

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 21, 2018

Item 9, Report No. 6, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on February 21, 2018.

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EARTH HOUR 2018

The Committee of the Whole recommends approval of the recommendation contained in the following report of the Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management, dated February 6, 2018:

Purpose

To provide background on the World Wildlife Fund's annual Earth Hour initiative and recommend the City of Vaughan partner with the Earth Hour Vaughan Committee to provide in-kind services to host the community celebration at City Hall on March 24, 2018.

Recommendations

1. That the City of Vaughan continue to support and participate in the Earth Hour 2018 event on March 24, 2018 by partnering with the Earth Hour Vaughan Committee, to host a community celebration at City Hall; and
2. That City staff, including but not limited to, Corporate Communications, Economic Development and Culture Services, Recreation Services, Policy Planning and Environmental Sustainability, Facility Maintenance Services, Transportation Services Parks and Forestry Operations, and By-Law and Compliance Services be directed to provide in-kind support as needed to Earth Hour Vaughan in executing the event.

Report Highlights

- The Earth Hour global awareness campaign takes place on March 24, 2018 and it is recommended that the City of Vaughan, in partnership with the Earth Hour Vaughan Committee, host a community celebration at City Hall.
- It is predicted that the event will attract over 500 Vaughan residents and provide an opportunity for raising awareness on energy efficiency and climate change issues as it relates to Green Directions Vaughan.
- City staff from various departments will assist in supporting the event by providing in-kind services. 2018 will mark the 11th consecutive year of City staff support for this annual event.
- In 2017, Vaughan residents and businesses reduced energy consumption by over 14 megawatts during Earth Hour (8:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.).

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Background

On March 31, 2007 residents, businesses and local governments in Sydney Australia turned off their lights for one hour to bring attention to the issue of energy conservation and climate change. More than 2 million residents participated causing energy usage to drop by 10.2 per cent across the business district. The drop represented a reduction of 25 tonnes of carbon dioxide (equivalent to taking 48,613 cars off the road for one hour). Only a year later, on March 29, 2008, Earth Hour had become a global sustainability movement with more than 50 million people across 35 countries participating. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF), a global environmental non-profit organization, assists with coordinating the Earth Hour program.

Highlights from WWF's Earth Hour 2017 include:

- 187 countries and territories across all seven continents participated globally with over 3,000 landmarks switching off their lights; and
- Over 3.5 billion impressions of official campaign hashtags leading up to and on Earth Hour and over 350 ambassadors and influencers joined the movement.

Previous Reports/Authority

https://www.vaughan.ca/council/minutes_agendas/Extracts/02cw0117_17ex_18.pdf

[Earth Hour 2017 Committee of the Whole Report](#)

[EARTH HOUR 2016](#)

(http://www.vaughan.ca/council/minutes_agendas/AgendaItems/CW0202_16_8.pdf)

<https://www.earthhour.org/>

Analysis and Options

Alectra Utilities reported that the Vaughan community reduced its energy consumption by 4.5 percent in 2017 for the Earth Hour event which was slightly higher than the 4 percent reduction achieved by the entire Alectra Utilities service area. By turning off the lights between 8:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., City residents and businesses reduced energy use by 14.77 megawatts.

Earth Hour Vaughan is organized by the Earth Hour Vaughan Committee, a citizen-led volunteer group. In 2017, the 10th annual Earth Hour Vaughan event at City Hall attracted an estimated 500 people. A lantern walk, night-cycle ride, energy and climate trade show, candlelit yoga class, citizen awards, hot refreshments, children's activities and live entertainment were part of the 2017 event. Preliminary event planning for the 2018 Earth Hour has identified a residential energy exhibit, lantern making, night-cycle

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ride, candlelit yoga, social media engagement strategies, and local performers as potential components of this event.

Earth Hour is a component of the Green Directions Vaughan citizen engagement/education strategy as it has strong links to energy efficiency and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

By participating in Earth Hour, the City continues to demonstrate environmental leadership by encouraging behavioural change in the business and residential communities, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Financial Impact

The Earth Hour Vaughan Committee coordinates all aspects of the event in consultation with City of Vaughan representatives. As in past years, the City will provide access to the following City Hall amenity spaces: Atrium; Multi-purpose room; Cafeteria and adjacent outdoor space along with tables for the exhibit portion of the event; outdoor stage and related sound equipment; as well as indoor stage. Any other activities will be supported through existing budget allocations.

The Earth Hour Vaughan Committee will be tasked with securing the necessary financial contribution or in-kind support from other community partners to execute the event.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

N/A

Conclusion

Participating in the Earth Hour initiative on March 24, 2018 will demonstrate the City of Vaughan's ongoing commitment to promoting and practicing environmentally responsible behaviour. Vaughan will be joining a growing number of Canadian municipalities and international cities that have expressed their interest in participating in this global awareness event.

Working with the Earth Hour Vaughan Committee will provide both administrative and promotional support. Alectra Utilities monitors the impact on electrical demand, which will provide the public with an indication of the potential benefits of a minor behavioural change on their energy usage. Hosting the Earth Hour 2018 celebration at City Hall will enable more people from across all the communities in Vaughan to participate.

For more information, please contact: Tony Iacobelli, Manager of Environmental Sustainability, ext. 8630.

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Attachments

N/A

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