

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - DECEMBER 1, 2009

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES – DECEMBER 3, 2009

Recommendation

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

1. That the presentation by David Hingsburger – Director of Clinical and Educational Services for VITA Community Living Services be received; and,
2. That the Schedule of Activities for International Day of Persons with Disabilities – December 3, 2009 (Attachment 1) be received.

Contribution to Sustainability

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council in the Green Directions, Vaughan, Community Sustainability Environmental Master Plan, Objective 4.1:

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

Economic Impact

Although there are no direct costs associated with this information report, the costs associated with the promotion and delivery of International Day of Persons with Disabilities activities for 2009 are included within the approved 2009 operating budget.

Communications Plan

The Recreation and Culture Department and Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC) will continue to communicate and inform the community as it relates to its programs, initiatives, and the celebration of International Day of Persons with Disabilities through the City website, media, advertising, and the distribution of flyers to community centres, Vaughan Public Libraries and elementary and secondary schools in Vaughan. Outreach to community groups, cultural organizations and businesses will take place via poster distribution and a news release.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide information to Council relating to International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3, 2009 via a presentation by David Hingsburger – Director of Clinical and Educational Services for VITA Community Living Services; and, the schedule of activities for this day (Attachment 1).

Background - Analysis and Options

People with disabilities represent a significant and growing part of the population. “**Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for All: Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and Their Communities around the World**” is the theme for the 2009 International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This annual observance promotes an understanding of disability issues and aims to mobilize support for dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of the benefits to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities into every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

Each year, Vaughan celebrates International Day of Persons with Disabilities in a myriad of ways. This year will be marked with a presentation from David Hingsburger and a musical performance by the Vaughan Shining Stars. Mr. Hingsburger is the Director of Clinical and Educational Services for VITA Community Living Services, 2009 honouree on the Disability Hall of Fame, famous therapist, advocate and writer. Mr. Hingsburger will talk about the inclusion, the progress and the advancement of persons with disabilities and the rights and freedom they gained in the community. The Vaughan Shining Stars is a choir of persons with disabilities from various community agencies who, under the guidance of Jeffery Smith from the Sara Elizabeth Centre, developed their musical contribution title "Let Me Shine", composed by Jeffrey Smith, for this day.

Further activities to celebrate the annual observance include a display of art by the Fun Club in Council Chambers and a series of city-wide recreational activities on December 3, 2009. The complete list of the 2009 recreational activities can be found on Attachment 1. One activity of note is an inclusive basketball game that has been organized in partnership with the Vaughan Secondary School and Vaughan Special Olympics Ontario. The inclusive basketball game will be held at Maple Community Centre on Thursday, December 3, 2009 at 5:00pm.

VAAC, in partnership with the City of Vaughan, seeks to improve the quality of programs and services for persons with disabilities on an ongoing basis. While the inclusion of citizens with disabilities is a corporate-wide vision shared by Council and staff as stated in the Vaughan Vision 2020, VAAC's role is to assist the Corporation in the preparation and implementation of the annual Accessibility Plan; to advise council on the planning and accessibility of municipal buildings and services; and to address and identify the needs of the community by the removal and prevention of barriers in the City of Vaughan's by-laws, policies, programs and practices. VAAC follows the guidance of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA), 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005.

Some of VAAC's most recent achievements include the following:

- participated in the Accessibility Advisory Committees Regional Forum through the Ministry of Communities and Social Services;
- provided public information and education on Accessibility in Vaughan during the 2009 National Access Awareness Week;
- organized a workshop for Information and Technology Management with respect to the TEXTNET software;
- provided recommendations to the City of Vaughan - Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for the planning and implementation process of the Accessibility Plan and the Accessibility for Customer Service Policy;
- participated to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Community Visioning Open House; and
- recommends systems, services and programs to increase accessibility.

A recent example of a new system to improve accessibility for individuals with moderate loss and with/without hearing in the recreational programs and events, under the recommendation of the VAAC and in collaboration with Canadian Hearing Society, the Recreation and Culture Department purchased a **William Sound Multichannel FM System** consisting of 5 Pocket Talker Listening Receivers and 1 Transmitter. With a reception distance of approximately 80 feet, the transmitter functions like a microphone. The transmitter is connected with either the microphone lapel or the conference mike and sends the sound wirelessly to the receiver enabling the person to hear clearly and loudly. The assistive device can be used for one-on-one or multiple

conversations at the same time. The assistive device was used during the summer camp program to assist a hard of hearing summer student staff to communicate with campers. Further, the device will be used to enable the access for persons with moderate loss and with/without hearing in summer camp programs, general programs, fitness classes, public events and public meetings.

Each year new recreational opportunities are created to reflect the diverse needs of the community such as Just Dance and Spotlight. In order to support the Active Together - Physical Activity Strategy, this year the Recreation and Culture Department took a special approach to bridge the gap from an access point of view for persons with disabilities by developing adaptive sport programs such as: FUNdamentals of sports, In the Zone, Active Play and Interactive Adaptive Aquatics. Volunteer opportunities have been developed for students with disabilities through the T.E.A.C.H. program. Further, staff continued to work with new community partners to address service and program gaps. For example, additional social recreation and programs for children/youth/adults are offered through Alternatives, Community Living York South, META Centre, MS Society, Kinark, VITA and Vaughan in Action Community Program.

In addition, summer employment opportunities have been opened to young adults with disabilities. To enhance the participation of persons with disabilities in swimming, the Recreation and Culture Department has purchased water wheelchairs at all pools and provided one-on-one support in all programs.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

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

Regional Implications

N/A

Conclusion

While this report describes the programs and services for improving the access of citizens with disabilities during the last year, we are aware that not all barriers have been identified or removed. The VAAC will continue to raise awareness on accessibility issues and make recommendations on the preparation of the annual corporate wide Accessibility Plan and the implementation of the AODA so that citizens with disabilities will not be limited in any way. VAAC will also continue to raise public awareness and understanding of issues affecting people with disabilities during International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3, 2009 as a time to make a renewed commitment to these principles of dignity and justice and to ensure implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Attachments

1. Schedule of Activities for International Day of Persons with Disabilities – December 3, 2009

Report Prepared By

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Respectfully submitted,

Marlon Kallideen, Commissioner of Community Services

International Day of Persons with Disabilities



December 3, 2009

**Vaughan Accessibility
Advisory Committee invites you
to join us as we celebrate International
Day of Persons with Disabilities!**

FREE Recreational Activities on **Thursday, December 3**
at the following Vaughan Community Centres:

COMMUNITY CENTRE	ACTIVITY	AGE	TIME	CONTACT
AL PALLADINI 905-832-8564	Length Swim	18 years+	10:00am - 1:00pm	Alexandria Weatherup-Leach ext.7201
	Lunch-time Skate	All Ages	12:00 - 1:00pm	Art Mastantuono ext.7209
CHANCELLOR 905-832-8620	Length Swim; Parent & Tot Swim	18 years+ & under 7 years	10:30am - 1:00pm	Robin Roy ext.7506
	Recreational Bocce	All Ages	12:00 - 5:00pm	Virginia Rubino ext.7504
	Youth Basketball	10-17 years	3:30 - 6:00pm	
DUFFERIN CLARK 905-832-8554	Youth Games Room	13-18 years V.S.S.	11:00am - 3:00pm	Dee Richards ext.4233
	Recreational Swim	All Ages	1:00 - 3:00pm	Josie Filippelli ext.4252
FATHER ERMANNO BULFON 905-879-8732	Youth Gym	10-17 years	4:00 - 6:00pm	Rick DeMedeiros ext.7121
	Youth Room Drop-In	10-17 years	5:00 - 7:00pm	
GARNET A. WILLIAMS 905-832-8552	Length Swim	All Ages	10:30am - 3:00pm	Brook Beatty ext.5220
	Sportsarama	3-5 years	2:00 - 3:00pm	Steve Flood ext.5209
	Recreational Ball Hockey	18 years+	8:30 - 10:30pm	Domenic Grossi ext.5207
MAPLE 905-832-2377	Basketball Tournament	18-29 years	10:30am - 12:00pm	Mihaela Neagoe ext.7405
	Inclusive Basketball Game: Vaughan VoyageUrs vs. Special Olympics Ontario Vaughan Raptors	16 years+	5:00 - 6:00pm	
ROSEMOUNT 905-832-8552	Parent & Child Shinny Hockey	6-12 years	11:45am - 12:45pm	Tony Medeiros ext.3600
VELLORE VILLAGE 905-832-8544	Youth Gym	10-17 years	4:00 - 7:00pm	Rob Moniz ext.7306
	Youth Room	10-17 years	6:00 - 9:00pm	