

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) JUNE 21, 2005

SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT UNIT

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services recommends that this report be received.

Purpose

This report is to provide information on the Special Enforcement Unit of the Enforcement Services Department

Economic Impact

none

Background - Analysis and Options

At the Working Session of May 25, 2005 Council directed that staff provide a report to the Committee of the Whole (Working Session) meeting of June 21, 2005 with respect to job functions, responsibilities and activities of the Special Enforcement Unit, including number and nature of charges laid and parking tickets issued.

The Special Enforcement Unit was established during the 2002 Budget process to provide a visible presence in the City parks and Community Centres to deter loitering, vandalism, alcohol and drug use. The intent of the program was to get officers out into City property in highly visible uniforms, and use bicycles where possible to patrol areas that regular vehicles could not access. The City of Vaughan Safe City Committee assisted in the development of the unit by donating two bicycles to the unit and help launch the program along with the Yellow Jacket Program.

The unit was created with five officers that received formal enhanced training in bicycle operations, investigations, and self-defense tactics. This unit continues to work closely with York Regional Police 4 District Community Response Unit in our parks and open spaces. This partnership has been very successful and was even mentioned in the York Regional Police 2003 Annual Report. This position liaises with various intergovernmental agencies for information sharing purposes as well as joint initiatives.

This unit works predominantly late evening shifts. This is the most effective shift as it coincides with the times that problems generally occur.

Public relations is an integral part of this position. Officers routinely participate in food drives, parades, park openings, the Yellow Jacket Program, and participate as a unit in various charity events such as the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics and raising money for Ronald McDonald House.

Special Enforcement Officers educate, investigate and as a last resort, prosecute violations under City of Vaughan Bylaws that govern Parks, Noise, Nuisances, Signs, Licensing, Zoning, and on occasion, act as support staff to property standards investigations. The Special Enforcement Officers investigated 265 complaints relating to problems at parks and community centres in 2004. Also in 2004, the unit issued 98 tickets for non parking related violations. In addition, the unit issued 69 Trespass Notices under the Trespass to Property Act in 2004. This position has also received authorization for the enforcement of the Trespass to Property Act for property

belonging to both School Boards in the event that a situation that originated on City property migrates to School property.

Parking enforcement also accounts for approximately 40% of the five officers' responsibility. It is estimated that each Officer annually issues an average of 1300 parking tickets which accounts for approximately \$400,000 in revenue. The combined fine generation by this unit makes it revenue neutral.

This unit is designed to deliver specialized targeted enforcement activity to City parks, community centres and open spaces while augmenting the parking enforcement role of the Department. This unit has also been called upon to assist in other areas of the department on short term, specialized projects. Recently, this unit was temporarily reduced to four officers as one member has been re-assigned to a special project for one year.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision

This report is in keeping with the Vaughan Vision as it speaks to community safety and service excellence.

The necessary resources have been approved and allocated.

Conclusion

The Special Enforcement Unit provides a high level of service while maintaining revenue neutrality and will continue to be an asset to the City.

Attachments

none

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Respectfully submitted,

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Commissioner of Legal & Administrative Services