

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 9, 2014

Item 42, Report No. 41, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on December 9, 2014.

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PROCLAMATION - INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES - DECEMBER 3, 2014

The Committee of the Whole recommends:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Strategic and Corporate Services, dated December 2, 2014, be approved; and
- 2) That the presentation by the Vaughan Accessibility and Diversity Coordinator be received.

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Strategic and Corporate Services, in consultation with the Director of Human Resources recommends:

1. That Council proclaim December 3, 2014, International Day of Persons with Disabilities in Vaughan; and,
2. That the presentation at Council on December 2, 2014, by Mr. Warren Rupnarain, City of Vaughan Accessibility and Diversity Coordinator, be received.

Contribution to Sustainability

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council in the Green Directions, Vaughan, Community Sustainability Environmental Master Plan, Goal 4, and Objective 4.1:

- To foster a city with strong social cohesion, an engaging arts scene, and a clear sense of its culture and heritage.

Economic Impact

There is no economic impact.

Communications Plan

In consultation with the Corporate Communications Department, the International Day of People with Disabilities will be communicated through the City's external website, social media and e-newsletter.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities December 3, 2014 date as proclaimed by the United Nations and present an outline of the initiatives.

Background - Analysis and Options

International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is a United Nations sanctioned day that aims to promote an understanding of people with disability and encourage support for their dignity, rights and well-being. The day seeks to increase awareness of the benefits of the integration of people with disability in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

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In honour of IDPD, Mr. Warren Rupnarain, City of Vaughan Accessibility and Diversity Coordinator will serve as the master of ceremonies of the celebration of the International Day of People with Disabilities at Queen's Park. Mr. Rupnarain will speak about Vaughan's commitment to accessibility and diversity during his presentation.

The barriers persons with disabilities face are more prevalent as a result of the environment in which they live in, rather than their impairment. Obstacles to participation stem more from the environment in which people live than from within the individual's perception of their abilities. These barriers can be prevented, reduced or eliminated.

The inclusivity of citizens with disabilities is a corporate-wide vision shared by Vaughan Council and staff as identified in Vaughan's corporate strategic plan. The City plays an important role in ensuring access for residents with disabilities and through the Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC). The role of the VAAC is to advise Council to support the City's work in identifying and removing barriers to lay the foundation for a barrier-free, inclusive community.

Some of the highlights of the initiatives supported by the VAAC are the following:

- Assisted the Technical Advisory Committee in the completion of annual Accessibility Plans and compliance report with the Ministry of Community and Social Services for the Accessibility for Customer Service Regulation, O. Reg. 429/07;
- Assisted with the City's compliance of the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation;
- Made recommendations related to the need for improved accessibility services.

The City of Vaughan provides a number of programs and services for people with disabilities and regularly identifies and creates new opportunities to reflect the diverse and growing program needs of the community. Opportunities for persons with disabilities are vast and include the creative arts, health and wellness, life and social skills, performing arts, sports and leadership programs. In addition, Vaughan's Accessibility Plan outlines corporate and departmental objectives related to addressing accessibility issues and services at a corporate level.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

This report supports the Vaughan Vision 2020 initiatives of Service Excellence, specifically to "Enhance and Ensure Community Safety, Health and Wellness" and "Preserve our Heritage and Support Diversity, Accessibility, Arts and Culture.

Regional Implications

There are no regional implications.

Conclusion

International Day of Persons with Disabilities is recognized in communities across the world. The day reminds us of the many contributions people with disabilities have made to society. It also reminds us of the physical, social, economic and attitudinal barriers that may exclude them from participating fully and effectively as equal members of society.

It reinforces the importance of accessibility and inclusion and that persons with disabilities need to be part of the decision-making process for programs and services in order to create a barrier free community.

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Attachments

N/A

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