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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hockey Association Set To Own Its Future AMHA confirms purchase of Feildian Gardens ice arena

St. John's, NL (May 11, 2020) - Avalon Minor Hockey Association (AMHA) today confirmed they will have a new home. AMHA is providing details on a pending purchase of Feildian Gardens, an established, well recognized ice rink in the heart of St. John's. The transaction will close in the coming weeks and secures the future for the local minor hockey association.

AMHA will relocate their office and all Avalon Celtics minor hockey programming to Feildian Gardens upon completion of the transaction. A unique deal for any minor hockey association, the purchase involves transforming an established private sector rink to a not-for-profit, community owned facility. For many years, AMHA rented ice time in a private sector arena and in doing so faced challenges which made it difficult to meet their mandate as a minor hockey association.

Mark Sexton, President of AMHA commented, "We are very pleased and excited to share the details of this milestone event with our member families and the local hockey community today. Through rink ownership, we will remove many obstacles impeding our organization - specifically access to prime time ice slots at an affordable cost." Sexton continued, "Our Executive worked on aspects of this project over the past two years and are confident it's the ideal solution to secure our hockey club's future. Over the long-term, arena ownership will deliver many key benefits and promotes our vision of delivering quality hockey programs and putting more kids on the ice."

AMHA is completing the purchase with bank financing backed by the City of St. John's through their Capital Grant program and additional financial support.

City Council and senior officials were involved with the project from the outset and fully support the purchase. "We support AMHA's proposal and vision for minor hockey and youth sport in St. John's" stated Mayor Danny Breen. "The unique project is a win-win-win for all parties, especially the young athletes from St. John's who will have the opportunity to participate in sport in this rink."

AMHA will focus rink operations on hosting youth recreational sports on a year round basis. Feildian Gardens has long served other private user groups in the City and AMHA intends to work with these and other user groups to support the growth of recreational sports in the City.

AMHA acknowledges the time and energy invested by Mr. Gary Wadden, long-time owner of Feildian Gardens. As a past member and volunteer with deep connections to AMHA, Mr. Wadden responded positively to the approach by AMHA to acquire the facility. "I thought I would always own the rink, until this idea and visionary plan was brought forward to me by AMHA" stated Wadden. "I have enjoyed owning this rink for many years and have declined offers to sell it in the past. But as a former coach of AMHA and having had my three sons go through the program, I felt it was the right thing to do for the future of youth hockey."

AMHA will soon launch an extensive program for sponsorship, legacy donations, facility advertising, and fundraising in support of the facility's operations. AMHA welcomes inquiries from businesses or individuals interested in partnering towards mutual goals of growing community and youth recreational sports.

Following the close of the transaction, AMHA will invite members to a meeting and information session to review the coming season and plans for developing hockey programs and the facility.

Avalon Minor Hockey is a minor hockey association in the City of St. John's. AMHA delivers recreational and competitive hockey programs to over 400 players aged 5-18. AMHA supports numerous leagues in the region including AAA Programs, Doug Marshall Hockey League, Don Johnson Hockey League, and the Interlocking House League. Established in 1984, AMHA offers the youth of St. John's quality programs in minor hockey and their mission is to;

- provide equal opportunity in accordance with interest and ability
- promote self-confidence, discipline & sportsmanship and respect for others through hard work and fair play
- encourage coaches and members to demonstrate a positive attitude
- provide direction & assistance for coach development
- deliver programming in a cost effective and efficient manner

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For additional information, please call Mark Sexton, President - Avalon Minor Hockey Association, at 709.763.1339 or mail@marksexton.com or Kelly Maguire, Media Relations Officer, City of St. John's at 709.576.8491.