

Big Cove YMCA Camp

YMCA OF GREATER HALIFAX/DARTMOUTH

Shine On



DIRECTOR'S REPORT: 2025 HIGHLIGHTS





Director's Report

The 2025 season marked a year of operational stability, site development, and sustained demand for Big Cove YMCA Camp programs. Across all three seasons (Spring, Summer and Fall), the camp remained fully staffed and operated at full capacity, welcoming 1,234 participants while successfully navigating environmental and infrastructure challenges through adaptability and strong partner collaboration.

Key highlights included:

- **Operational resilience during the summer season.** Wildfire-related drought conditions required program adjustments; however, ongoing communication and coordination with the Department of Natural Resources and the Wildfire Supervisor in Shubenacadie ensured that camp operations continued uninterrupted. Additionally, a food services staffing transition during the final two weeks of August was managed effectively through temporary operational adjustments.
- **Creative responses to infrastructure limitations.** Aging tipi accommodations used for leadership programming were temporarily replaced with existing tent platforms, allowing programs to continue without the need for additional capital purchases during the season.
- **Strong fall season engagement.** The fall season experienced renewed momentum, with increased group rentals and participation from six separate groups.





Participation

The spring season welcomed five Outdoor Centre groups, the majority of which were returning organizations. This momentum continued into the fall season, which hosted six groups and demonstrated increased demand for group programming.

Summer programming served 785 campers. While overall demand remained strong, some capacity gaps were identified, including vacancies in two two-week sessions (one gendered session and one all-genders session), as well as 10 unfilled spots in the August Leadership 2 program. Despite these gaps, staffing levels remained sufficient, allowing the camp to operate at full capacity throughout the summer.

Financial accessibility continued to be a priority, with 44 campers supported through the camp's financial assistance program. In addition, two seasonal staff positions were funded through the Canada Summer Jobs program.

Participation/Registration	2025 YTD			2024
	Actual	Target	Variance	Actual
Overnight Summer Camp	785	810	-25	772
Family Camp (families)	10	26	-16	19
Spring Outdoor Ed	233	215	18	208
Fall Outdoor Ed	206	150	56	119
Other	0	0	0	-
Total	1,234	1,201	33	1,118

Groups	Financial Assistance
Little Big Cove	2
6-Day Sr.	19
6-Day Jr.	11
13-Day Jr.	2
13-Day Sr.	8
Leadership	2
Total	44



Additional Key Highlights

- A new climbing wall was constructed in 2025, with equipment purchases supported through a Sport Nova Scotia grant. Equipment installation is scheduled for May 2026.
- Reduced bussing operations led to increased use of camp vehicles for transportation.
- Pavilion floor repainting was completed, improving the appearance of the space.
- The spring season focused heavily on-site improvements, including the creation of a new Junior camping area, development of a new archery range, establishment of a dedicated out-tripping canoe area, and significant trail revitalization. This work centered around the original Farmhouse Foundation and included wildfire mitigation efforts across wooded areas.
- Water room floor repairs and equipment upgrades were completed in late October and early November.



Looking Ahead to 2026

Looking ahead, early indicators for 2026 are encouraging. Two spring weekend bookings are already confirmed, including a large-scale booking with Connected in Motion, which is expected to host approximately 80 participants. Key priorities moving into 2026 include the installation and activation of the new climbing wall, continued growth in shoulder-season group bookings, and ongoing investment in infrastructure maintenance and program adaptability.

Fall bookings are also beginning to take shape, highlighted by a returning group, Make Do Camp, which last visited in 2016. The group is currently exploring a three-night stay for approximately 70 campers.

In addition, staff are exploring alternative opportunities to further maximize use of the Big Cove property. Potential opportunities include:

- hosting organized running and cycling events with an overnight component. These events typically attract strong participation—often 100–200 or more participants—and could generate revenues of \$200 or more per participant.
- Piloting a weekend Airbnb-style accommodation model similar to Parks Canada’s oTENTik rentals. Depending on program design, this model could operate with minimal staffing requirements.
- Positioning Big Cove as a fall base camp for a Cabot Trail motorcycle tour, further diversifying programming and revenue streams.





Financial Highlights

2025 closed the year with a profit/deficit of \$48,024.82

Operating Financials (December 2025)	2025 YTD			2024 Year
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual YTD
Revenue	896,530.46	1,078,950.00	-182,419.54	995,989
Expense	848,505.64	905,853.52	(57,347.88)	(985,250.00)
Net	48,024.82	173,096.48		11,639



Big Cove 2025 Financials

REVENUE	YTD
0110-8200 General Contributions	100.00
0123-8200 Camperships-Individual	21,215.63
0131-8200 Scholarships	(29,968.00)
0140-8200 Subsidies founded by Donations	32,927.20
0200-8200 Miscellaneous Income	2,619.49
1021-8200 Federal Grants	9,898.00
1381-8200 Residence Camp Fees	782,340.13
1430-8200 Merchandise Sales	8,493.00
1605-8200 Internal Rental Recovery from RDC	3,960.66
1616-8200 Camp Rental Fees	56,644.35
1698-8200 Camp Bus Fees	8,300.00
TOTAL REVENUES	896,530.46
EXPENDITURES	
2011-8200 Administrative Salaries	93,966.00
2012-8200 Program Staff Salaries	343,658.39
2185-8200 Honorarium	800.00
2200-8200 Fringe Benefits	32,759.92
2410-8200 Professional Fees	7,341.71
2510-8200 Office Supplies	1,791.11
2521-8200 Maintenance Supplies	6,414.73
2523-8200 Cleaning Supplies	5,611.50
2540-8200 Program Supplies	10,078.34
2550-8200 Food & Beverage Supplies	97,998.92
2555-8200 Food & Beverage Cleaning	643.19
2564-8200 Uniform Expense	426.22
2570-8200 Resaleable Supplies	6,761.11
2585-8200 Medical Supplies	3,433.73
2610-8200 Telephone Expense	1,291.46
2611-8200 Mobility	4,924.76
2825-8200 Contract Maintenance	3,068.44
2831-8200 Heating	1,291.77
2832-8200 Electricity	14,680.67
2834-8200 Parking Expense	52.59
2880-8200 Insurance Expense	9,853.00
2900-8200 Expendable Equipment	4,159.22
2930-8200 Equipment Repair	1,390.77
3110-8200 Program Promotion	7,254.56
3200-8200 Employee Expense & Travel	91.74
3206-8200 Mileage	813.87
3300-8200 Staff/Volun. Development	3,206.58
3410-8200 Vehicle Expense	25,128.23
3500-8200 Association Dues	12,531.34
3580-8200 Computer Software/Licenses	6,977.66
3711-8200 Bank Services Charges	17.03
3712-8200 Credit Card (PayPal) Expense	20,557.88
3900-8200 Miscellaneouse Expense	6,555.74
4821-8200 Inter Dept Allocations (Admin)	112,973.46
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	848,505.64
Net Income	48,024.82



BIG COVE 2026 BUDGET

REVENUE

0110-8200	General Contributions	\$2,000.00
0123-8200	Camperships-Individual	\$2,600.00
0131-8200	Scholarships	-\$40,000.00
0140-8200	Subsidies founded by Donations	\$40,000.00
0150-8200	Give the Gift of Camp Campaign	\$18,000.00
0200-8200	Miscellaneous Income	-
1021-8200	Federal Grants	\$16,000.00
1381-8200	Residence Camp Fees	\$823,300.00
1430-8200	Merchandise Sales	\$6,000.00
1616-8200	Camp Rental Fees	\$72,000.00
1698-8200	Camp Bus Fees	\$8,300.00
TOTAL REVENUES		\$948,200.00
DIRECT EXPENDITURES		
2011-8200	Administrative Salaries	\$96,850.00
2012-8200	Program Staff Salaries	\$363,563.00
2185-8200	Honorarium	\$800.00
2105-8200	COLA	\$1,546.50
2200-8200	Fringe Benefits	\$34,041.00
2410-8200	Professional Fees	\$8,000.00
2510-8200	Office Supplies	\$2,000.00
2521-8200	Maintenance Supplies	\$13,050.00
2523-8200	Cleaning Supplies	\$7,000.00
2540-8200	Program Supplies	\$13,500.00
2550-8200	Food & Beverage Supplies	\$110,000.00
2555-8200	Food & Beverage Cleaning	-
2564-8200	Uniform Expense	\$1,400.00
2570-8200	Resaleable Supplies	\$7,000.00
2585-8200	Medical Supplies	\$4,000.00
2610-8200	Telephone Expense	\$1,920.00
2611-8200	Mobility	\$4,920.00
2710-8200	Postage Expense	\$100.00
2825-8200	Contract Maintenance	\$26,100.00
2831-8200	Heating	\$7,000.00
2832-8200	Electricity	\$12,850.00
2834-8200	Parking Expense	\$740.00
2900-8200	Expendable Equipment	\$5,000.00
2930-8200	Equipment Repair	\$2,310.00
3110-8200	Program Promotion	\$7,000.00
3200-8200	Employee Expense & Travel	-
3206-8200	Mileage	\$3,100.00
3300-8200	Staff/Volun. Development	\$2,000.00
3301-8200	Staff Development GM	-
3410-8200	Vehicle Expense	\$26,500.00
3580-8200	Computer Software/Licenses	\$6,000.00
3711-8200	Bank Services Charges	\$20.00
3712-8200	Credit Card (PayPal) Expense	\$19,000.00
3900-8200	Miscellaneous Expense	\$6,000.00
Subtotal		\$793,310.50
ALLOCATED EXPENDITURES		
2880-8200	Insurance Expense	\$9,864.00
3500-8200	Association Dues	\$12,984.00
4811-8200	Administration Overhead	-
4821-8200	Inter Dept Allocations (Admin)	\$122,423.00
Subtotal		\$145,271.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$938,581.50
Net Income		\$9,618.50