



City of
Peterborough

To: **Members of the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee**

From: **Ellen Stewart, Youth Recreationist**

Meeting Date: **February 25, 2014**

Subject: **Report APRAC14-010
National Youth Week**

Purpose

A report to provide information on the history of National Youth Week events that have occurred in Peterborough since 2007.

Recommendation

That the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee approve the recommendation outlined in Report APRAC14-010 dated February 25, 2014, of the Youth Recreationist, as follows:

That Report APRAC14-010 be received for information.

Budget and Financial Implications

The costs incurred by the Recreation Division hosting events during National Youth Week will be approximately \$300.00 and can be accommodated within the approved Downtown Youth Space budget.

Background

National Youth Week is May 1- 7 every year and is dedicated to the celebration of youth and their active participation in their community. Whether it is recreation, drama, sport, volunteerism, dance or art, National Youth Week is a time to honour their involvement. National Youth Week is not a program, but rather a movement. It is driven by what happens in local communities across Canada. For the purpose of this report youth are identified as being between the ages of 12 and 18 years.

Since its inaugural year, in 2007, the City of Peterborough has been celebrating National Youth Week. Blue Sky, the first community youth festival was hosted at Del Crary Park in May of 2007. The event was on a small scale and was developed and implemented by the Recreation Division with the support of the Peterborough Youth Commission and the Peterborough Youth Council. The Blue Sky festival was an opportunity for youth to gather at the park, participate in outdoor games and have food. All activities were free of charge for the youth participants.

In 2008 various community youth serving agencies and organizations expressed interest in becoming involved in organizing the Blue Sky youth festival. As a result, 17 community agencies and organizations along with several youth, came together to form the Blue Sky Planning Committee. A list of those organizing members is attached as Appendix "A".

This planning committee dedicated a lot of time and resources to the annual Blue Sky event. The festival grew to become an example of great community partnerships. Blue Sky was truly a celebration of Peterborough's youth.

Enthusiasm and resources for the festival started to decline in 2011. The decline was a strong indication that the agencies and organizations around the table were facing fiscal restraints. Several community partners were no longer part of the planning table. Their agency mandates and personnel had changed and this impacted resources available. This resulted in the City's Recreation Division having to dedicate more staff time and resources to keep the festival going.

The key to the success of National Youth Week was having the community partners engaged in a way that did not tax their resources. In 2013 the Recreation Division introduced the National Youth Week Calendar of events. This was an opportunity for community agencies and organizations to host smaller events in-house that still celebrated youth in our community. A draft of the 2014 National Youth Week Calendar of Events is attached as Appendix B. Each event listed was no cost or low cost and involved many community partners, Blue Sky was one of those events.

A debrief meeting was held after the 2013 National Youth Week events and the committee members were supportive of the National Youth Week Calendar and agreed to continue with the calendar in 2014. Plans are currently underway to develop events.

The Committee also decided that the inaugural Blue Sky festival needed to be re-invented. At this time the Committee is anticipating a partnership with the Peterborough Music Festival to host a free youth festival in June at Del Crary Park. The Peterborough County-City Health Unit and the Peterborough Drug Strategy staff have indicated they will take on the lead roles in organizing the June festival. Hosting an event in June will take the youth festival out of the youth week calendar of events however it will provide yet another opportunity to celebrate our youth.

The Committee is committed to hosting enough low cost or no cost smaller events during May 1 to 7, 2014 that will recognize and celebrate youth in our community. The Recreation Division in partnership with the Peterborough Youth Commission are dedicated to participating in National Youth Week events and will continue to work with community partners to develop a wide-ranging calendar for years to come.

Submitted by,

Ellen Stewart
Youth Recreationist

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Attachments:

Appendix A-Blue Sky Planning Committee Members

Appendix B-National Youth Week Calendar of Events