

COUNCIL – DECEMBER 11, 2012

PROCLAMATION REQUEST INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

Recommendation

The City Clerk recommends:

- 1) That January 27, 2013 be proclaimed as "International Holocaust Remembrance Day"; and
- 2) That the proclamation be posted on the City's website and published on the City Page Online.

Contribution to Sustainability

N/A

Economic Impact

N/A

Communications Plan

The Corporate Communications Department posts proclamations issued by the City on the City's website under "Events – Proclamations" and on the City Page Online.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to respond to the request received from the Outreach and Communications Manager, Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program, the Azrieli Foundation.

Background - Analysis and Options

The correspondence from the Outreach and Communications Manager, Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program, the Azrieli Foundation, dated December 4, 2012 is attached (Attachment 1). The request was received too late to be placed on the last Committee of the Whole meeting agenda of November 27, 2012. Due to the time-sensitivity of the proclamation this matter is being placed before Council as an addendum.

The proclamation request meets the requirements of the City's Proclamation as follows:

"That upon request, the City of Vaughan issue Proclamations for events, campaigns or other similar matters:

- (i) Which are promoted by any organization that is a registered charity pursuant to Section 248 of the Income Tax Act"

In 2005 the The United Nations General Assembly dedicated January 27 annually to commemorate and honour the victims of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp which was one of the largest Nazi death camps in eastern Europe.

The Azrieli Foundation is a Canadian organization that supports a wide range of initiatives and programs in the field of Holocaust commemoration and education. The Foundation's mandate includes supporting initiatives and development of educational programs and the "Holocaust

Survivor Memoirs Program" is one of their many initiatives. This program collects, archives, and distributes memoirs of Holocaust survivors in Canada. The Azrieli Foundation has requested that the city proclaim January 27, 2013 as "International Holocaust Remembrance Day"

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

This report supports the strategic priorities established by Vaughan Vision 20/20 Strategic Plan:

Service Excellence

- Preserve Our Heritage & Support Diversity, Arts & Culture

Regional Implications

N/A

Conclusion

Staff is recommending that January 27, 2013 be proclaimed as "International Holocaust Remembrance Day", and that the proclamation be posted on the City's website and on the City Page Online. Given that the next meeting of Council is on January 29, 2013, this report recommends that Council ratify the decision at its meeting of December 11, 2012.

Attachments

Attachment 1 Correspondence from the Outreach and Communications Manager, Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program, The Azrieli Foundation, dated December 4, 2012

Report prepared by

Connie Bonsignore, Administrative Assistant to the City Clerk

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey A. Abrams
City Clerk



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December 3, 2012

Jeffrey A. Abrams, City Clerk
City of Vaughan
2141 Major MacKenzie Dr.
Vaughan, ON L6A 1T1

Dear Mr. Abrams,

January 27 marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp in Eastern Europe. In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly designated this day as International Holocaust Remembrance Day (IHRD), an annual day of commemoration to honour the victims of the Nazi era.

Every member nation of the U.N. has an obligation to honour the memory of Holocaust victims and develop educational programs as part of an international resolve to help recent future acts of genocide. The U.N. resolution that created IHRD reject denial of the Holocaust, and condemns discrimination and violence based on religion or ethnicity.

Last year I approached the Mayor of the Town of Markham to officially proclaim and commemorate January 27th as IHRD, which was welcomed by Mayor Frank Scarpitti and 12 Markham councillors. In the audience were 3 of our Holocaust survivors whose memoirs we had recently published. The survivors presented their signed books to each councillor and the mayor. It was a moving program and one that I am hoping will be accepted by every mayor in our city and the GTA.

In a recent meeting with Deputy Mayor Gino Rosati, he suggested I contact the City of Vaughan for a similar proclamation for the coming year. I would suggest we might have time for a small presentation that would include a series of short films we produced, which are moving tributes to our survivors lives, before, during and after the war. Perhaps we can show one of these films – I would suggest Felix Opatowski - and have some of our Holocaust survivors out to hear the proclamation, as well as residents in your community.

Enclosed are our most recently published memoirs and a DVD of our films for your review.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With kind regards,

Elin Beaumont
Outreach and Communications Manager

Encls.

