

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – FEBRUARY 1, 2011

BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN FEBRUARY 2011

Recommendation

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

1. That the list of activities to be held in February 2011 in the City of Vaughan to commemorate Black History Month as found in Attachment 1, be received; and,
2. That the proclamation and City activities be posted on the City's website.

Contribution to Sustainability

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

- 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

The cost to develop a display and informational material related to Black History Month is included in the Recreation and Culture Department's 2011 Operating Budget.

Communications Plan

The proclamation of February as Black History Month and the list of activities will be posted on the City's website. Displays and informational material will be made available at community centres and the Civic Centre.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the list of activities scheduled to be held in February throughout the City of Vaughan in recognition of Black History Month.

Background - Analysis and Options

Black History Month is a time to honour and celebrate the achievements of Black Canadians and descent and their contribution to the social, economic, cultural and political life in Canada. It provides an opportunity to learn about and be inspired by the history, pride and strength of Black Canadians.

In February 2009, Council approved the following recommendation from the Community Equity and Diversity Committee:

- 1) That Community Equity and Diversity Committee recommend that February 2009 be recognized as "Black History Month"; and,
- 2) That this proclamation be made on a yearly basis.

The City of Vaughan has in previous years proclaimed February as Black History Month. The proclamation request meets the City's Proclamation policy, as follows:

- (ii) If the event, campaign or declaration is directly related to matters over which the City has jurisdiction or the City directly sponsors the event, campaign or other matter.

In support of Black History Month, there are a number of activities throughout the City of Vaughan. Highlights are as follows:

- **Vaughan Public Libraries:**
 - Each branch will celebrate stories that explore African and Caribbean history and culture from February 1 to 28;
 - Art works from the Association of African Canadian Artists Colourblind Collection will be on display at the Dufferin Clark and Maple Libraries from February 1 to 28; and,
 - Guest authors will visit Dufferin Clark and Maple libraries on February 3.
- **York Regional Police:**
 - Music and art displays will be posted at the Safety Village on January 29, 11am – 1pm. Chief Eric Jolliffe will pay tribute to the outstanding individuals who have made significant contributions to Canada and the world at large.
- **City of Vaughan Civic Centre & Dufferin Clark Community Centre:**
 - Displays commemorating the significance of Black History Month and an historical perspective of Black History in York Region.

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:**
Preserve our heritage and support diversity, arts and culture.

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council, and the necessary resources to implement this program have been allocated and approved.

Regional Implications

N/A

Conclusion

The history of the Black Canadian community is part of the history of our City and the celebration of Black History Month works towards reaffirming our efforts to build an inclusive society. The proclamation of February 2011 as "Black History Month" and the list of community activities will be posted on the City's website and displays and events will commemorate Black history and culture at community centres and Vaughan Public Libraries.

Attachments

1. Black History Month – February 2011 – List of Activities

Report Prepared By

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Respectfully submitted,

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Commissioner of Community Services

Black History Month – February 2011

List of Activities

City of Vaughan – Community Centres

Dufferin Clark Community Centre:

The Thornhill African Caribbean Canadian Association will have a display in the Centre entitled “tree of recognition” highlighting prominent personalities (i.e. Mercy Garvey, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King) along with local youth who achieved success with goals.

All Centres:

Displays and informational material will be made available at community centres and the Civic Centre.

City of Vaughan – Vaughan Public Libraries

Each branch will set up a book display together with reading lists in February to highlight the Black Heritage materials in the library’s collection. Reading lists will be available for displays.

Art Display

Dufferin Clark Library and Maple Library, February 1- 28

Art works will be on display from the COLOURblind collection from the Association of African Canadian Artists.

eLIBRARY

During the month of February, the eLibrary will highlight the Black Heritage Collection Library Guide, the “We Recommend” booklists and the Recommended links.

Author Visits

Dufferin Clark Library, February 3, 1-2 p.m.

Maple Library, February 3, 10-11 a.m.

Adwoa and Fule Badoe will present an entertaining program called *Once Upon an African Village* using the mediums of oral storytelling, song, dance and drumming to tell stories of Ananse, Ijapa and other heroes of African folklore. Adwoa is a writer of several books for children, notably *The Pot of Wisdom: Ananse Stories* and her new release *Between Sisters*. Elementary students will be present for each author’s visit.

African & Caribbean Storytime

In celebration of Black History Month, stories that explore African and Caribbean history and culture. Storytimes are scheduled as follows:

Ansley Grove Library, February 17, 11-11:30 a.m.

Bathurst Clark Resource Library, February 7, 7-7:30 p.m.

Dufferin Clark Library, February 15, 7-7:30 p.m.

Maple Library, February 10, 10:30-11 a.m.

Pierre Berton Resource Library, February 28, 7-7:30 p.m.

Woodbridge Library, February 1, 10:30-11 a.m.

School Boards: YRDSB / YCDSB

A City-wide African Heritage writing contest will be hosted inviting all schools from YRDSB to have students submit their short stories or poetry. Displays in the foyer, morning announcements with quotes or music are scheduled at many schools. Teachers will create activity to highlight awareness of Black History with students as well as the school as a whole. Some schools will have an assembly which would consist of plays, guest speakers, author visits and more.

York Regional Police

Black History Month Celebrations at Safety Village, January 29, 2011, 11a.m. – 1p.m.

Annual music, art display and refreshments will be available for all. Chief Eric Jolliffe will pay tribute and speak to the outstanding individuals who have made significant contributions to Canada and the world at large.

Other

Vaughan African Canadian Association - Guest speaker Runoka Rashidi will be scheduled to speak at local venue schools and the community is invited to attend. He is a writer and public lecturer with a focus on Black foundations of world civilizations. **Dates to be determined.**

VACA is also facilitating a Black History Essay and Art Contest. Deadline is February 20. All schools city-wide are invited to participate.