



Subject: Big Bass Champion Fishing Tournament 2021

To: Council

From: Chief Administrative Office

Report Number: 2021-154

Meeting Date: June 14, 2021

Recommendation:

That Chief Administrative Office Report 2021-154 be received;

That City sponsorship of the 2021 Big Bass Champion Fishing Tournament be approved, with \$4,000 in financial support from the City, City assistance with event promotion and marketing on social media, and waiving the permit fees for the use of H.H. Knoll Park; and

That approval of the above-noted event and sponsorship is conditional on the Big Bass Champion Fishing Tournament submitting a certificate of liability insurance in the amount of \$2,000,000 naming the City of Port Colborne as additional insured.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to present a request from Eric Hill, seeking support to host the Big Bass Champion Fishing Tournament on Saturday, September 18 and Sunday, September 19, 2021 at Sugarloaf Harbour Marina and H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park.

Background:

The Big Bass Champion Fishing Tournament ('the Event') will be a new fishing tournament in Port Colborne. The organizer, Eric Hill is also the organizer of the Canadian Tire Lake Erie Open Bass tournament that is run on the Niagara River annually in the fall.

The Event goal is to establish a presence in Port Colborne as an annual event that will continue to grow to attract experienced and new anglers. City staff see value in this

partnership and the potential for economic benefits to the Port Colborne community in the future.

The tournament organizer has been working with City staff and with direction of the City's Emergency Control Group to prepare COVID protocols for this event, to ensure that the health and safety of everyone involved is a top priority. The overview of COVID protocols is attached as Appendix B.

The tournament organizer has submitted a proposal to City staff that can be viewed in Appendix A. The proposal involves requests to waive fees, assist with promotion of the tournament, and provide a \$10,000 financial contribution. As a result, staff have reviewed the event requirements with the tournament organizers, including infrastructure and logistical support (similar to the level of support provided by the City for other fishing tournaments).

The tournament organizers stated that the financial support would help alleviate costs of the tournament that include:

- Insurance costs;
- Branded event tents and supplies for on-site operations for the tournament;
- Website design and domain;
- Social media advertising campaign, promotional video, promotional posters, newspaper/magazine advertising;
- Weigh-in equipment including generator, weigh scale, and other supplies;
- Junior angler prize purse;
- Tournament championship prize purse estimated to exceed \$20,000; and
- Hand sanitizer, masks, other protective equipment for event staff and volunteers.

Discussion:

The Big Bass Champion fishing tournament promotes sport fishing tourism in the City and enhances the City's recognition as an "Ultimate Fishing Town" destination (a designation awarded to the City of Port Colborne in 2013/14). The City has provided infrastructure and logistical support for other tournaments in the past, which in turn has helped event organizers promote and maintain manageable tournament participation fees. If Council approves the recommended funding and waiver of fees, the Big Bass Champion will recognize the City of Port Colborne as an event sponsor.

Council approved the establishment of an account dedicated to supporting local fishing tournaments during its 2019 budget deliberations and allocated a total of \$25,000 to the account for this purpose. Should Council approve the staff recommended amount of funding, it will be allocated from this account.

Staff recommend that the City should waive all related fees and assist with promotion of the event. Staff also recommend that the City provide \$4,000 as a financial contribution rather than the \$10,000 that is being requested. In order to provide sufficient support to other fishing tournaments in Port Colborne, staff feel that \$10,000 is too much to sustain on an annual basis. Staff also feel that during provincial COVID-19 related restrictions on gathering and operation levels of local businesses the true benefit to the community will not be realized as it would during a 'normal' year. The City values the partnership with this fishing tournament and sees great potential moving forward and would like to take steps to ensure that support is provided this year to build for future growth.

In addition to other conditions of approval that may be imposed by the City, the City's festivals and events insurance policy requires event organizers to carry a minimum of \$2 million in general liability insurance (or \$5 million for an event involving alcohol). The organizer is required to file a Certificate of Insurance, naming the City as an additional insured, to the City prior to the event.

Internal Consultations:

The Big Bass Champion fishing tournament has been discussed internally with the Economic Development and Tourism Service division staff, the Sugarloaf Marina Manager, and the Emergency Control Group.

Event staff presented the proposal and COVID-19 protocols plan to the Emergency Control Group for consultation. The protocols have been approved by the Emergency Control Group and event staff will work with Sugarloaf Marina staff to ensure they are implemented in a safe manner. The Emergency Control Group advised that if the Niagara Region is under a lockdown or stay-at-home order for the date of the tournament, that the City will not support the event.

In Appendix "B" there are two options that have been presented by the event organizer. The preferred option by the City and the event organizer is weigh-in procedure "B". If Public Health restrictions loosen by the tournament dates, staff will look to re-evaluate the protocols for the tournament.

Financial Implications:

As mentioned previously in the report, the event organizer is requesting the waiver of park rental fees and assistance with promotion of the tournament. The approximate value of the fees is \$150 and the assistance with promotion will include staff time. The organizer is also requesting a financial contribution of \$10,000. Staff recommend that the City provides \$4,000 in financial support.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Economic Development and Tourism Services staff recommend that City sponsorship of the 2021 Big Bass Championship be approved, with sponsorship to be provided as follows:

- a. Waiving of permit fees for the use of H.H. Knoll Park.
- b. City assistance with event promotion and marketing on social media.
- c. \$4,000 in financial support.

Approval of the above noted event and sponsorship is conditional on the Big Bass Champion Fishing tournament submitting a certificate of liability insurance in the amount of \$2,000,000 naming the City of Port Colborne as additional insured.

Appendices:

- a. Big Bass Champion Proposal
- b. Big Bass Champion COVID Protocols

Respectfully submitted,

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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.