



Subject: Canal Days Committee Recommendation for Canal Days 2021

To: Council

From: Chief Administrative Office

Report Number: 2021-38

Meeting Date: May 10, 2021

Recommendation:

That Chief Administrative Office Report 2021-38 be received;

That, in order to safeguard the health and safety of the community, volunteers, artists, festival partners/vendors, visitors and staff, the 2021 Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival is hereby cancelled;

That staff, in conjunction with the Canal Days Advisory Committee, be directed to commence planning a smaller event, or series of events, to take place in the 2021 fall season, that would take place once the public health crisis is contained and economic recovery efforts are underway.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide a recommendation from the Canal Days Advisory Committee regarding the status of the 2021 Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival.

Background:

The information outlined in this report has been discussed internally with staff, production management, and with the Canal Days Advisory Committee at its meeting, April 27, 2021. Last year, the City took precautionary measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and cancelled the 2020 festival. The recommendation in this report is intended to safeguard the health and safety of the community, volunteers, staff, festival partners, and visitors.

Discussion:

The COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to have a significant impact on the economic and tourism industries again in 2021. On April 8, 2021, the provincial government officially announced a stay-at-home order. This includes a limit on social gatherings to only members of households. Summer events and festivals have begun announcing cancellations throughout Ontario. For example, RBC Bluesfest in Ottawa and Boots & Hearts Music festival have announced cancellations in April. The Burlington Sound of Music Festival will be taking on a different form; therefore, staff are of the opinion that mass gathering festivals and concerts are not feasible this year. In light of the current impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Economic Development and Tourism Services Division staff have been continually analyzing the situation and the impacts on this year's Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival. As noted above, this information was presented to the Canal Days Advisory Committee on April 27, 2021. At that meeting, the Committee recommended the City again take precautionary measures in response to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic by cancelling the 2021 Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival. The Committee also recommends that staff continue to evaluate the status of the COVID-19 pandemic and be prepared to host a smaller event or series of smaller events in the fall season, once the public health crisis is contained and economic recovery efforts are underway.

Cancellation is recommended in order to safeguard the health and safety of the community, volunteers, festival partners, artists, vendors, visitors, and staff.

Once direction has been received, the Economic Development and Tourism Services Division will work with Communications staff to prepare public communication materials and reach out to festival partners.

Financial Implications:

The City has contractual agreements in place for the 2021 Canal Days Festival and staff are working with the parties to move the contracts forward to the 2022 Canal Days.

Conclusion:

The Canal Days Advisory Committee recommends that the 2021 Canal Days Festival be cancelled in order to safeguard the health and safety of the community, volunteers, festival partners, artists, vendors, visitors, and staff. Also, that Council direct staff, with participation of the Committee, to prepare to host a smaller event, or series of separate events in the fall season, once the public health crisis is contained and economic recovery efforts are underway.

Respectfully submitted,

Luke Rowe
Events and Volunteer Coordinator
905-835-2900 ext. 566
Luke.Rowe@portcolborne.ca

Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.