



REPORT
PUBLIC WORKS & RECREATION
COMMITTEE

DATE: September 18, 2023

REPORT NO: REC-05-2023

SUBJECT: T-03-2024 SCHEDULE C.docx

CONTACT: Wendy Beaty, Coordinator of Recreation Services
Mike DiPaola, Director of Public Works & Recreation

OVERVIEW:

- At the April 24, 2023 Council meeting a resolution was adopted directing staff “to report back on a plan for further involvement of staff and resources as part of the 2024 budget for the planning and execution of the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade event commencing in 2024 while continuing to work with the volunteer committee members of the Parade Committee”.
- The purpose of this Report is to report back in response to the resolution from April 24, 2023 and to recommend an interim solution to provide more support and resources to the 2023 West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade event. The solution will also serve to improve services to the community.
- The Recreation and Wellness Programmer secondment contract has been extended by the Director of Public Works & Recreation and the CAO until December 31, 2023 and will be funded through savings in the 2023 Operating Budget.
- This report recommends the further extension of the Recreation and Wellness Programmer secondment contract from January 1, 2024 to March 1, 2024 and recommends the extension be funded through reserve transfer of \$14,000.
- The recommended extension will:
 1. support the request and needs of the Santa Claus Parade Committee and the 2023 Santa Claus Parade event.
 2. mitigate risk and liability to the Corporation related to the Santa Claus Parade event
 3. provide an opportunity to enhance service delivery by implementing new processes and programming.
 4. assist with the execution of the Senior’s Community Grant programs.
 5. provide continuity for the 2023 Harvest Routes event.
 6. assist with the training of part time staff for the provision of additional financial services at the Community Centre in the Point of Sale system.
 7. allow staff to fully evaluate event planning needs for the community so that a thorough proposal can be developed for the operation of the Parade event and the recommendation for an events planning staff position in the proposed 2024 budget.
 8. Allow staff to revisit the Santa Claus Parade Committee structure and the Terms of Reference.

1. That, Recommendation Report REC-05-2023, re: West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Event, dated September 18, 2023 be received; and,
2. That, Council approve the extension of the Recreation and Wellness Programmer contract from January 1, 2024 to March 1, 2024 funded through a transfer from the Contingency Reserve in the amount of \$14,000.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Theme #1

- **Build** – a Safe, Connected, Caring and Active Community

Theme #4

- **Advance** – Organizational Capacity and Effectiveness

BACKGROUND:

Prior to 2019 Parade Event and Staff Resources

The Coordinator of Recreation Services served as the Township Liaison on the Christmas in the Village Santa Claus Parade Committee (currently known as the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee) and attended meetings from September to December. This staff person also assisted with putting out garbage cans and minimal parade line-up assistance before the Parade event. The main role of the Liaison was to connect Committee members with the appropriate Township staff for any questions that were Township related.

The Committee's Traffic Coordinator would meet with Public Works staff prior to the event to discuss locations for barricades for the road closures. Public Works staff would place the barricades at the locations on Friday afternoon and Committee members would put them in place on the day of the event.

Committee members and volunteers managed all other aspects of the parade.

At the completion of the 2019 event, the Christmas in the Village Santa Claus Parade Committee Chair and members resigned from their positions on the Committee.

2020 Parade Event & Staff Resources

A new Committee was developed and appointed with no returning members. The West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee Terms of Reference is attached as Appendix A. The Committee's positions and roles are explained in the Terms of Reference, Duties & Responsibilities section. The Terms of Reference clearly describe an event that is planned and executed by Committee members with the Staff Liaison providing guidance.

The 2020 West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade was not held due to Covid-19.

2021 Parade Event & Staff Resources

The West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee held meetings virtually in 2021 and decided that a lights competition and reverse parade would be offered for the 2021 season.

The Coordinator of Recreation Services served as the Township Liaison on the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee and attended meetings. The Coordinator advised

and gave guidance on safety for the execution of the event and prepared training for the volunteer Committee members and created an Emergency Plan.

The event was presented at the West Niagara Fairgrounds and Committee members managed all aspects of the event.

2022 Parade Event & Staff Resources

The Coordinator of Recreation Services was a member of the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee as the Township Liaison. Prior to 2022, there were minimal Township resources used to execute the Parade event. In 2022, the Township Liaison attended meetings aside from Committee meetings and spent many hours managing the following aspects:

- the road closure permit process
- the Niagara Regional Police Services contract
- the traffic management plans
- the volunteer training program
- the float marshalling for the execution of the parade.

Also in 2022, senior Public Works Roads' staff assisted with traffic management plans and operational staff worked several hours on the day of the event. There were no Public Works staffing resources on the day of the event before 2022.

Staff can confirm that there was a significant increase in staff hours dedicated to the planning and execution of the Parade event in 2022, over previous years. This was a result of several factors such as the availability of Committee members, mitigating Township liability, ensuring the success of the event and in response to the Committee's request for additional Township resources.

In 2022, several duties that had been previously managed through positions on the Committee were managed by staff.

West Lincoln Santa Clause Parade Committee - Letter from the Chair

At the April 17, 2023 Admin/Finance/Fire Committee meeting, a letter from the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee Chair was read (attached as Appendix B). The letter outlined the Committee's financial struggles as support for their request for an increased amount through the Community Grants program. The letter also requested increased Township staff and resources to support the Parade event. Further, the letter identified a concern from the Committee for the safe operation of the event through trained and experienced staff rather than volunteers.

At the April 24, 2023 Council meeting, a resolution was adopted to direct staff "to report back on a plan for further involvement of staff and resources as part of the 2024 budget for the planning and execution of the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade event commencing in 2024 while continuing to work with the volunteer committee members of the Parade Committee".

CURRENT SITUATION:

2023 West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee & Event Execution

Two Committee members have recently resigned and only one new member has recently joined the Committee for 2023. This new Committee member has reported that they will not be available on the Parade day. The Committee will be functioning with fewer members than last year's event. As the Chair mentioned in the letter, Committee members have full time jobs, are busy with children and other commitments that limit their availability. The result is an increased need for Township staff and resources immediately with the event being less than two months away.

2024 Budget Proposal

Staff are currently preparing the 2024 budget proposal for Council. The need for staffing support for the Santa Claus Parade event coupled with a need for staff resources in the area of event planning in general will be addressed through the 2024 budget process. Staff's preliminary proposal is for one (1) additional FTE (full time equivalent) in the 2024 budget to assist with the Santa Claus Parade and other community events.

Interim Staffing Solution

As a means to create a well-informed 2024 budget proposal, and to support this year's 2023 West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee and event, staff is recommending the extension of the current secondment contract (Recreation & Wellness Programmer).

In June of 2022 the Recreation and Wellness Programmer began a leave of absence, which was followed by a parental leave. This leave was filled by secondment by existing staff resources after a thorough recruitment process. This secondment contract ended September 15, 2023 but has been extended until December 31, 2023 by the Director of Public Works & Recreation and the CAO. Sufficient funds are available in the 2023 operating budget for this extension through savings in youth and adult programming and the Canada Day operating budget. These savings are attributed to a combination of higher revenue, lower staffing costs and a federal grant received for the Canada Day event.

Staff recommend a further extension of the secondment contract until March 1, 2024 to align with the timeframe of the 2024 budget approval process for the following reasons:

- It will support the request and needs of the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee and the 2023 Parade event.
- It will mitigate risk and liability to the Corporation related to the Parade event.
- It will provide an opportunity to enhance service delivery by implementing new processes and programming.
- It will assist with the execution of the Senior's Community Grant programs.
- It will provide continuity for the 2023 Harvest Routes event.
- It will assist with the training of part time staff for the provision of additional financial services at the Community Centre in the Point of Sale system.
- It will allow staff to fully evaluate event planning needs for the community so that a thorough proposal can be developed for the operation of the Parade event and the recommendation for an events planning staff position in the proposed 2024 budget.
- It will allow staff to revisit the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee structure and the Terms of Reference.

The Strategic Plan has identified the following theme and strategy:

BUILD a safe, connected, caring and active community

- Leverage our facilities and develop partnerships to enhance quality and appropriate community programming and expand community events, gatherings and local attractions.

The extension will provide an opportunity to evaluate and define an events planning staff position for the 2024 budget proposal that is guided by the Corporate Strategic Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The 2023 portion of the recommended contract extension will be funded through savings in the 2023 approved operating budget in the amount of \$26,000. Sufficient funds are available in the 2023 operating budget for this extension through savings in youth and adult programming and the Canada Day operating budget. These savings are attributed to a combination of higher revenue, lower staffing costs and a federal grant received for the Canada Day event.

The 2024 recommended contract extension from January 1, 2024 to March 1, 2024 will be funded through a transfer from the contingency reserve in the amount of \$14,000. Should the proposed service level request of 1 FTE be approved through the 2024 budget approval process, the transfer from the contingency reserve would not be required.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS:

This Report was reviewed by the Township CAO, the Director of Finance and the Clerk's Office.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommend the extension of the Recreation & Wellness Programmer secondment contract until March 1, 2024. This will support the needs of the 2023 Santa Claus Parade event and will provide an opportunity to assess event planning needs for the development of the 2024 budget proposal.

The extension would be funded through savings in the 2023 operating budget and through contingency reserve until the 2024 budget approval process is complete.

ATTACHMENTS:

APPENDIX A – Terms of Reference Parade Committee

APPENDIX B – West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee - Letter from Committee Chair

Prepared & Submitted by:

Approved by:



Wendy Beaty
Coordinator of Recreation Services



Beverly Hendry
Chief Administrative Officer



Mike DiPaola, P.Eng
Director of Public Works & Recreation