



Corporate Report

Report from Recreation and Community Services, Programs and Cultural Services

Date of Report: July 8, 2013

Date of Meeting: July 22, 2013

Report Number: RCS-033-2013

File: 68.32.99

Subject: Programming Special Initiatives for 2014

Recommendation

That Council approve the waiving of any applicable fees for the facilitation of programing initiatives in 2013 as outlined in this report, with total estimated revenue forgone of \$11,908; and

That Council approve the waiving of applicable fees for all Recreation and Community Services direct programming initiatives going forward. FORTHWITH

Summary

Recreation and Community Services (RCS) annually reviews and implements programming initiatives that encourage water safety and increased participation at the City's aquatics facilities as well as general programming initiatives for residents. The recommended waiving of fees for various programs supports these initiatives.

The Programming Special Initiative Report has been traditionally approved by Council in January. In order to effectively promote the programing special initiatives in the department's leisure guide the requests for 2014 are being submitted at an earlier date.

Background

Significant steps were made toward the promotion and dissemination of information of water safety in 2013. Water safety promotion and education is still primarily completed through the Red Cross Swim Lessons, on site bulletin boards, special hand outs and flyers, and the "April Pools" event.

On July 1, 2013, 162 people participated in Canada Day free public swims at the various municipal aquatics facilities. This day served as the official "kick-off" to the outdoor swim season and promoted participation across the City's facilities.

Aquatics, Programming, and Older Adult initiatives for 2014 are highlighted.

Report

Aquatics

April Pools Day initiative

The Lifesaving Society (LSS) has developed initiatives to educate the general population on water safety. The “April Pools Day” initiative highlights and showcases water safety in a friendly environment.

The City of St. Catharines’ Kiwanis Aquatics Centre location will be participating in April Pools Day on April 12, 2013. A two hour program will take place during a regularly scheduled leisure swim, which will include a leisure swim and several in-water and on-land demonstrations. There will also be information tables to provide additional educational resources for the participants.

In order to attract a wide range of participation, staff recommends Council waive the regular leisure swim admission fees during these two hours of programming to support this initiative. In 2013, 180 people participated in the April Pools Day initiative.

It is estimated that 180 people would attend this event; and as such, projected fees waived would total \$450.

Canada Day official outdoor pool opening celebrations

To promote the celebration of Canada Day and the opening of the 2014 outdoor pool summer season, staff recommends Council waive the regular public swim admission fees on July 1, 2014, for all aquatic facilities. Additional activities and displays will take place promoting water safety to all participants.

It is estimated that 550 people would attend this event; and as such, projected fees waived would total \$1,302.

St. Catharines Kiwanis Aquatics Centre anniversary

To celebrate the two year anniversary of the opening of the St. Catharines Kiwanis Aquatics Centre, staff recommends Council waive the fees to provide one day of free entry into the St. Catharines Kiwanis Aquatic Centre. The day of free entry will be used to celebrate the success of the St. Catharines Kiwanis Aquatics Centre within the community. The facility will offer a sampling of all programs, including Water Safety Lessons, Leisure Swimming, Aquatic Activity and Aquatic Fitness.

Three hundred and six (306) people participated in the first year anniversary swims. It is estimated that 300 people would attend this event; and as such, projected fees waived would total \$825.

Loonie Swims

To promote leisure swimming for residents, staff recommends Council reduce the entry fee of one Leisure Swim per month at each of the St. Catharines indoor and outdoor aquatics facilities to \$1 per person. Loonie Swims will be introduced at the leisure swim that has been identified with consistent low attendance levels at each facility and will be evaluated as needed. This initiative is practiced by numerous municipalities across

Canada and is expected to increase participation. In 2012, 178 people participated in the Loonie Swims.

It is estimated that through additional promotion and an increased number of events, that a total of 2000 people would attend; and as such, projected fees waived would total \$4726.

Programming

Family Day Fun Zone event

This event offers an afternoon of fun on Monday, February 17, 2014 from 1pm - 4 pm at the St. Catharines Kiwanis Aquatics Centre. It is designed as an opportunity for families to celebrate Family Day through a variety of crafts, face painting, temporary tattoos, children's colouring, games and activities.

Approximately 200 people attended the event in 2013 and it is estimated that 200 people will attend this event again in 2014; and as such, projected fees waived would total \$500.

Recreation showcase

To promote the programs and services that RCS offers, staff recommends Council approve the waiving of any applicable program fees on dates to be determined in the spring and fall at the St. Catharines Kiwanis Aquatics Centre. The Recreation Showcase is a celebration of the release of both the Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter Leisure guides. Join us and discover there's 'tons to see and do' in St. Catharines! Come out and let us show you how to feel and be healthier! There will be demonstrations and opportunities to try something new. Programming staff will be on site to answer any questions you have.

Each of the Fall 2012 and the Spring 2013 events attracted at least 125 people and we anticipate similar or improved participation moving forward. As such, the projected fees waived would total \$946.

Older Adult

June is seniors (older adult) month

To promote the month of June as we recognize and celebrate older adults, various events will be planned and offered in partnership with the older adult associations, including a special concert on June 29, 2014 in Montebello Park. To promote increased future participation, staff recommends Council approve the waiving of applicable program fees for events planned throughout the month of June, which include aquatics fitness classes, and 50 plus skate.

Eighty-five (85) people attended the aquatics fitness classes in June 2013 and as such, projected fees waived would total \$300 for 2014. Although the 50 Plus Skate was not well attended, we will offer the program one more time. We anticipate that 50 people would attend the 50 plus skate and as such, projected fees waived would total \$134.

St. Catharines Family New Year's Event Celebration

As a follow-up to the very successful 2012 event and expectations for a successful follow up event in 2013, a fun evening will take place on December 31, 2014 from 3pm – 9 pm. The event will include free activities including children's inflatables, crafts, face painting and other children's games. A supply of noise makers and party hats will be offered.

It is estimated that 300 people would attend the free swim at the Kiwanis Aquatics Centre event for a projected fee waived of \$825. The free skate would also be offered next year at Seymour Hannah to approximately 200 families for estimated fees waived of \$1900.

Additional programming events not requiring waiving of fees

In addition to the initiatives listed above requesting fees be waived, the following events are planned and do not require any fees to be waived.

Family Day at Dunlop Drive Older Adult Centre

Offered in partnership with the Dunlop Seniors Recreation Club Association, this inter-generational open house will take place at Dunlop Drive Seniors Centre with scheduled activities, such as a friendly game of table tennis, darts, pole walking and Wii. It is designed to promote and encourage families to participate in recreational activities together. In 2013, Family Day at Dunlop Drive Older Adult Centre attracted 150 people of all ages. In 2014, a 50s theme will be incorporated into the day's programming.

Family campfire and sing-a-long

The City will host three free Summer kick off family campfires to take place in June, July and August at Burgoyne Woods. During the campfire program, participants will join programming staff and community volunteers at the fire pit in the park for a good old fashioned hot dog roast and campfire sing-a-long. Participants bring their own hot dogs, buns and other snacks. The City supplies the beverages, condiments, marshmallows and roasting sticks. Residents bring their own blanket or lawn chair to relax on. Free activities include face painting, children's games and activities. There will be information regarding summer programs available on site.

26th Annual Pumpkinville

Pumpkinville is one of the longest running special events in the City of St. Catharines. It offers a fun family fall day full of children's activities, inflatables, petting zoo, games and crafts including live entertainment and face painting. The annual event will be held at Happy Rolph's on Saturday, October 18th, 2014 from 10am - 3 pm. Activities include free pumpkins to the first 500 families, pumpkin carving and scarecrow building contests. Food vendors, a professional photographer and pony rides will also be on site for which nominal charges apply. A complimentary shuttle bus service will be provided.

Financial Implications

All related expenses will be included in the 2014 Recreation and Community Services Operating Budget. In addition, sponsorships for all programming initiatives will be pursued.

The total projected amount of fees requested to be waived is \$11,908. This will assist with the promotion of programs and facilities to the general public in order to create awareness for potential participation in other programs throughout the year.

Conclusion

Through the approval of special initiatives, residents will be exposed to the importance of swimming and water safety in Aquatics, as well, will create increased opportunities for participation in programming, and special events.

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