

**PROCLAMATION REQUEST –  
NATIONAL FIBROMYALGIA AND CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME DAY**

**Recommendation**

The City Clerk recommends:

- 1) That May 12, 2007 be proclaimed as “**NATIONAL FIBROMYALGIA AND CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME DAY**”; 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.

**Economic Impact**

N/A

**Communications Plan**

The Corporate Communications Department posts proclamations issued by the City on the City's website under “Events – Proclamations”. Publishing proclamations on the City Page depends on space availability. Corporate Communications will, given sufficient lead-time, issue news releases in support of the proclamation.

**Purpose**

To respond to requests received from the Richmond Hill Fibromyalgia-Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Wellness Support Group in Collaboration with FM-CFS Association of Canada.

**Background - Analysis and Options**

A copy of correspondence received from the Richmond Hill Fibromyalgia-Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Wellness Support Group in Collaboration with FM-CFS Association of Canada (Attachments #1).

The proclamation request meets one of the requirements of the City's Proclamation Policy, namely, “*which are promoted by an organization that is a registered charity pursuant to Section 248 of the Income Tax Act*”.

The Richmond Hill Fibromyalgia-Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Wellness Support Group in Collaboration with FM-CFS Association of Canada has requested the City publicize this proclamation in an effort to promote awareness of this debilitating disease. Council has approved this proclamation in previous years.

**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.

**Regional Implications**

N/A

**Conclusion**

Staff is recommending that May 12, 2007 be proclaimed as "National Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Day" and that the proclamation be posted on the City's website and published on the City Page, space permitting.

**Attachments**

Attachment #1 - Correspondence from the Richmond Hill Fibromyalgia-Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Wellness Support Group in Collaboration with FM-CFS Association of Canada, dated March 5, 2007

**Report prepared by:**

John D. Leach, City Clerk

Respectfully submitted,

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John D. Leach,  
City Clerk

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Janice Atwood-Petkovski,  
Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services

## Richmond Hill Fibromyalgia-Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Wellness Support Group

In Collaboration with FM-CFS Association of Canada  
Charitable registration #89241-7742-RR0001 www.fm-cfs.ca

Mayor Linda D. Jackson  
Town Councillors,  
City of Vaughan

March 5th, 2007

### **RE: Request for Proclamation**

Dear Mayor Jackson,

Thank you for your Council's support in 2006 in proclaiming May 12<sup>th</sup> National Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Day. To assist our local Support Groups and the tens of thousands of sufferers across our Region, we are once again asking for your moral support and a proclamation in 2007.

### **Background**

As we wrote to you last year, Fibromyalgia (FM) and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) continue to afflict **over 1 million Canadians**<sup>1</sup>, with some estimates as high as 1.5 million. Based on population, this means there are at least 25,000 afflicted in York Region, perhaps as high as **30,000 sufferers or more**, right here in our community.

FM and CFS (also called Myalgic Encephalomyelitis or ME) are 'invisible illnesses' causing chronic pain, cognitive impairment; they are debilitating for the sufferers, devastating for their families, employers and communities. The young, old and all ethnicities are afflicted, more women than men—about 4:5—which means mothers and their children suffer the consequences of these cruel, relentless diseases.

FM-CFS patients are frequently un- or misdiagnosed, there is no known cause, no cure, and only marginal treatments with serious, life-threatening side effects. And these agonizing illnesses also create **an enormous financial burden**.

### **Financial and social costs**

Annual federal costs, which of course download to each and every one of us, are estimated conservatively at **\$ 3.5 Billion**<sup>2</sup>:

- ▶ \$ 2 Billion spent on disability payments and lost taxes
- ▶ \$ 1.5 Billion spent on medications and physicians' expenses

Incremental costs to healthcare from hospital visits and extended stays—and the strain

that puts on hospitals like York Central, Markham Stouffville and Southlake Regional Health Centre—are incalculable. As are the costs to:

- **local and regional employers** in lost-time and talent, and insurance expense
- **provincial and municipal taxpayers** for increased demand on social services
- **patients and their families** for bankruptcies, lost income, savings and investments; non-reimbursed expenses for medications and therapies; legal expenses incurred seeking fair treatment; and, most critically,
- **burdened, desperate patients and families—many with kids—who** break down under the unrelenting stress of illness, creating a human cost that is immeasurable.

### **How we can help: Our request**

Our group, and many others across Canada and around the world, seeks to promote awareness of FM-CFS, educate the public about the illnesses, motivate actions necessary to find a cure, and better support sufferers. In support of these goals, we request and encourage you and the Town Council to once again proclaim:

### **May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007: “National Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Awareness Day”**

With your continued support, we will sustain and expand our efforts to support FM-CFS sufferers in our communities. We will seek medical answers, motivate healthcare, legislative and legal change, and fight these diseases that devastate so many lives.

**Thank you for your consideration and support.**

*On behalf of Richmond Hill FM-CFS Wellness Support Group,*

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<sup>1</sup> National ME/FM Action Network: StatsCan Community Health Survey & White KP, Speechley M, Harth M, Ostbye T. The London fibromyalgia epidemiology study: the prevalence of fibromyalgia syndrome in London, Ontario. *Journal of Rheumatology* 26(7):15700-1576, 1999.  
[http://www.mefmaction.net/Patients/Disability/IllnessCost/tabid/157/Default.aspx#\\_edn2](http://www.mefmaction.net/Patients/Disability/IllnessCost/tabid/157/Default.aspx#_edn2)

<sup>2</sup> FM-CFS Association of Canada: FM & CFS/ME in Canada 2007, <http://www.fm-cfs.ca/1-FM-CFS-Ca.pdf>

## Mauti, Kay

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**From:** Leach, John  
**Sent:** Monday, March 05, 2007 10:16 AM  
**To:** Mauti, Kay  
**Subject:** FW: Request for Proclamation  
**Attachments:** LettertoMayorJacksonVaughanEmailedMar5.doc

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**From:** Compagno, Mirella  
**Sent:** Monday, March 05, 2007 10:15 AM  
**To:** 'Melanie Cunningham'  
**Cc:** Thorne, Kathy; Leach, John  
**Subject:** RE: Request for Proclamation

Dear Ms. Cunningham,

I am responding to your email on behalf of Mayor Jackson.

Requests for proclamations are handled through our City Clerk, Mr. John Leach. I have copied him on this email for response.

Best regards,

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Mirella Compagno  
Executive Assistant to the Mayor  
(905) 832-8585, Ext.8837  
[mirella.compagno@vaughan.ca](mailto:mirella.compagno@vaughan.ca)

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**From:** Melanie Cunningham [mailto:[melanie@wellspringpro.com](mailto:melanie@wellspringpro.com)]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 05, 2007 9:41 AM  
**To:** Mayor@vaughan.ca; Compagno, Mirella; Thorne, Kathy  
**Subject:** Request for Proclamation

Good morning. I'm a recent volunteer with the Richmond Hill Fibromyalgia-Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (FM-CFS) Wellness support Group. Last year, your Council provided moral support for our organization and the millions of sufferers across Canada, by proclaiming May 12th National Fibromyalgia-Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Awareness Day.

Attached please find a letter making the same request again this year. Can you please let me know if there's anything else you need from me to assist in this process? And, I understand there will be a supporting document provided back to our group, I'd kindly ask that any documentation get sent to me.

Thanks in advance for your help and please let me know if/when this proclamation is likely to take place. Regards,  
Melanie.

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3/5/2007

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