

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - APRIL 4, 2005

REQUEST FOR STAFF TO REPORT ON PARTNERING WITH EARTH RANGERS

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Community Services, in consultation with the Director of Recreation and Culture, recommends:

That the following report be received for information and that the Earth Rangers Foundation Pilot Project be approved by Council.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of Council that the Department of Recreation and Culture staff are working with the Earth Rangers Foundation to undertake a number of mutual program opportunities to benefit the community.

Background - Analysis and Options

On March 29, 2004 Council directed staff to report on the feasibility of partnering with the Earth Rangers Foundation to explore opportunities. In the fall of 2004 Department of Recreation staff met with the Earth Rangers Foundation representatives to discuss future programming ideas.

This summer, the Earth Rangers Program will collaborate with the city-operated Camp Forest Green to deliver a pilot program that combines the fun and safety parents and campers have come to expect from City of Vaughan Camps with the message and education component of the Earth Rangers. This pilot consists of the following three objectives:

1. To include visitations and programming to the Earth Ranger Centre as part of the Camp Forest Green Camp experience;
2. For pre-summer 2005 the Earth Rangers staff will provide nature/outdoor education instruction training to City of Vaughan Day Camp Nature and Environmental Specialists. The Earth Ranger staff will teach concepts such as Flow Learning and provide resources such as Joseph Cornell (Sharing Nature with Children); all to ensure that the City staff are delivering a message that has buy-in. Flow Learning allows the leader to put checks and balances in place to ensure that campers understand the message and are able to place global environment concerns into an "at my house" perspective;
3. To jointly promote the Earth Rangers Program and the City's Camp Forest Green program through media and promotional literature.

For the summer of 2005 it was agreed that a pilot project involving Camp Forest Green would be the best starting point to ensure a full realization of both organizations goals. Based on the success of this initiative further programming will be explored to include the City of Vaughan's Camp Oradaca and other programs. An estimated 240 Camp Forest Green campers between the ages of 6 to 10 will attend the Earth Ranger program.

All services provided by the Earth Rangers in this partnership are at zero cost to the City of Vaughan. The only additional cost will be camper transportation costs from the campsite to the Earth Rangers Centre. Transportation costs will be included as part the program registration fees for participants.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and no additional resources are required to undertake this initiative with the Earth Rangers Foundation.

Conclusion

Staff have provided this report for information and recommend that Council approve the Earth Rangers Foundation Pilot Project. The City of Vaughan looks forward to working with the Earth Rangers Foundation by enhancing the program offerings for the Camp Forest Green program in the summer of 2005. This partnership will provide mutual benefits for both organizations in the way of programming, training and public awareness.

Attachments

None

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Respectfully submitted,

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