I give to this project and then the school takes the land away for another use?**

Orono Independent School District 278 entered into a long-term land lease agreement with Orono Ice Arena, Inc. The initial term was for a period of 30 years; the original term has approximately 9 years remaining. Further, the lessee (Orono Ice Arena, Inc.) has a 25 year extension option at its sole option.

### **Q: Why isn't the arena renovation project part of the school referendum that passed in November?**

Orono Independent School District (278) studied the matter carefully and determined the most likely form of a referendum to be passed by voters was a referendum focused on the Activity Center. The referendum passed by a narrow margin of 12 votes. Orono Ice Arena is not owned by or part of the Orono School District facilities. The school cannot legally bond for or use taxpayer dollars to make capital improvements to facilities that they don't own.



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### **Q: Why is the school not funding this project for us?**

The Orono Ice Arena was built in 1997 with private contributions from local residents and continues to operate as a community based Minnesota non-profit 501c3. Orono Ice Arena is not owned by or part of the Orono School District facilities. The school cannot legally bond for capital improvements to facilities that they don't own. As a result, Orono Ice Arena relies on revenue from ice fees, concessions, advertising and contributions from its members and community to operate. With that said, the Orono Independent School District (278) has shown significant support when possible through the following three ways over the years:

1. Entered into a long-term land lease with Orono Ice Arena, Inc. to provide the land for \$1 per year.
2. Provided matching grant money in the past to help with projects when possible.
3. Agreed to increased ice usage fees significantly last year to supplement income for Orono Ice Arena, Inc.

### **Q: Why don't we give the rink to the school or the City?**

The real question is do you think that tax levy referendum to fund the rink is possible either for the city of Orono or the Orono School District. The City of Orono and the Orono Independent School District (278) each has a member on the five (5) member Board of Directors that oversee Orono Ice Arena. The remaining three (3) members are appointed by the Board of Directors from the Orono Hockey Boosters. The rink has been a great asset of our community for over 20 years, and it will require the City of Orono, Orono Independent School District (278), and Orono Hockey Boosters to continue to work together going forward to make it a success for our kids for the next 20 years.

### **Q: Will the school district take over the rink if we do not make necessary investments?**

Do we really want to find out the answer to this question? The answer is that the school district may not have the revenues to take this on. If we work together as a community we can maintain an arena that our kids and our community are proud to call their home arena. Twenty years ago members of our community came together to make Orono Ice Arena a reality. Now it is our turn to take care of required maintenance and enhance the facility and experience for our kids.

### **Q: Why can't a second sheet of ice be part of this project too?**

The Orono Renovation Project Team and Orono Ice Arena Board prioritized the current and future needs of the rink. It was determined that the cost of an additional sheet of ice was too high to include in the project at this time. The Orono Renovation Project Team and Orono Ice Arena Board both recognize that future growth of the program or changes to the Pond longer term could create the need for a second sheet of ice in the future. As a result, the renovation plan is minimizing foot print changes to the rink with the exception of the locker room extension to maintain as many options as possible going forward.



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**Q: If we have a ½ interest in the Pond, why don't we sell our interest and use the money to build facilities here in Orono?**

The Pond was built in the early 1980's and the covenants surrounding its ownership and financing provide two options – proceeds from the sale or razing of the Pond a) can be reapplied to the purpose of building a similar facility for Orono and Mound or b) return sale proceeds to the Orono and Mound School Districts.

**Q: I've heard synthetic ice isn't expensive. Why not build that into the project too?**

Synthetic ice typically provides 10% to 20% more resistance providing a different training experience than ice. Synthetic ice or stickhandling tiles will be utilized in the mezzanine level for stickhandling and shooting stations.

**Q: Is the Orono Ice Arena Board supporting the renovations?**

The Orono Ice Arena Board approved Phase 1 of the renovation project to shrink the rink to NHL size. Additionally, Orono Ice Arena Board is supportive of the additional projects and is expected to approve each as funding is secured.

**Q: Who is on the OIA Renovation Project Team? Who is leading the OIA Renovation Project?**

Members of our hockey community from mites on up through high school, the OIA board and the high school coaches are all actively involved in making this project successful. We feel very good about the success of this project. If you have questions, please contact Pete Eckerline, OIA Renovation Project Chair, at 612-867-8371