

Harriet Tubman Games

Date: February 21, 2017
To: Executive Committee
From: General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation;
General Manager, Economic Development and Culture
Wards: Ward 10 - York Centre

SUMMARY

This report responds to a request for information on the support required to make the Harriet Tubman Games a success, including facility access, logistical support, grant or partnership information and annual access to the Esther Shiner Stadium.

Requests from the Harriet Tubman Community Organization include annual access to the Esther Shiner Stadium, event equipment, awards, promotional support and a commemorative Harriet Tubman statue.

This report outlines the plan to support the Harriet Tubman Games in 2017 which includes facilitating the permit process, providing logistical advice, promotional support, information on available grants and referrals in securing equipment required for the event. The report also identifies those requests which cannot be accommodated through the 2017 Council Approved Operating Budget according to Council approved policies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture recommend that:

1. the Executive Committee receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact associated with the adoption of this report.

The 2017 Parks, Forestry and Recreation Operating Budget includes the resources necessary to support permitted activities city-wide as these services are cost recovered through permit fee revenue generation. Based on a preliminary estimate of services required for these Games, the permit fee would be \$6,532.

Additional services beyond those permitted have been discussed, but not firmly estimated and could not be provided by City staff, other than through full cost recovery paid by event organizers. The 2017 Council Approved Budget and associated approved service levels include no provision for other materials and equipment required to support events such as the Harriet Tubman Games.

The Deputy City Manager & Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council on January 31, 2017 adopted the following Members Motion (MM24.16) to "request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture to report to Council, through the Executive Committee, by March 28, 2017 on a plan to support the Harriet Tubman Games, such report should include, but not be limited to a determination of what City of Toronto partnership opportunities are available, including facility space, logistical support and grants, as well as outline a strategy to make the Esther Shiner Stadium the permanent home of the Games."

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.MM24.16>

COMMENTS

Event Background and Details:

In 1971, the first annual Black Track Meet was held in Toronto and has since seen athletes such as Ben Johnson and Donovan Bailey participate and go on to compete in the Olympics. Although it started as an impromptu foot race during a day of picnics and socializing, in the 1970s the Black Track Meet attracted the fastest runners from Canada, the United States and the Caribbean. In 1986, the Harriet Tubman Community Organization assumed responsibility for the meet, overseeing its evolution into a general community track and field event for all ages and renamed it the Harriet Tubman Games.

The Harriet Tubman Games is a community-based outdoor track and field event sanctioned by Athletics Ontario. This year the Games will take place on August 10, 2017 and include up to 500 participants of all ages.

The event plan for 2017 has been discussed with City staff and event organizers and the following requests can be supported:

1) Competition Venue - Esther Shiner Stadium

Use of Esther Shiner Stadium (5720 Bathurst St.) including track access, lobby area, change rooms, PA system, tables and chairs has been requested and reserved for August 10, 2017. Permit costs would include use of the entire stadium including the track, lobby, change rooms and including equipment such as tables, chairs and a P.A. system.

The cost estimate of \$6,532 will be refined once the final event, security and facility requirements are detailed. Planning meetings are scheduled between events such as the Harriet Tubman Games and City staff to set out those requirements.

Parks, Forestry, and Recreation issues permits to event organizers on an annual basis in accordance with the Council approved Permit Allocation Policy and User Fee Schedule. Additional user fees may be applied to not-for-profit organizations in an effort to recover 100% of the staff costs when events take place outside of the normal operating timelines and budget. As Esther Shiner Stadium is a premiere facility, the fees cannot be reduced or waived by City staff under the Reduction of Fees Policy.

Future year requirements will be assessed annually. As Esther Shiner Stadium seems to be the preferred location for the event, Parks, Forestry and Recreation will work with the organizers to secure dates as soon as schedule information becomes available.

2) Equipment

The organizers have requested the use of 10 track hurdles with trolley, 30 pylons and 6 tents as well as the provision of 30 medals. Staff have confirmed that Esther Shiner Stadium is not equipped with track hurdles, tents and pylons. City staff can assist with the rental and sourcing of these items. However, the associated cost would be the organizers' responsibility.

3) Promotional Support

In order to increase participation, event organizers have requested assistance with promoting the event to local track and field clubs, as well as their coaches and athletes. City staff, through Parks, Forestry and Recreation and Economic Development and Culture, would provide access to promotional channels including local track and field centres and/or clubs at Community Recreation Centres, youth spaces and services and social media.

4) Harriet Tubman Statue

Organizers have requested funding to create, install and maintain a statue of Harriet Tubman to be placed at the Esther Shiner Stadium. At the time of this report, staff had not received any details pertaining to the size, cost and recommended site for this statue.

A monument of this nature would be required to follow the process outlined in the City of Toronto Public Art and Monuments Donation Policy which specifies that all costs related to the donation must be borne by the donor along with many other requirements.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EX21.5>

Additionally, the Esther Shiner Stadium was constructed by the City of Toronto on Toronto District School Board land. The City of Toronto's Public Art and Monuments collection are pieces located on City of Toronto lands.

Public art and monuments are generally capital projects and these projects do not commence without a minimum project budget of \$50,000. Artworks and monuments come into the collection through either commissions funded by City of Toronto infrastructure projects (one percent of construction costs), Section 37 funds, or donations. The 2017 Council Approved Capital Budget and 2018 - 2016 Capital Plan does not include funding which could be applied to this support this request.

The City can facilitate a meeting with a potential donor group to explain the City's public art and monuments donations policy and how it would apply to a legacy project associated with this event.

City of Toronto Partnership Programs for Events:

Parks, Forestry and Recreation explored potential sources of City support and found that there are no partnerships available through event funding programs managed by Economic Development and Culture or other current City programs.

While the City has a Hosting Policy for Significant Events funded from The Major Special Events Reserve Fund, the Harriet Tubman Games do not meet the specified criteria. The fund is intended for significant events with a notable international profile; which draw out-of-town attendance in excess of 50,000 people; are expected to have high economic and business benefits, i.e. utilize 3 or more hotels; and can demonstrate other government support. As a local and annual event, with attendees less than 2,000, these Games would not be considered a Major Special Event under this policy.

The City's Community Investment Funding Programs, administered by Social Development, Finance and Administration, provide community investment and grant programs for organizations. In 2015, the Harriet Tubman Community Association received \$68,875 in funding from the City of Toronto: Community Service Partnership funding of \$48,875 for ongoing core and youth programming and \$20,000 in one-time funding from the Community Festivals and Special Events program for special enhanced Harriet Tubman Games during the summer of the 2015 Pan Am Games.

Two newly proposed grant programs, pending Council approval in March 2017, will support community recreation and neighbourhood events and festivals. However, the proposed guidelines do not support reoccurring events and, therefore, the Harriet Tubman Games would not qualify for funding under these programs.

Conclusion:

The Harriet Tubman Games is an important event that has a history in the City of Toronto. Plans for the 2017 Games are moving forward with City staff and event organizers. Requests for the use of City facilities and resources are accommodated within the approved Council policies and available funding. Staff will provide promotional support, logistical advice, and referrals to assist the organizers with event requirements.

CONTACT

Cathy Vincelli, Project Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Parks, Tel: 416-397-5349, Email: Cathy.Vincelli@toronto.ca

Laura Jane Elkin, Supervisor, Event Support, Economic Development and Culture, Tel: 416-397-5397, LauraJane.Elkin@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Janie Romoff
General Manger, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Michael H. Williams
General Manger, Economic Development and Culture