

Town of Whitby

Staff Report

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Report Title: June is Recreation and Parks Month, Seniors Month and Pride Month

Report to: Committee of the Whole

Date of meeting: May 8, 2023

Report Number: CMS 05-23

Department(s) Responsible:
Community Services Department

Submitted by:

John Romano, Commissioner,
Community Services

Acknowledged by M. Gaskell, Chief Administrative Officer

For additional information, contact:

Sharon Meredith, Sr. Manager of
Recreation

1. Recommendation:

1. That report CMS 05-23 be received for information.

2. Highlights:

- Annually the month of June is used to promote the benefits of recreation and parks for physical, social, and environmental health.
- For 2023, staff have developed activities/events that will take place during the month of June to celebrate Recreation and Parks Month. Activities will also include a focus on Seniors Month and Pride Month.
- A request has been submitted to Council for the official proclamation of June is Recreation and Parks month from June 1 to 30, 2023. Council proclaimed Seniors Month, Pride Month and Elder Abuse Awareness Day (June 15) at the March 20, 2023, Council Meeting.

3. Background:

Each June, communities across Ontario celebrate June is Recreation and Parks Month (JRPM). JRPM is recognized by municipalities, community organizations, and schools as a way of promoting the benefits of being active and recognizing the contribution that recreation and parks make to quality of life.

Access to parks and recreation is a fundamental human need that helps to foster personal health, strong communities, and social inclusion. By celebrating June is Recreation and Parks Month, Seniors Month and Pride Month, the Town of Whitby aims to promote healthy and active living for all residents and increase awareness of the value and important benefits that recreation and parks provide to individuals, families, and communities.

4. Discussion:

On Saturday June 3, "Play in Whitby Day" will kick off the month with local sport/recreation organizations participating in an information fair about opportunities for sport and recreation in Whitby. The event will take place at Iroquois Park Sports Complex, along with free swims and skates.

To celebrate June is Recreation and Parks month, Seniors Month and Pride Month, the following is a snapshot of activities/events have been planned:

- "Play in Whitby Day" – Promotion of local sport/recreation organizations in the lobby of Iroquois Parks Sports Complex along with free activities for individuals and families.
- 55+ Art Rail at the Whitby Public Library
- Pride Banners
- Free Skates/Swims
- 55+ Meet the Artists Event
- 55+ Fraud Prevention Seminar
- Drag Queen Story Time
- Elder Abuse Awareness Day Info Booth
- Youth Pride Day
- Ukulele in the Park
- Fitness/Yoga in the Park
- Walking with Mary
- 55+ Extravaganza BBQ

Attachment 1 provides a full listing of events occurring throughout the month of June.

5. Financial Considerations:

Many of the activities are being supported through the approved 2023 Operating Budget. Others are being supported by volunteers or through partnerships with the Whitby Public Library and Regional partnerships. Sponsorship from local retirement homes (Amica, ViVa, Aspira) are off-setting costs for 55+ events.

6. Communication and Public Engagement:

Activities planned for June is Recreation and Parks month will be promoted through the Town's website, weekly e-newsletters, within community centres and libraries and through the Town's social media accounts. A June focused promotional rack card is also being developed by Communications & Creative Services that will be distributed throughout community centres and libraries during the month of June.

June is Recreation and Parks Month will be supported with a communication plan that will also spotlight recreation destinations in Whitby available for an informal visit anytime throughout the summer (Whitby parks, splash pads, dog parks and the marina/waterfront).

7. Input from Departments/Sources:

Staff have worked in collaboration with staff from the Whitby Public Library and Region of Durham organizations to plan and support events such as the 55+ Art Rail at the Whitby Public Library, Drag Queen Story Time, and Youth Pride Day.

8. Strategic Priorities:

Celebrating June is Recreation and Parks Month, Seniors Month and Pride Month advances the following pillars from the draft Community Strategic Plan:

Pillar 1: Whitby's Neighbourhoods – Healthy and Inclusive

Events offered during the month of June will raise awareness of parks, trails, recreation facilities, programs and services providing inclusive opportunities for residents to be active and promote community health and well-being.

Pillar 4: Whitby's Government – Responsive and Responsible

June is Recreation & Parks month is focused on building a healthy, inclusive community by connecting residents with services. JRPM encourages residents to be actively involved in their community. Experiencing outdoor spaces with their family, participating in a program or event with friends and becoming more familiar with the many community organizations who support a vibrant and active parks and recreation service delivery system in Whitby.

Events offered during June is Recreation and Parks month are available at no cost and will be promoted in accessible formats on the Town's website.

9. Attachments:

Attachment 1 - June is Recreation and Parks Month - Seniors Month - Pride Month Activities