

PROCLAMATION REQUEST – PRIDE WEEK

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services and the City Clerk recommend:

- 1) That the Week of June 13–19, 2004 be proclaimed PRIDE Week; and
- 2) That the proclamation be posted on the City’s website, published on the City Page space permitting and that staff issue a news release.

Purpose

To respond to a request received from Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG).

Background - Analysis and Options

A request has been received from PFLAG to proclaim June 13–19, 2004 PRIDE Week (Attachment #1). PFLAG meets Council’s requirements respecting the issuance of proclamations in that it is a registered charity under section 248 of the Income Tax Act. PFLAG is actively involved in the promotion of PRIDE Week (Attachment #2). In addition, PRIDE York Region has submitted an earlier request for this proclamation (Attachment #3). PRIDE York Region itself does not meet Council’s criteria to have the proclamation issued as it is not a registered charitable organization.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

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

Conclusion

It is being recommended that June 13-19, 2004 be proclaimed PRIDE Week, that the proclamation be posted on the City’s website, published on the City Page, space permitting, and that staff issue a news release.

Attachments

Attachment #1	Letter from PFLAG dated January 30, 2004
Attachment #2	Email from PFLAG dated April 25, 2004
Attachment #3	Letter from PRIDE York Region dated January 26, 2004

Report prepared by:

John D. Leach

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Swayze,
Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services

John D. Leach
City Clerk



PFLAG York Region
P.O.Box 87586, 300 John St., Thornhill, ON, L3T 7R3

January 30, 2004

John Leach 1/3

Mayor Michael Di Biase & Members of Vaughan Council
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, ON L6A 1T1

Re: PRIDE Week 2004 ~ June 13 through 19 ~ Proclamation Request

Dear Mayor Di Biase and Council,

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, their families and friends through support and education. We provide opportunities for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and act to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

In that spirit, we are writing to request an official Proclamation of Pride Week 2004 by the Town of Vaughan. A Proclamation will send an important message, not only to Vaughan's LGBT citizens, but also to their families, friends, neighbours and co-workers that Vaughan is an inclusive and supportive community where diversity is celebrated in all its forms.

We also want to express our support for PRIDE York Region and the community service and outreach activities they provide. PFLAG has been a member organization of PRIDE York Region since its inception. Our members have been active participants in Pride celebrations since the first York Region Pride Week in 2001.

It is our sincere hope that this year the City of Vaughan will join other York Region municipalities in recognizing Pride Week with an official Proclamation. Can we count on your support?

Sincerely,

Marilyn Byers, President
PFLAG York Region

c.c. PRIDE York Region

telephone: 1-866-440-4415 fax: 416-929-2252
e-mail: pflag_york@sympatico.ca www.gaycanada.com/pflag-york
PFLAG York Region is a non-profit charitable organization
Charitable # 86159-2244-RR0001

ATTACHMENT #2

Leach, John

From: Marilyn Byers [pflag_york@sympatico.ca]
Sent: Sunday, April 25, 2004 12:24 AM
To: Leach, John
Subject: Re: Pride Week Proclamation

PFLAG co-sponsors the annual Rainbow Community worship service and also independantly hosts a community meet-and-greet after the service with refreshments provided and served by our dedicated volunteers.

PFLAG is an integral part of the community outreach/awareness displays which will appear in local public libraries again this year. We provide educational materials, posters and other items for inclusion and offer assistance with setup. (So far this year, displays are confirmed in Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Markham and Richmond Hill libraries and literature will be available in public libraries in all municipalities. We are awaiting display confirmation from Vaughan and the other remaining libraries.)

PFLAG relies year-round on the PRIDE York Region McBean Library at the Krasman Centre in Richmond Hill. This library is a community resource of LGBTQ-themed books and is an annual Pride Week initiative which is supported enthusiastically by PFLAG. Many of the books on the shelves are donations from PFLAG members and friends. The library will more than double in size once again this year with the new books to be announced as part of PRIDE Week festivities. PFLAG will mark this event by adding the library resource to our web site.

Last year I participated in two public PRIDE presentations where I was a featured speaker.

----- Original Message -----

From: Leach, John
To: pflag_york@sympatico.ca
Sent: Thursday, April 22, 2004 3:23 PM
Subject: Pride Week Proclamation

Attention: Ms. Byers:

As you are making this request on behalf of another organization, please indicate how your group participates in Pride Week celebrations. Thank You J Leach City Clerk

4/26/2004



January 26, 2004

Mayor Michael Di Biase & Members of Vaughan Council
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, ON L6A 1T1

Re: PRIDE Week 2004 ~ June 13 through 19

Dear Mayor Di Biase and Council,

As you are aware, the City of Vaughan was the only York Region municipality to refuse Proclamation of Pride Week in 2002 and again in 2003. We were disappointed by those decisions, but encouraged by Council's willingness to grant "official recognition" of Pride Week in 2003, and the subsequent referral to staff of the City's proclamations policy with a view to allowing more leeway for proclamations in the future.

We are writing now to make our official request for Proclamation of Pride Week 2004, June 13 through 19, and to seek your support for this important recognition of the lives and contributions of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities in the City of Vaughan and throughout the Region.

During the past two years, PRIDE York Region has developed liaisons with York Regional Police, York Region District School Board, York Region Health Services, and many other service providers and community organizations. We've made presentations to social service staff on same sex adoption and creating safe spaces; participated in minority awareness training for police officers; mounted Pride displays in regional public libraries; and spoken with hundreds of students about overcoming heterosexism in their schools and communities. We maintain a toll-free phone line, an informational web site, an active speakers bureau, and distribute a monthly e-newsletter to over 1400 subscribers. Our PRIDE York Region McBean Pride Library, located at the Krasman Centre in Richmond Hill, currently houses over 300 books, both reference and fiction, which are available as a resource for the people of York Region.

Once again this year, our aim with Pride Week is to increase awareness and understanding in the community through outreach initiatives that will continue year-round. It is our sincere hope that the City of Vaughan will join in recognizing this important week with an official Proclamation. Should you require additional information in order to respond to this request, please let us know and we will be pleased to provide it. Due to the time and effort involved in Pride Week preparations, we would appreciate receiving your decision by March 31st. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

1-888-442-9967

Ian A McCallum and Cheryl Harrington
Co-Chairs, PRIDE York Region
c.c. Vaughan Watch



Box 182 • Markham • Ontario • L3P 3J7
yorkpride@yahoo.ca • www.gaycanada.com/prideyorkregion • 1.888.4GAYYORK

CC: John Leach *ly*