

The Markham-Milliken Children's Festival Committee
Minutes
May 23 2018
6:00 pm

Members: Sean Wong, Melissa Nicholas, Saadia Zakki, Yvonne Lord Buckley, Astra Josie Rose, Kethika Logan, Diana Mousavi, Richard Lee, Quidde Cheung.

Regrets: Councillor Logan Kanapathi (Chair), Jing Yu.

Staff: Andrea Tang, Andrea Berry, Brianna Gabbard, Alex Sepe (Clerk), Laura Gold (Clerk)

The Markham-Milliken Children's Festival Committee convened at 7:35 pm with Trinela Cane presiding as the Chair.

1. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

- None disclosed.

2. Opening Remarks

- August 25th, festival will be held at the new Aaniin Community Centre.

3. Review of Minutes from the September 27, 2017

- Vulnerable sector screening- Arranged for them to be free last year to increase volunteer numbers. All volunteers must go through screening. The City will have to ask if this can be offered free of charge again this year.
- Suggested more of an adult presence at this year's festival, but also suggested involving more students.
- Should try to provide volunteers with their specific roles prior to the festival.
- Should start seeking volunteers earlier this year.

4. Planning and Undertaking of the 2018- Markham- Milliken Mills Children's Festival

a. Roles and Responsibilities

- Sub-Committee assignments should be finalized by the next Committee Meeting.
- Members should mention if they are interested in assisting a specific Sub-Committees throughout the planning of the event.
- Need to create role descriptions, so each volunteer understands their specific purpose at the event. Some volunteer positions already have role descriptions.
- Suggested holding a meeting at the new Community Centre to inspect the space.

c. Finance

- Report given by Andrea Tang:
 - Last year the committee incurred a deficit of \$ 28, 000.
 - Carrying over a total deficit of roughly \$ 30, 000.
 - Members will assist with the management of the 2018 budget by looking over specific items. The Goal is to balance the budget.
 - Target will be to generate an extra funds through sponsorship to help pay off the deficit.
 - Last year had roughly 2380 people purchase wrist bands.
 - A Member suggested that attendance was lower at last year 's event due to using more social media and less print to promote the festival.
 - It is Important for each Sub-Committee to find ways to reduce their budget.
 - Members were recommended to review and approve all Committee expenditures.

d. Staging & Entertainment

- Last year what worked well was having more professional entertainment (e.g. magic show, and fire show,)
- Need to look at the venue to see which type of entertainment will be feasible for this year's festival. Strolling entertainment (Balloon clown), fantasy fables (princesses) were successful last year, mascots worked well last year.
- Always looking for new kinds of entertainment.
- Suggested asking school groups, or performers from the Many Faces of Markham event to perform at the festival.
- Will possibly have a stage outside, but need to focus on making the festival fun with entertainment and activities while selling wristbands.
- Can also have the stage indoors at the new Community Centre.
- Need to limit the number of free activities as it may reduce the number of patrons that purchase a wristband.
- Noted that two videos were created at last year's festival, one aimed at gaining more volunteers, one aimed as an advertising tool to draw in greater crowds.
- When comparing the attendance from last year with previous years the numbers were slightly less.
- Indoors will be an attraction to remove people from the heat.
- Members Discussed the inflatables, and wagon ride:
 - Wagon ride holds roughly 20 people, also a train that hold 15-18 people at once.
 - Inflatable lineups are long, along with the maze.
 - Park at the Community Centre is small, but the park provides lots of open space. There is also a possibility of a road closure to make room for all of the activities.
- Suggested there may be an opportunity to sell low price merchandise for children and begin charging more for vendor fees.

e. Sponsorship

- Tim Horton's, Presenting Sponsor- \$25, 000- also advertise the festival on the Tim's screens throughout York Region.
- Telus- \$5,000.
- Looking at school programs- Kumon, Montessori Schools, Daycare programs as potential sponsors.
- Sponsorship Package will be distributed to the Committee once finalized.
- Looking for additional sponsors.
- Smaller sponsorships are also welcomed. Same applies for food vendors/ and not-for-profit booths.

f. Corporate Communications/Advertising

Andrea Berry advised that the festival will be promoted in the following locations:

- Markham Road and 14th avenue- CN advertising Banner (will be up on Canada Day).
- Markham Life- will be promoted in a couple issues.
- York Scene Guide- YR wide magazine/brochure that all hotels/tourist centres will have to check out the festival.
- On the City's Website.
- Need to know start/finish time of the event to prepare initial social media activities.
- Need to confirm the overall budget for the promotion of the festival.
- May use mobile signs to get the word out. This is was believed to just as effective and cheaper than print.
- Suggested promoting the festival in movie theatres:
 - Andrea Berry will look into the possibility of providing an in-kind sponsor to cover the cost.
- Suggested signs should be put up as soon as possible so residents are aware of the festival.
- Diana Mousavi advised that she could ask the School Board to distribute information about the festival to the schools.
 - Committee thought this could be a useful tool in encouraging high school students to volunteer.
- In the past, the festival provided opportunities for student to get leadership experience. Members wanted to once again provide these opportunities to youth.

Volunteers

- Volunteer sign-up is not yet available on the City's website.
- Need to determine how many volunteers are required, and develop role descriptions for the various volunteer positions.

- Trinela Cane will look into the possibility of providing youth volunteers with free vulnerable sector checks again this year.
- All volunteers must be 14 to volunteer, noting they also require a background check.
- A Member suggested capping/limiting the number volunteers to reduce costs (feeding them), currently 1 volunteer per 10 children.
- Some Members felt that there were too many volunteers last year, and that many of them were not actively engaged.
- Noted that there are moments when more/less volunteers were required, need to ensure there are enough volunteers to cover off breaks.
- Suggested awarding volunteers that work harder, like giving them a sticker for good work.
- Last year had a volunteer recognition night, given budget constraints there may no longer be a recognition night.

Start time of festival

- Last year the Committee looked into extending the hours of the festival to show a movie outdoors, but it was expensive and it could not be shown until it was dark. However, this year a movie could be shown indoors at a minimal cost, as the facility has a projection screen.
- When Sub-Committees are formed, it was recommended that members meet in between committee meetings so that they come prepared to meetings.
- Yvonne Lord-Buckley will provide an overview of the Sub-Committee roles and responsibilities at the next meeting. The Committee can then discuss which Sub-Committee they would like to join.
- Suggested having a theme for the event;
- Advised that the Race Relations Committee was willing to help out with the event if it had a cultural related theme.
- The Chair advised the Committee to address questions/comments "through the chair".

Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, June 13th 5:30pm- 7:00PM.

Adjournment

Committee adjourned at 9:00pm.