TORONTO Member Motion

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM23.24	ACTION			Ward:All

Proposed Return of the Toronto Sportsmen's Show to Exhibition Place - by Councillor Mark Grimes, seconded by Councillor Josh Colle

***Notice of this Motion has been given.**
This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.

Recommendations

Councillor Mark Grimes, seconded by Councillor Josh Colle, recommends that:

1 City Council exempt the Board of Governors of Exhibition Place from the City Policy prohibiting use of City facilities for the promotion of firearms, for the purpose of permitting the Toronto Sportsmen's Show to host its annual five day show at Exhibition Place.

2. City Council direct the Toronto Sportsmen's Show to continue to have the Ontario Chief Firearms Officer on site at the Show at all times and continue to provide educational seminars on the safe use and storage of firearms to all Show attendees through the Ontario Chief Firearms Officer.

Summary

The first Canadian National Sportsmen's Show, the parent company of the Toronto Sportsmen's Show and a forerunner to the present day consumer shows, took place in Toronto in 1948. A small group of sporting enthusiasts under the leadership of the world-famous outdoorsman, author and dedicated conservationist, Frank Kortright first imagined a "sportsmen's show" that would be a catalyst to support conservation projects throughout Canada. Kortright devoted his life to protecting Canada's outdoors/wilderness and its habitat and created a legacy that can now be appreciated by all Canadians.

The Canadian National Sportsmen's Shows, including the Toronto Sportsmen's Show, grew from Frank Kortright's vision. Today, it is a not-for-profit corporation and Canada's largest producer of outdoor shows. The proceeds from its shows support and promote outdoor campaigns and programs in conservation and education and the safe use of Canada's outdoors. Over its 65-year history, Canadian National Sportsmen's Shows have helped protect Canada's outdoors with grants exceeding $32 million.
The Toronto Sportsmen's Show is a large tourist draw bringing 123,000 visitors each year over its 5-day event. It is not simply a consumer show but a family entertainment venue that attracts attendees to celebrate and learn more about outdoor and wilderness activities that can be found in Ontario. 10 % of attendees are children and the Toronto Sportsmen's Show partners and financially support organizations such as the St. Lawrence Community Centre to bring children

to the Show at no cost.

The Toronto Sportsmen's Show invests over $600,000 in family entertainment and education including features such as a Kids Trout Pond, Fishing Simulators, Fish identification and a Casting pond with $75,000 in prizes. Many children catch their very first fish at the Toronto Sportsmen's Show. It also produces Fishing, Hunting and Outdoor Seminars, Archery instruction for adults and children, live Birds of Prey, Adventure Mountain, Kayak demonstrations, Zip lining and Rappelling. The McCann Dog Show, Dogs with Jobs and the Super Dogs are also family favorites.

One of the most successful community programs launched by the Canadian Sportsmen's Shows and undertaken in Ontario by the Toronto Sportsmen's Show is the "Kids Fishing Day" through which 6500 complete fishing kits (Rod, Reel, Line, Lures and Hat) are distributed annually. Each year In Toronto the Toronto Sportsmen's Show, in partnership with City Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division, holds this very successful event at Grenadier Pond (High Park) and at Centre Island where over 500 kits are distributed. In addition, the Toronto Sportsmen's Show is also committed to outfitting a fishing camp at Centre Island and another at Grenadier Pond with $5000 each in fishing equipment.

The Toronto Sportsmen's Show was held at Exhibition Place from 1948 to 2009 but since 2010, has been unable to locate there resulting in a loss of $1.1 million of annual gross income to Exhibition Place. However, the Toronto Sportsmen's Show now wants to return to its "home" at Exhibition Place. Its location within the City of Toronto represents $6 million in Economic Impact to the City.

Supporting the Toronto Sportsmen's Show are 66 outdoor associations and ministries including: The Ontario Federation of Hunting and Anglers, Northern Ontario Tourist Association, Great Lakes Fishery Commission, Trout Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited, Toronto Parks Department, Toronto Military Family, Girl Guides of Canada, Ministry of Natural Resources, Parks Ontario and Fish Ontario. The Show exhibits 112 outfitters and camps from across Ontario and Canada that rely on the Show for their future bookings.

Each of the Show's themed areas are intrinsically linked to one another in a supporting structure of activities, accommodations, education and information. The Hunting Hall of the Show occupies 10% of the rented space, featuring exhibits ranging from outdoor clothing, accessories; hunting firearms and Hunting Association's booths, Archery Range, and Wildlife Display. Included in this space is a main stage for seminars and educational sessions. All firearms displayed are approved by the Chief Firearms Officer, and stored in accordance with the Ontario Chief Firearms Officer and the Toronto Police Services. The Ontario Chief Firearms Officer is on site at all times as they have a booth at the Show which provides educational seminars on the safe use and storage of firearms to all attendees.

Since 2008, the City has had a policy which restricts the use and promotion of firearms on city property, including Exhibition Place. However a Variance from the policy exists for other "entertainment" industries such as permits issued for the film and television industry. Further, as part the successful bid of the Toronto 2015 Pan Am Games, "Shooting" is represented as a medal sport.

We respectfully suggest that the Toronto Sportsmen's Show is true family entertainment and that the residents of Toronto have benefited immensely from the grants and programs that this iconic 65 year old Show has provided.

(Submitted to City Council on May 8 and 9, 2012 as MM23.24)

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM23.24