

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - FEBRUARY 2, 2010

DEPUTATION: MS MARTHA BELL - LANTERN WALK FOR EARTH HOUR - WARD 2

Recommendation

The Director of Economic Development, in consultation with the Director of Recreation and Culture and the Director of Buildings and Facilities recommends:

1. That the City of Vaughan join the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF) Earth Hour project as an official participant;
2. That the venue for the 3rd Annual Woodbridge Lantern Walk be the Woodbridge Pool and Memorial Arena (rain location) and parking lot in respect of Earth Hour on Saturday, March 27, 2010 from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm;
3. That Services in Kind, equipment requests and staff be provided as necessary for the event;
4. That the City power down the lights as much as is safe in the parking lot of the Woodbridge Pool and Memorial Arena during Earth Hour on Saturday, March 27, 2010 from 8:30 to 9:30 pm;
5. That the City advertise their participation by posting the event including information about the Woodbridge Lantern Walk on the Environment Page, the Community Calendar, the City Page Online and print and distribute posters to municipal buildings, community centres and libraries and promote Earth Hour to staff internally through email communications;

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 1.1 and 1.2:

- To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move towards carbon neutrality for the City of Vaughan's facilities and infrastructure; and,
- To promote reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the City of Vaughan.

Economic Impact

The economic impact of this event is minimal.

Communications Plan

The City will advertise their participation by posting the event including information about the Woodbridge Lantern Walk on the Environment Page, the Community Calendar, the City Page Online and print and distribute posters to municipal buildings, community centres and libraries and promote Earth Hour to staff internally through email communications.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate Council and the City's support for Earth Hour 2010 by adopting the recommendations herewith.

Background - Analysis and Options

At the Committee of the Whole Council meeting of January 12, 2010 a deputation was received from Mr. Brian McCran on behalf of Ms. Martha Bell, Chairperson of Woodbridge Lantern Walk, and written submissions dated December 8, 2009 (Attachment # 2) and January 6, 2010 (Attachment # 3) with respect to the Earth Hour Committee's request for Council's support of the 3rd annual Woodbridge Lantern Walk for the Earth Hour Event.

Staff were asked to provide a report that the City of Vaughan recognize the event as an important community initiative and that staff provide to council an appropriate motion after reviewing the matter.

The Earth Hour event initiated by the WWF was officially announced in December 2007 at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change, attracting the participation of almost 2.3 million Sydney, Australia residents, including more than 2,100 businesses, resulting in a 10 per cent reduction across the electrical grid, saving 25,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide, the equivalent of taking about 50,000 cars off the road for one hour.

In 2008, Earth Hour became the biggest voluntary power reduction in history, with some 50 million people around the world switching off their lights for one hour, during which more than 370 municipalities took part in more than 35 countries across seven continents, including Antarctica, and across more than 18 different time zones.

In 2009, almost 4,000 cities in 88 countries participated in Earth Hour, far exceeding WWF's global goal of 1,000 cities. Canada was again among the leading countries with more than 280 cities participating nationally. Several municipalities have already signed up to participate in Earth Hour 2010.

Earth Hour has become an annual global event intended to raise awareness of the need for action on global warming. The City of Vaughan has participated in this event for the last two years and is a strong supporter of how turning off lights during Earth Hour is an example of how we can all become more proactive on environmental issues.

Participating in this historic event sends a powerful message to every citizen and business around the world that it is possible to take action on climate change and that switching off our lights is just one simple action we can take to help make a difference. The City of Vaughan cares about our planet and is willing to take a leadership position against climate change and global warming.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, the report will provide:

- STRATEGIC GOAL:
Service Excellence – Providing service excellence to citizens.
- STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:
Lead and Promote Environmental Sustainability.

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

Regional Implications

There are no regional implications associated with this report.

Conclusion

Participating in the Earth Hour initiative on March 27, 2010 will demonstrate the City of Vaughan's ongoing commitment to promoting and practicing environmentally responsible behaviour.

Attachments

1. Deputation from Martha Bell
2. Request of Vaughan Council from Woodbridge Lantern Walk Committee

Report prepared by:

Rebekah McGurran, Economic Developer, ext 8426.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Simmonds, Director of Economic Development

Subject: FW: Deputation

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
ITEM: Deputation a)
CW – January 12, 2010

From: Martha Bell [mailto:martha_bell@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, December 08, 2009 3:07 PM
To: Abrams, Jeffrey
Cc: Jamie Maynard
Subject: Deputation

Hello,


The Earth Hour committee would like to make a deputation to the Council requesting its support for our 3rd annual Woodbridge Lantern Walk for Earth Hour event.

We will request of Council that

1. they register as a City with the global Earth Hour event,
2. they give a videotaped statement of the City's commitment to action to reduce fossil fuel emissions in its operations, procurement and education of its residents,
3. that the City sponsor the event as it did last year with the free use of the Vaughan stage and the Woodbridge arena and parking lot with support staff for the evening of March 27, 2010.
4. That it support the event with advertising through the local papers and the City's website.

If we are approved for the deputation, please confirm date and time and any other obligations on our part.

Sincerely yours,
Martha Bell, Chairperson of Woodbridge Lantern Walk.

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Attachment # 2:

January 6, 2010

Requests of the Vaughan Council to mark Earth Hour in the City

1. Join the World Wildlife Fund's Earth Hour project as an official participant. As a City, challenge Brampton on greenhouse gas reductions during Earth Hour.
2. During Earth hour, power down the lights as much as is safe in the City of Vaughan buildings. Adjust the Lighting Systems permanently to continue with reduced lighting every night.
3. Advertise Vaughan's participation as a City in Global Earth Hour in the local papers and on the City's appropriate web pages. Include information about the Woodbridge Lantern Walk
4. Come out to the 3rd Annual Woodbridge Lantern Walk. Join us as honoured guests on the stage. Bring family, friends, constituents to help us mark the occasion and raise awareness.
5. On a personal level, each member of Council could adopt one energy reduction habit before March 27. Request the same of friends and family.
6. We congratulate the Council on the City's investment of \$27 million in Powerstream to put solar panels on some municipal buildings.
7. Continue to make future investments within the framework of sustainability.

We thank you and hope that together our efforts will help accelerate our communities' awareness of and action to address climate change.

Woodbridge Lantern Walk Committee

Julia and Tom Arbanas

Martha Bell

Lucy Cardile

Tony Carella

Cathy Defina

Florida Giallardo-Brienza

Erm Lombardi

Mara Maggiacomo

Jamie Maynard

Giulia Mazella

Brian and Josie McCran

Mary Pataki

Franca Poretta

Sony Rai

Elaine Rodaro

Cathy Romano

Agnes Saldutto