



MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE

Partial Reimbursement of Permit Fees for Toronto Music, Arts and Nature Alliance

Moved by: Councillor Paula Fletcher

Seconded by: Councillor Frances Nunziata

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Councillor Paula Fletcher, seconded by Councillor Frances Nunziata, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the General Manager, Parks and Recreation to waive 60% or \$28,098.69 of the total remaining permit fees that are outstanding, \$46,831.15 on a one-time basis, for permits taken out by Toronto Music, Arts and Nature Alliance for cultural events programming held at Cherry Beach in 2024.

SUMMARY:

Toronto Music, Arts and Nature Alliance is a not-for-profit organization that has produced the Promise Cherry Beach music and arts event series for more than 25 years. The event series is a longstanding part of Toronto's cultural landscape and attracts residents and visitors to Cherry Beach throughout the summer season.

In 2024, Toronto Music, Arts and Nature Alliance obtained permits to host eleven ticketed event dates at Cherry Beach. Following permit issuance, access to Cherry Beach was significantly impacted by the unexpected closure of the Cherry Street bridge for emergency repairs undertaken by Ports Toronto. The bridge closure was extended multiple times throughout the summer, often with limited notice.

Cherry Beach has limited access points, and the bridge closure created significant challenges for event attendees travelling to and from the site. The nearest Toronto Transit Commission service is approximately a 40-minute walk from the event location. As a result, the event series experienced an estimated 50% reduction in attendance and associated revenue losses due to circumstances beyond the control of the event organizer.

Recognizing these impacts, City Council adopted Item MM23.31 in 2024, authorizing a refund of 25 percent of the permit fees paid by the organizer. The approved refund totalled

\$13,319.51, based on total permit fees of \$60,150.66. The remaining permit fee balance of \$46,831.15 remains outstanding.

While Parks and Recreation has delegated authority to waive or refund up to \$1,000 in fees for a not-for-profit organization, any additional fee relief requires approval by City Council.

Although Toronto Music, Arts and Nature Alliance is a not-for-profit organization, the event series did not qualify for assistance under the City's one-time Special Events Stabilization Initiative because their commercial permit classification allows for for-profit sales rather than not-for-profit events that would be free and open to the public.

Given the extraordinary and prolonged access restrictions experienced during the 2024 event season, and the significant impacts on attendance and event revenues arising from circumstances outside the organizer's control, additional relief is being sought through the waiver of 60% of the remaining permit fees for the 2024 Promise Cherry Beach event series, following the previously approved 25% fee reduction.

Reason for Urgency: The permit fees associated with the 2024 Promise Cherry Beach event series remain outstanding and are now past due. As a result, Toronto Music, Arts and Nature Alliance is currently in arrears with the City and is not eligible to receive permits for future events under existing City policies.

The 2026 Promise Cherry Beach event series is scheduled to commence on June 19 and permits must be issued in advance to allow for event planning, site preparation, and operational coordination. As Parks and Recreation staff do not have delegated authority to waive permit fees beyond \$1,000, City Council direction is required to resolve the outstanding balance and enable permit processing for the 2026 event season.

Consideration of this matter at this meeting will provide certainty to both the event organizer and City staff and support the continued delivery of a longstanding cultural event series at Cherry Beach.

Date: June 24/25, 2026