

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 11, 2012

Item 21, Report No. 48, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on December 11, 2012.

21 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES - DECEMBER 3, 2012

The Committee of the Whole recommends:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Community Services, dated November 27, 2012, be approved;**
- 2) That the City Clerk be requested to issue an invitation to the Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, to attend a City of Vaughan celebration to take place during National Access Awareness Week between June 2 and 8, 2013; and**

That the invitation stand regardless of Mr. Onley's reappointment as Lieutenant Governor; and

- 3) That a copy of this resolution be sent to the local Members of Parliament and Members of Provincial Parliament.**

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Community Services, in consultation with the Director of Recreation and Culture Department and the Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee, recommends:

1. That Council proclaim December 3, 2012 as "International Day of Persons with Disabilities" in the City of Vaughan.

Contribution to Sustainability

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

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

Economic Impact

Costs associated with the promotion and the delivery of this event will be covered by the 2012 Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee's approved operating budget.

Communications Plan

The City of Vaughan, in cooperation with the Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC) will communicate the observance of "International Day of Persons with Disabilities" through the City's website and public service announcement.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities December 3, 2012 date as proclaimed by the United Nations and present an outline of the initiatives supported by the Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Background - Analysis and Options

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities is a United Nations sanctioned day that aims to

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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. The theme for this year is "Removing barriers to create an inclusive and accessible society for all".

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 in society grows more from the environment in which people live and not 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 and 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 Vaughan Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in the completion of the City's annual Accessibility Plan and the compliance report with the Ministry of Community and Social Services for the Accessibility for Customer Service Regulation, On. Reg. 429/07;
- Hosted events and presentations on accessibility to schools/ community partners during the National Access Awareness Week, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Canada Day and Winterfest
- Addressed accessibility issues through public consultation meeting "Improving our Services with You" in partnership with YRT Mobility Plus;
- Made recommendations related to the need for improved accessibility within the services provided by the City;
- Made recommendations as they relate to the purchase of assistive devices and technology in Recreation and Culture and Access Vaughan.

To celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, City of Vaughan staff in conjunction with the Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee is coordinating an event on/about December 3, 2012 at Vaughan City Hall. This event will outline accessibility achievements and the significance of celebrating International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The Honourable Lieutenant Governor David C. Onley has been invited to be a guest speaker. A presentation of the "Land Connections, Exploring the Group of Seven Legacy" art project, executed by the Connect special needs participants, in collaboration with the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, will be featured. The celebration will conclude with a song performed by participants from the City's recreational programs and the Sara Elisabeth Centre.

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.

A testament to the City of Vaughan's work and achievements for our special needs community is defined by the increase in special needs programs, the increased participation of persons with disabilities in recreation programs, the purchase of assistive devices by the City, the funding support for low income residents with special needs through the Vaughan RecAssist program and

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the increased number of partnerships with community organizations servicing Vaughan's special needs community.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, the report will provide:

- STRATEGIC GOAL:
Pursue Excellence in Service Delivery;
- STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:
Enhance and Ensure Community Safety, Health and Wellness - To deliver high quality services and promote health and wellness through program development and increased awareness.

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Regional Implications

There are no regional implications.

Conclusion

International Day of Persons with Disabilities is recognized in communities across the world. The theme "Removing barriers to create an inclusive and accessible society for all" reminds people 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. Importantly, Vaughan's Accessibility Plan outlines corporate and departmental objectives related to addressing accessibility issues and services.

Attachments

N/A

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