



City of
Peterborough

To: **Members of the General Committee**

From: **Jen McFarlane, Commissioner, Municipal Operations (Acting)
and Sheldon Laidman, Commissioner, Community Services**

Meeting Date: **April 22, 2024**

Report: **Update regarding Little Lake Fireworks Platform, Report
MOENV24-010**

Subject

A report to provide an update on the state of the Fireworks Platform in Little Lake and recommended disposition of the platform.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report MOENV24-010, dated April 22, 2024, of the Commissioner of Municipal Operations (Acting), as follows:

- a) The Little Lake Fireworks Platform be decommissioned and disposed of in accordance with Part 15 of the City's Procurement By-law 22-070; and
- b) That future fireworks displays utilize the "T" Wharf or other approved sites to mitigate cost, risks and liability to the City.

Executive Summary

- The Little Lake fireworks platform has failed several times, most recently on January 18, 2023, breaking free and risking catastrophic damage to critical infrastructure.
- A thorough review of options for the platform, including the significant costs to safely return the platform to Little Lake with ongoing risk and liability.

Background

On January 18, 2023, a resident notified Public Works that the Fireworks Platform located in Little Lake had drifted away from its normal location in the lake. Environmental Services staff attended the site and found that high water levels had caused the anchors to become unmoored which allowed the platform to float downstream. The Fountain remained in place and its electrical source was not damaged.

Environmental Staff, along with a contractor were able to launch a boat and broke a channel through the ice to access the platform. They then cut the chains to release the anchors that had come loose. The anchors were GPS pinned to allow for recovery in the Spring. Staff cleared ice around the boat ramp located on Mark Street, to provide a space for docking. The platform was safely towed and secured for the winter cabled to the trees at the shoreline with no damage caused to other assets. The recovery cost \$1,412.50 in contracted services, plus significant labour and equipment from city staff, and risk to staff and assets.

In the spring of 2023, staff reviewed available options, and determined that the platform should be removed, and safely stored on land until a final plan could be developed and approved. Staff reviewed options for the 2023 season, determining that the sole City coordinated fireworks show on July 1, 2023 could safely and economically be performed from the Little Lake “T” Wharf. Considering the platform was inherited from a local service group and has broken free several times over the past decades, a thorough review and funding is required before deciding to return the platform to Little Lake.

Consideration to return the fireworks platform to Little Lake

There are multiple costs, risks and liabilities associated with returning the fireworks platform to Little Lake:

- A proposal was received in 2023 for \$4,680.00 to return the platform to previous location. But this proposal did not include any design consideration to prevent future failures or catastrophic damage to Trent Severn or other assets.
- Insurance for the fireworks platform was removed in 2023. Historically, premiums cost approximately \$2,000 annually. To return the fireworks platform to service, insurance would be required at current rates.
- It is estimated that Engineering costs to review and design a permanent anchoring system for the fireworks platform will cost \$10,000 plus any specified additional anchoring or installation costs.
- The July 1, 2023 fireworks display was launched from the “T” Wharf at a lower cost than previous fireworks platform shows. It is expected that the “T” Wharf will

continue to be the most economical, lowest risk location for City supported fireworks shows.

If returned to Little Lake the fireworks platform will incur significant cost, and continued liability to the City's Fountain, as well as other assets on the Trent Severn waterway. Staff have received public feedback in support of the "T" Wharf fireworks display, and decreased negative incidents since the fireworks platform has been removed from Little Lake.

Consideration to repurpose the fireworks platform

Staff have received suggestions that the platform be anchored or attached to land for public access, boat docking, or swimming. If the fireworks platform were returned to Little Lake, similar costs previously identified would be required, plus any costs to upgrade the decking material or meet accessibility requirement, plus annual insurance costs as well as continued risk and liability.

If the fireworks platform were attached to land and used as a dock or platform for public access there would be costs to design and anchor or attach the platform. It is estimated that the costs to retrofit the aging fireworks platform would exceed the costs of a purpose designed and built dock.

Engagement and Consultation

This report was reviewed by the Risk Management Committee at their meeting held on March 21, 2024. The Risk Management Committee is supportive of the recommendation to Council that the Little Lake Fireworks Platform be decommissioned and dispositioned in accordance with Part 15 of the City's Procurement By-law 22-070.

Strategic Plan

Strategic Pillar: Governance & Fiscal Sustainability

Strategic Initiative: Pursue service excellence in governance to support long-term fiscal sustainability of the city while respecting the impact of decisions on taxpayers.

The review, and recommended disposition of the Little Lake fireworks platform aligns with the Governance & Fiscal Sustainability pillar by ensuring continued support of fireworks presentations in a fiscally responsible and minimises risk and liability for the City of Peterborough.

Budget and Financial Implications

There are no budgetary or financial implications associated with the recommendations. If Council wishes to retain the platform, the estimated cost to repair it would be \$14,680 (one time fee) plus estimated ongoing annual insurance costs of \$2,000, as well as higher fireworks show costs from the floating platform.

Conclusion

There is currently no budget to maintain or upgrade the Little Lake fireworks platform. Considering the significant costs and liability, it is recommended that the fireworks platform not be returned to Little Lake. Staff recommend that the Fireworks Platform in Little Lake be disposed of and that it not be replaced. The limited use of the platform does not justify the significant capital as well as recurring operating cost, insurance and risk.

Submitted by,

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