

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 15, 2015

Item 3, Report No. 44, of the Committee of the Whole which was adopted, as amended, by the Council of the City of Vaughan on December 15, 2015.

By receiving Communication C1 from Mr. Chris Wray, AMCT, President, dated December 1, 2015.

3

PROCLAMATION REQUEST – INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN VAUGHAN

The Committee of the Whole recommends:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Chief Human Resources Officer, dated December 1, 2015, be approved; and**
- 2) That the deputation of Ms. Meenu Sikand, Chair, Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee, Rusty Trail, Woodbridge, be received.**

Recommendation

The Chief Human Resources Officer, in consultation with the Corporate Management Team, recommends:

1. That the presentation by the Accessibility and Diversity Coordinator be received;
2. That Council proclaim December 3, 2015, International Day of Persons with Disabilities in Vaughan; and
3. That Council proclaim December 3, International Day of Persons with Disabilities annually going forward.

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 Office of Corporate Communications, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities will be communicated through the City's external website, social media and the City's internal communication platforms.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities December 3, 2015 date as proclaimed by the United Nations and present an outline of the initiatives.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 15, 2015

Item 3, CW Report No. 44 – Page 2

Background - Analysis and Options

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

In honour of IDPD, Mr. Warren Rupnarain, City of Vaughan Accessibility and Diversity Coordinator and members of the Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC) will represent the City at the third annual December 3 tribute event. The goal of the event is to raise awareness of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, recognize the contributions of persons with disabilities as well as the challenges that they face.

The event features an award ceremony with awards in various accessibility categories. Mr. Rupnarain was the recipient of “Outstanding Accessibility Champion in York Region” award in 2013. Mr. Rupnarain was asked by the event organizers to present the aforementioned award at this year’s event.

Also, Ms. Meenu Sikand, Chair of the VAAC will present the “Outstanding Accessibility Champion in the Region of Peel” award at this year’s event.

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 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 the multi-year accessibility plan,
- Assisted with the City’s compliance of the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation;
- Assisted in the planning of events for National Access Awareness Week.

The City of Vaughan provides a number of programs and services for persons 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 Term of Council Strategy Map (2014-2018)

This report supports the Vaughan Vision 2020 initiatives of Service Excellence, specifically to support and promote arts, culture, heritage and sports in the community and continue to ensure the safety and well-being of citizens.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

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Item 3, CW Report No. 44 – Page 3

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 persons 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.

Attachments

N/A

Report prepared by:

Warren Rupnarain, Accessibility and Diversity Coordinator, ext. 8641